

INSPECTION REPORT

MOWLEM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bethnal Green, London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100914

Headteacher: Ms Julia Burns

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Gill
18706

Dates of inspection: 14th - 16th October 2002

Inspection number: 246091

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:	Mowlem Street Bishops Way Bethnal Green London
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Peter Chatwin
Date of previous inspection:	June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18706	Janet Gill	Registered inspector	Art and design Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14324	Michael Hudson	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13754	Judy Morris	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12764	Wendy Thomas	Team inspector	English Music Religious education English as an additional language	
31525	Sue O'Sullivan	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Modern languages Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mowlem Primary School is situated in Bethnal Green, London. There are 183 pupils on roll aged from four to 11 years, with a further 33 children attending the Nursery, 15 on a full-time basis. The size of school is average. The school is popular and oversubscribed. The school's ethnic mix is diverse and greater than that found nationally. The majority come from Bangladesh, others from Somalia, the Caribbean and Eastern Europe. There are no refugees or traveller pupils. Few of the pupils speak English on entry to the school. Over 80 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high, of these around a third are at an early stage in the acquisition of English. The most frequent language spoken at home is Sylheti. About 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is average; of these most have moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication problems and a few have behavioural difficulties. Children's attainment on entry is well below average. Many have poorly developed personal, social, language and communication skills. Over half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is high and far greater numbers of children live in overcrowded households than is usual.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Mowlem Primary School provides a satisfactory education. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has improved and the school has received a DfES Achievement Award. The teaching is at least satisfactory with half being good or better. Pupils behave appropriately, have positive attitudes and respect for each other's cultural and ethnic backgrounds. All pupils are included in all aspects of school life. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher has a clear vision and direction for the future of the school; she is strongly supported by staff and governors who work together effectively.
- Pupils' attainment in the core subjects has risen at a rate greater than the national trend.
- There are effective links with parents and the quality of information provided for them is good.
- The school is effective in supporting pupils' welfare and has very good procedures to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Good systems promote racial harmony where relationships are good and pupils have positive attitudes to school and respect for others' values and beliefs.

What could be improved

- Standards of speaking, reading and writing in English.
- Standards in information and communication technology.
- Too much time is spent on some subjects and not enough on others; skills in some subjects are not taught in a progressive manner throughout the school.
- There are weaknesses in aspects of management and provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Financial administration and monitoring.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There have been satisfactory improvements since the school was last inspected in June 2000. Some of the weaknesses identified have been addressed. Pupils' attainment has continued to rise in the core subjects, at a rate greater than the national trend. The newly appointed headteacher has reviewed the aims of the school and set a clear educational direction through the school improvement plan and deficit budget plan. Assessment has improved in English and mathematics and is now good but it is not rigorous enough in other subjects or in Foundation Stage. Monitoring of teaching and learning has maintained the quality of teaching. The leadership of the school is stable, the school is well placed to continue to tackle its priorities and to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	D	E*	E
Mathematics	C	A	E	C
Science	B	A	E	D

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have continued to improve and the overall trend for improvement in the core subjects is above the national trend, although there was a dip in performance in 2001. In the 2001, Year 6 National Curriculum tests, standards were well below average in mathematics and science and in the lowest five per cent in English. In comparison with similar schools, results were well below average in English, below average in science but average in mathematics. Early indications for the Year 6, 2002 tests are that standards have improved in English, mathematics and science with a higher proportion of pupils gaining the average levels but still too few achieve the higher Level 5. This represents good achievement, as pupils start in the Nursery with well below average standards.

Children enter the Nursery with well below average attainment; they make good progress and continue to achieve well throughout the school. On entry to Reception, attainment is below average in all areas of learning, but lower in communication, language and literacy. Standards in Year 2 are well below average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. In Year 6, they are below average in English and science and average in mathematics. Standards in English are still a cause for concern, particularly in writing. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to most other pupils, achieve well and make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are interested in their lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy school and settle quickly into the routines.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most respond to what is expected of them and behave appropriately but some have to be prompted. Playtimes are often boisterous but pupils are not intentionally rough or reckless. There is a high level of racial harmony.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils have a good respect for each other's differences and diverse backgrounds.
Attendance	Satisfactory – but unauthorised absence is above average. A few parents do not accept their responsibility to ensure their children attend regularly and holidays are sometimes taken during term time. Punctuality is satisfactory and lessons start on time.

The school's very good systems for monitoring attendance and lateness together with pupils' satisfactory behaviour and good attitudes are having a positive impact on their learning.

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 with good features. Good features in teaching were observed throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage, and in several subjects, including English, mathematics and music.

The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory. Bilingual assistants give good support to pupils and help them to take part in the lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The emphasis on the core subjects is helping to raise standards but has an impact on the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. There is good equality of opportunity for all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs experience the same curriculum as the rest of their class. Teaching assistants reduces the size of groups in lessons but this does not always provide an effective way to reinforce learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is the same as that of all pupils with little specific intervention provided for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory, with good provision for moral and social development. The school's learning mentors give very effective support to pupils in their moral and social development. Cultural development is satisfactory but there are too few opportunities for pupils to discover the richness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good overall. Staff know pupils very well and pastoral care is given high priority.

Parents have very positive views of the school and make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning and the work of the school. The school is working hard to establish effective links with parents and keeps them well informed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is setting a clear direction for the school. She is strongly supported by the efficient acting deputy, but their management and curriculum workload is too great.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body does not fulfil all its statutory duties of monitoring the balance of the curriculum and ensuring requirements for information and communication technology are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school has satisfactory strategies to evaluate its successes and weaknesses and is more aware of its overall performance.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial planning is unsatisfactory. A deficit budget plan has been agreed with the local education authority. Some items are outstanding from the audit report.

The headteacher and governors soundly apply the principles of best value. They are developing a better understanding of monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, which is having an impact on raising standards. Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory overall. The school has good accommodation inside and outside but the boys' lavatories and hall roof require attention.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School's ethos and values. • Children's enjoyment of school. • Children's progress. • Children's behaviour. • Pastoral care. • Feeling comfortable in approaching and talking to staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to support children's learning fully because of insufficient command of English. • Not being aware of homework programme or understanding some requirements.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. The school makes good arrangements to provide parents with information about all aspects of school life, including homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of achievement have been maintained since the school was last inspected in June 2000. Following a dip in performance in the 2001 National Curriculum tests results at the end of Year 6 standards have either been returned to previously higher standards or improved. The overall trend for improvement over the last five years is above the national trend. This is the result of hard work by the then acting headteacher, staff and governors, with good backing from the local education authority advisors, who have put into place a number of effective strategies to bring about improvements. In recognition of the performance of pupils in previous years, the school received the DfES¹ School Achievement Award.
2. Standards of attainment of pupils in Year 6 in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were in the lowest five per cent nationally in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Although in mathematics and science the proportion of pupils gaining the average Level 4² was above the national average, too few pupils gained the higher Level 5, so overall standards were still well below average. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English, below average in science but pupils were performing in line with similar schools in mathematics.
3. Early indications suggest that standards in English, mathematics and science have improved in the 2002 national tests, with a higher proportion of pupils gaining the average and higher grades but few pupils gain the higher Level 5. In mathematics and science the percentage of pupils gaining the average level is slightly above the national average for 2001. Although results in English and mathematics have improved, challenging targets set by the local education authority were not met. The school has identified that a significant number of pupils join the school with little, or no English, other than the normal time for entry. These pupils make good progress in English acquisition, although not enough to enable them to attain the average levels in the national tests. The school is not complacent and is very aware that raising standards in English throughout the school is still a major priority and has drawn up detailed action plans in the latest school improvement plan.
4. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 were below average in reading, well below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, they were well above average in reading, above average in writing and very high in mathematics. This indicates good achievement from a very low starting point. However, few pupils gained the higher Level 3 in both reading and writing and raising attainment remains a priority for the school. Teacher assessment in science showed pupils attainment to be well below average. However, when compared with schools with a similar intake, pupils achieved in line with national expectations, both at Level 2 and the higher Level 3. Unconfirmed results for 2002 show an increase in the number of pupils performing better in mathematics and writing. However, there are still no pupils attaining the higher level in writing and just a few in reading, when compared with that expected nationally. Many pupils were at the early stages of learning English, which has a greater impact on achievement in writing than in reading.
5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 6 in English and science are below average but in line with that expected nationally in mathematics. In Year 2, pupils' attainment in English is still well below average, below average in science and average in mathematics. The satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies and the school's good use of analysis of test results are contributing to pupils' improved performance. However, below

¹ DfES – Department for Education and Skills

² In National Curriculum tests Level 2 is the average grade for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Level 4 is the average grade for pupils at the end of Year 6. Level 5 is above average for 11-year-olds and Level 3 for seven-year-olds.

average standards in English have a significant impact in other subjects. For example in history, there is little evidence in pupils' writing that they have the skills to develop their ideas and draw conclusions from historical knowledge. Pupils' speaking skills often hamper their learning, as in a discussion in religious education as to why the artefacts are important in Hindu worship. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls in all three subjects, although indications from recent local education authority data shows that boys perform slightly better than girls. Pupils, for the majority of whom English is not their first language, achieve well throughout the school and make good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress.

6. When children start in the Nursery, their attainment is well below average in all areas of learning and sometimes lower in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress, because they have good bilingual support, which is necessary as most of them speak English as an additional language. They continue to make good progress and by the end of the Reception year, a few achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas, but most do not. Children who have special educational needs also make good progress in the Foundation Stage when compared with their prior attainment.
7. The school has concentrated on raising standards in the core subjects and overall the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory. However, the breadth and balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory and at times too little time is allocated to subjects. This means that standards in some subjects such as art and design and history for older pupils are unsatisfactory. The statutory curriculum is not in place for information and communication technology, which has an adverse impact on standards. The school has very recently adopted Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national guidance, which has helped to provide the structure for teachers, but schemes of work have not been adapted to suit the needs of the pupils. Many pupils, particularly the older ones, have not had the benefit of these schemes of work and have insufficient skills to be able to attain the levels expected for pupils of a similar age.
8. There are gaps in the acquisition of skills for pupils in some subjects, illustrated in an art and design lesson where Year 3 pupils needed a lot of help and guidance to mix basic colours for their paintings of vegetables. In the foundation subjects, average standards are reached in history in Years 1 and 2 and in design and technology, music, physical education and religious education throughout the school. Standards are below those expected in art and design, in both Year 2 and Year 6 and history in Year 6. No judgement on attainment could be made in geography as too little work was available, but given the uneven provision for pupils to acquire skills, it is likely to be below average throughout the school. French is taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6 to familiarise them with learning French before they move on to secondary school. The standards pupils achieve are low but in line with expectations given the small amount of time allocated. They increase their knowledge of vocabulary in the second year but make little progress in language skills.
9. The school makes good arrangements to ensure that all pupils are included in the full range of activities. This ensures that there is little difference currently in the progress and attainment of boys and girls in the school. The local education authority analyses test results by gender, ethnicity and English as an additional language to ensure pupils are supported appropriately. This shows that there is no significant difference in attainment in the core subjects at the end of Year 6 by pupils from ethnic minorities.
10. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in learning English, whether they enter the Nursery or join the school later. A large proportion of pupils at the school speak English as an additional language and a significant proportion of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Considering these factors pupils achieve well during their time in school, as evident in the National Curriculum tests.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, both in lessons and over longer periods of time. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are making progress in line with the targets set out in their annual reviews. Other pupils who have special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in core subjects. The provisional results of National Curriculum

tests in 2002 show that 80 per cent of all pupils in Year 2, including those with special educational needs, achieved the expected Level 2 in mathematics and 40 per cent in reading and writing. Approximately a third of all pupils in Year 6 with special educational needs attained Level 4 in mathematics but in English and science they did not reach the average level.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy coming to school, are happy to learn and settle quickly into lessons. Pupils respond to challenge, sustain interest and most remain attentive in classes and assemblies. Pupils are well motivated, show a high degree of commitment and remain focused on the tasks they are given. They delight in learning activities like imitating animal behaviour and moving expressively to music. Pupils work effectively both on their own, as when listing their personal qualities in Year 4 and in paired and group activities, for example when conducting a scientific test in Year 6. They take pride in their efforts and are keen to share their pleasure in achievement, such as in assembly work displays. Pupils offer constructive ideas, listen to what others have to say and their contributions to discussions are often thoughtful and imaginative, debating bullying in Year 1 being an example. Parents confirm their children like school and work hard. Pupils' positive attitudes enhance their learning.
13. Children settle quickly into the Nursery and get used to routines. Effective teaching in personal, social and emotional development helps children to have positive attitudes and behave well which contributes well to the good learning and developing independence in the Foundation Stage³. Older children take on responsibility and enjoy showing the younger children the different activities. Milk and fruit time is a pleasant social occasion for the children and teacher in Reception. There is effective reinforcement of good manners which means most of the children spontaneously say please and thank you when offered fruit.
14. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and parents are happy with the standards achieved. Pupils understand school and class rules and, although some have to be prompted, most respond willingly to what is expected of them. The atmosphere within the school is calm, orderly and purposeful and pupils use corridors and cloakrooms responsibly. They respect property such as computers and library books. In lessons and assemblies, some infants can become distracted and fidgety, but most juniors remain engaged and well behaved. Older pupils exercise increasing self-discipline and this benefits their attainment and progress. Although playtimes are boisterous, pupils are not intentionally rough or reckless. Lunch is noisy but friendly and it is an enjoyable social occasion. Pupils are polite and pleasantly inquisitive with visitors, opening doors for them and offering help. During the inspection, there were no signs of abuse, harassment or aggression. There were two temporary exclusions in the last school year, which is a very low figure.
15. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Most pupils are self-assured and have good personal esteem and older pupils organise themselves effectively. Those who lack confidence or are socially insecure benefit from the advice and support they receive from the learning mentors. Although pupils show initiative and diligence when working on their own, for example in topic research, opportunities for independent learning are missed in many lessons. Pupils enjoy responsibility and carry out the duties they are given with enthusiasm and pride. Classroom tasks develop pupils' self-regard, while whole-school tasks enhance their corporate commitment and "make them feel important". Pupils value the part class and school councils play in school life. Discussions of issues like bullying improve pupils' social awareness. Pupils appreciate the purpose of charities, benefit from visits and have a growing sense of citizenship. They noticeably mature as they progress through the school.
16. Relationships in the school are satisfactory. Pupils are treated with respect and they flourish under the consistent and sensitive approach of staff. Pupils trust and have affinity with their teachers and readily confide in them when they are upset or worried. Relationships within peer groups are positive and friendly and those from different racial backgrounds interact comfortably. There are

³ Foundation Stage – this includes the Nursery and Reception – children from three years to the end of Reception

many constructive and harmonious relationships. Pupils listen to what others have to say, understand their feelings and show marked respect for different values and beliefs. Older pupils help the younger ones and pupils are caring and considerate when others are hurt. In lessons, boys and girls co-operate successfully, but in the playground most stay in single gender groups. At lunch, older boys and girls prefer to sit separately. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully integrated into the school community. All relationships are enhanced during visits and extra-curricular activities. Relationships between pupils and with adults in the school are good and behaviour is generally co-operative. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the work of their class and join in readily. In whole class sessions, many answer questions and contribute with confidence. They join in all aspects of school life, take their share of responsibility and join in celebrating awards.

17. Attendance is satisfactory. In the last school year, the rate has fallen and is now in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence in the same year has risen and is above the national average. The main reason for the fall in attendance and rise in unauthorised absence is the failure of some parents to recognise the importance of education and accept their responsibility in ensuring children attend school regularly. Other reasons include an increase in holidays in term time, an infectious illness and a pupil remaining on the school roll after leaving the area. The school has taken action to improve attendance and this is reflected in the latest attendance figures, including those for Nursery and Reception children. Punctuality is satisfactory and lessons start on time. Registration is prompt and efficient, pupils answer politely and there is an orderly start to the daily sessions. Satisfactory punctuality and improved attendance have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Gradual improvements in the quality of teaching have made a satisfactory contribution to the rise in standards in the core subjects, as evident in the above average trend in improvement in the National Curriculum tests since the school was last inspected in June 2000. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features, more in Years 1 and 2 than with older pupils. Around half of the lessons observed were judged to be good and over a third of these were very good. A small proportion were unsatisfactory, these were in Years 3 to 6. High quality teaching was observed throughout the school, including the Foundation Stage and in several subjects, such as English, mathematics, music, physical education and religious education. The overall teaching in most subjects is satisfactory. The school, with the backing of the governors, has ensured that all classes have support from teaching assistants to help pupils in their learning and with behaviour management. This strategy is generally proving successful and helping to keep pupils focused on their lessons and giving many much needed help and support to complete tasks in lessons. The satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, together with other recent developments in literacy and numeracy, has given teachers better expertise in these subjects.
19. Overall teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with good features. There are strengths in the quality of the current teaching (an experienced temporary teacher was in the Nursery) and provision in all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception, but there also a few weaknesses in both classes and this affects learning. Overall, the teachers know and understand the Early Learning Goals and they usually plan the curriculum to promote them. Day-to-day planning in Reception is, however, presently unsatisfactory and still based on the National Curriculum and Desirable Outcomes⁴ rather than the present recommendations. The curriculum for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development in Reception is partly based on the national strategies. There is careful planning both inside and outside for a range of literacy and mathematical activities after the introduction. This works well, particularly at present with only 15 children in Reception and a teacher, a nursery nurse and a special needs assistant working with them, so children receive good support, which is helping them to achieve well. By the end of Reception, a few children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals but most will not.

⁴ Desirable Outcomes were replaced by Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage in September 2000.

However, this still represents good achievement because children start in the Nursery from a very low base.

20. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan aspects of work at different levels for pupils with special educational needs and this enables all pupils to be included in the work of the class. In group work, pupils work with teaching assistants or with dedicated learning support assistants who contribute to pupils' ability to keep abreast with class work. The effectiveness of support varies. Where teachers and support staff co-operate in planning the work and in assessing pupils' progress, pupils make steady gains in learning. For instance, in a Year 2 literacy lesson three pupils found it difficult to concentrate. The teaching assistant worked effectively with the group using phonics to develop reading skills. This helped them to stay on task and make progress. However, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, there were two teaching assistants and a learning mentor working with pupils in a class of 22. While teaching assistants and the learning mentor contributed to the support of targeted pupils, the deployment of support staff was unbalanced for many.
21. The quality of teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. However, there is no specific teaching of English as an additional language. Bilingual assistants give good support to pupils and help them to take part in the lessons. There is no targeted teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language and their needs are not sufficiently identified in lesson planning. Whilst some teachers include key vocabulary in their lessons, there is not enough emphasis overall. Teachers do not all have a good understanding of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. This means that their planning does not take enough account of pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Pupils are supported in lessons but are not specifically taught. This means that they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. An example of this is in reading. Many pupils are able to read the texts expected for their age group, but they have difficulty in understanding and explaining the texts they read.
22. Overall, teachers have satisfactory expertise, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As a result, the majority of basic skills are soundly taught and pupils learn at a satisfactory rate. Although literacy skills are taught satisfactorily in lessons, there are too few occasions for pupils to write at length and use their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as in history. The use of Numeracy skills are limited overall but pupils do know that results can be represented in different ways such as in tables and line graphs in science. However, in information and communication technology it is unsatisfactory because of a lack of attention in teaching skills both within the subject and through other areas of the curriculum.
23. The quality of lesson planning has improved for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and is satisfactory with good features throughout the school. Teachers and support staff work hard to ensure that every pupil can understand and benefit from lessons. Where appropriate, lessons contain a range of tasks, set at different ability levels, so that every pupil can understand. When similar work is set for the class, pupils with special educational needs were helped by their teaching assistant, as in a mathematics lesson, to take part, completing much of the task. However, this is not always the case; there are occasions, such as in science when teaching assistants are not effectively deployed and pupils' work is not sufficiently well matched to their prior attainment. A good feature of some planning is the clear learning intention about what is to be taught in each lesson and this is usually effectively shared with pupils at the beginning and end of the lessons. In less effective lessons teachers do not refer back to the learning objective, which means some pupils are not clear what it is they were supposed to be learning.
24. A satisfactory range of teaching methods is usually employed. When teachers explain things clearly and use effective demonstration, pupils make good gains in their learning. This was evident in a Year 3 art and design lesson, when a clear explanation of the requirements of observational drawing and colour mixing meant that pupils understood what they were to do and made good progress in the lesson. When teachers use effective questioning to focus, check and extend pupils' thinking and maintain a good pace, pupils work hard and make good gains in their learning practice. In numeracy lessons, the lively start to lessons contributes to pupils' enjoyment and

subsequent learning of mathematics. Teachers, particularly in Years 1 and 2, are skilled at managing pupils' behaviour and keeping them focused on their learning, as in a physical education lesson when very good discipline and subject knowledge ensured all pupils stayed on task, achieved well and enjoyed the lesson.

25. The scrutiny of work that pupils had completed previously showed variability in marking and overall it is unsatisfactory. Some marking is marked correct, when there are errors, as in science, or at other times merely a tick which does not help pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning and what they need to do next to improve, as in English. Homework is appropriately set to support pupils' learning and used mainly in English and mathematics, little was seen in other subjects such as science. Some parents had a concern regarding how they could help and support their children completing homework at home. The bilingual learning mentor helps to explain the routines to parents.

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

26. Overall the quality and range of the learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory but the breadth and balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. All the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education, are offered. French is also included in the curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6. However information and communication technology (ICT) is not meeting statutory requirements. Consequently pupils do not reach the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the school and this is a weakness.
27. For most subjects, with the exception of physical education, design and technology and ICT, the school has adopted the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work. However, this guidance has not been adapted to meet the needs of the school. Nor have the current schemes and those in the Foundation Stage been in place long enough to have had an impact on standards. Consequently, some of the key issues from the HMI report have not been sufficiently well addressed and this is unsatisfactory. Appropriate policies are mostly in place but the physical education (PE) policy has yet to be updated to incorporate the requirements for Curriculum 2000. The time allocation for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is low when compared to DfES recommendations. The organisation of the school day is inappropriate and does not provide a suitably balanced curriculum. There are occasions when too long is spent on some subjects and not enough on others.
28. In the Reception class, the curriculum is based on an outdated curriculum and not on the recommended Foundation Stage curriculum. This is a weakness. Planning in the Foundation Stage is not balanced sufficiently well across all areas of learning nor planned as a cohesive unit between Nursery and Reception.
29. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented satisfactorily. Not enough consideration has been given to the possibilities of incorporating other subjects into the literacy times. The use of mathematics and ICT is not sufficiently developed across a range of subjects. Although the school recognises the need to raise standards in literacy, too much time is timetabled for the subject in the majority of classes. For example, in Years 4 and 6, a whole morning is timetabled for literacy without any significant increase in standards. The allocation of time to numeracy is satisfactory although in some classes the amount of time spent is well over and above that recommended. There is an issue over the use of time for Numeracy Plus⁵ when, throughout the week, in Years 1 and 2 but particularly in Year 4, the allocated time is variable. In Year 4 on one day, although timetabled for 15 minutes the actual time spent runs to an hour resulting in two hours numeracy in a morning. In other subjects, such as science in Year 1, some planned sessions are too long and in Year 3 there is an excess of time allocation for PE. The emphasis on English, less so in mathematics, results in insufficient time allocations for geography, history, design and technology and art and design. Consequently, standards are below

⁵ Additional lessons of numeracy, in addition to those planned using the National Numeracy Strategy.

those expected in aspects in these subjects because pupils do not have sufficient time to cover the programmes of study adequately. Standards in French are low. This is because there is a very short allocation of time and overall objectives for the programme have not been organised sufficiently well, in order for pupils to build on the limited skills they acquire.

30. The medium and long-term planning for history, geography, art and design and design and technology is unsatisfactory and is not conducive to helping pupils to develop their skills in a systematic manner. Throughout the school year, these subjects are planned in half-termly blocks in an inconsistent way. As an example, for design and technology, in some years, the time made available during the whole term is devoted to design and technology with the subject not being covered at all in other terms. There is no art and design for pupils in Year 2 during the summer term. Weekly plans generally focus on key objectives although in most subjects the work set for the higher-attaining pupils lacks challenge.
31. Provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Health, sex education, the use and misuse of medicines and drugs are taught as part of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and through the science curriculum. Pupils are provided with accurate information, which promotes positive attitudes to a healthy lifestyle and satisfactory use is made of outside agencies to support pupils.
32. Pupils with special educational needs experience the same curriculum as the rest of their class. In general, this reduces the demand on slower-learning pupils but does not always provide an effective variety of ways to reinforce their learning. Learning aids, for instance in mathematics, are needed to help pupils understand difficult concepts. In English and mathematics, the emphasis on basic skills serves pupils with special educational needs well. On occasion, these pupils are withdrawn from a lesson for additional support in literacy and numeracy. Where pupils regularly miss part of a lesson in another subject this needs to be reviewed. Curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is the same as that for all pupils with little specific intervention programmes provided for them.
33. The aims of the school show a strong commitment to equality of education for all pupils and are fully inclusive. This is reflected well in all areas of school life with the exception that some Year 5 pupils are withdrawn from science lessons for mathematics, resulting in disruption to their learning in science. Pupils have appropriate access to all aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.
34. The school provides a very limited range of extra-curricular activities within school. The only after-school sports club is football, which only boys attend, although girls are not excluded. There is a support club for girls in Years 5 and 6, which deals with personal issues and a breakfast club where pupils receive homework support. This club has played an important role in improving attendance. The school also provides Booster classes for literacy and numeracy and after-school study support. Six weeks prior to Christmas, choir is available to practise carols. The curriculum is enriched through a satisfactory range of visitors, for example musicians and jugglers. There are good termly visits undertaken by each class in relation to their work in school and these broaden and enrich their learning. Year 6 pupils undertake a five-day residential visit to a rural studies centre. During that time, they focus on wildlife and geography, including mapping skills and experience a range of physical activities, including orienteering. Such visits also help to enhance pupils' social and personal skills.
35. There are good links with the local secondary schools and clear programmes have been arranged to support the smooth transition of Year 6 pupils into the next stage of learning. These pupils undertake transition 'bridging units' with pupils in Year 7 and a 'learning mentors programme' is set up with a PSHE focus. There are good links with the Education/Business Partnership in the city, which provides funding for pupil visits and out of hours learning.
36. The overall provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. Acts of collective worship provide some opportunities for pupils to reflect on their experience and that of others but these are not well

developed and pupils do not always respond well. There are missed opportunities in the wider curriculum to promote pupils' spiritual development. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and to wonder at scientific and other marvels of the natural world. Music and art do not make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development. In lessons, teachers tend to ask closed questions, which do not help pupils to develop their ideas. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to ask questions and make connections between aspects of their learning.

37. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Pupils know right from wrong and show respect for people and property. The school has an effective policy for race equality. Pupils show respect for one another and the school is a harmonious community. Adults act as good role models for pupils and this helps them to behave well. Classes have agreed rules for behaviour and each teacher has a system of rewards for good work and behaviour. Pupils enjoy receiving certificates for effort in the achievement assemblies. Pupils are kind and considerate towards one another and work well together in pairs and groups.
38. The school has introduced a system of 'playground friends'. These are chosen by teachers and support staff. These pupils' photographs are displayed in the hall and at playtimes they wear coloured tabards so that other pupils in need of support can easily identify them. This is helpful to pupils who need support and also boosts the self-esteem of the 'playground friends' themselves. The schools' learning mentors give very effective support to pupils in their moral and social development.
39. Cultural development is satisfactory but there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of a range of cultural experiences in music, art and literature. Although the school has a programme of French for older pupils, this is limited to one lesson a week for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and does not enrich pupils' cultural experiences. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained a satisfactory programme of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' cultural experiences. There have been occasional visitors such as a Caribbean poet and a Russian dance group. As part of the programme for religious education, pupils have made visits to different places of worship.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good overall. Staff know pupils very well and pastoral care is given a high priority. Pupils feel safe, nurtured and secure and this impacts favourably on their attitudes to learning. Arrangements covering accidents, illnesses and medicines are very good and sufficient staff have up-to-date first aid qualifications.
41. Child protection procedures are good. The child protection policy gives appropriate advice about action to be taken if child abuse is suspected, but does not state how such abuse might be recognised. The named person for child protection has been trained and is known to staff and links are established with the requisite agencies.
42. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and staff are aware of health and safety matters relating to teaching. Cleanliness within the school is good and hazardous substances are well managed. Emergency lighting is fitted. Risk inspections are regularly carried out and security arrangements are periodically reviewed. Officers from the emergency services talk to pupils about safety and emergency evacuations are practised. The inspection of all appliances and equipment are up to date. There are three health and safety issues. The school has no visitors' book, the boys' lavatories are unhygienic and water leaking through the hall roof creates a hazard and restricts the use of the hall in PE lessons. The school is addressing these issues.
43. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Circle time, during which pupils express themselves freely, is used to develop confidence and self-image, while discussions on topics such as conservation broaden their worldly understanding. Pupils' views are sought in school surveys while the use of class 'worry boxes' allows them to voice their personal concerns. Class and school councils consider important issues like playground marking and equipment.

44. Pupils with personal or social difficulties receive very good support from the learning mentors. However, not all pupils are formally monitored and their achievements and aspirations recorded. To help younger pupils become self-assured and considerate, they are given classroom duties like tidying books and sharpening pencils. Older pupils undertake whole-school tasks, for example as librarians and 'special persons' in assembly, which develop their individual and collective responsibility.
45. The school has worked hard to improve its procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. These are now very good and a strength of the school. The school actively promotes good attendance and pupils' absences and punctuality are carefully checked. First day contact is made with any parents who do not observe the absence procedure and if they continue to ignore it, they are sent a letter reminding them to comply. If appropriate, home visits are made. The breakfast club allows parents to leave their children at school before the morning session begins. The guidelines on extended holidays have recently been reviewed and parents have been informed of the changes through notices and newsletters. Applications for holidays in term time must be approved by the headteacher. Awards are given for good attendance. The school works very closely with the education welfare service. Attendance registers are accurately maintained and meet statutory requirements.
46. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good and the school is continuing to improve them. The draft behaviour policy defines standards and expectations and reinforces the importance of positive behaviour. It includes a balanced range of rewards and sanctions, which are implemented by staff with consistency and common sense. Staff have received behaviour management training. The policy is supplemented by school and class rules, which are displayed prominently. Playground behaviour books are kept and awards are given for good behaviour. Pupils who frequently misbehave are made to sit quietly by themselves. Although the play areas have hidden corners, which are difficult to see, supervision is satisfactory. Wet weather arrangements are in place.
47. The school's procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good and no groups or individuals are unfairly treated or disadvantaged. The equal opportunities and race equality policies are fully inclusive and the draft anti-bullying policy is forthright and clear. Pupils are well aware that any signs of abuse, harassment or aggression will be dealt with firmly.
48. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics and English across the school is good. In science it is satisfactory. The school analyses the results of National Curriculum tests and uses the data to track pupils' progress year by year. Teachers take account of the information in planning class work for groups of differing levels of attainment. They keep detailed records of progress in literacy and numeracy against National Curriculum criteria. However, the detailed records passed on when pupils move up each year are not consistently used and this can result in under-expectation of what pupils can achieve.
49. Assessment is not rigorous enough to track children's personal and academic development in the Foundation Stage. For example, reading records are not kept regularly for children's performance and although the teacher knows the children well it is not helpful when other members of staff work with the children, neither does it identify the next steps in learning. In the last couple of weeks, the temporary teacher has introduced a better timetable for the children and Nursery staff have been carrying out detailed observations of the children's achievement. However, there are few recent entries in the Early Learning Profile for all areas of learning for the older children. This means passing on of accurate records to the Reception class in January could be difficult. Good settling-in information is being collected currently for the new children but it is too early to comment on how effectively the Nursery will use this information.
50. In the foundation subjects of history and geography, teachers use the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes of work. In music, assessment based on QCA guidance has been devised by the music specialist. Teachers assess pupils' learning at the end of units of work against the QCA's expectations of what pupils should achieve. These criteria are expressed in general terms. The school now needs to break these down into detailed measures of progress in

acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills and to express these in language that pupils understand. In this way, pupils can understand what their targets are and what they have to do to improve their work. While marking of pupils' work generally follows the school's policy, it seldom makes it clear to pupils what they have done well and how to improve.

51. In religious education, teachers assess pupils' learning against the criteria in the agreed syllabus. In design and technology, art and design, physical education and French there is currently no regular assessment of progress. The school needs to develop criteria for assessment in all subjects so as to measure subject-specific attainment and ensure that pupils make sufficient progress.
52. The arrangements for meeting the needs of pupils with statements of special educational need meet statutory requirements. In two cases, annual reviews of the pupils' statement have been delayed but targets have been set and progress is monitored. Parents, teachers and teaching assistants, together with outside experts, contribute to individual education plans and to the setting of appropriate targets. The provision for pupils on School Action⁶ and School Action Plus programmes is largely by variation of demand in class work and by some additional support in literacy and numeracy. The effectiveness of this provision needs to be evaluated by teachers and assistants and the latter drawn further into planning effective support. For pupils who speak English as an additional language, fluency in English is assessed according to national guidance. The school takes extra care to assess such pupils who are not making expected progress. The school then makes efforts to arrange for pupils to be assessed in their home language so that arrangements can be made to meet specific learning needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents' views of the school are very good and a notable feature. Attendance at the parents' meeting and response to parent questionnaires were both above average. Opinions expressed at the meeting, through the questionnaires and during the inspection show that parents strongly support the school's provision for their children.
54. Parents say the school is well-led and managed, teaching is good and their children work hard and make good progress. Parents confirm their children enjoy school, they are becoming more responsible and mature and their behaviour is good. Parents further affirm they find it easy to approach staff with questions and problems and they are happy with home/school links and the information they are given on children's progress. Parents are content with the range of school activities offered outside lessons and the amount of homework their children receive. However, they are not always aware of the homework programme or do not understand some requirements. Some do not always feel they are able to support their children's learning fully because of insufficient command of English. Evidence gained during the inspection upheld most but not all these views. Teaching, pupil's progress and behaviour were judged to be satisfactory rather than good.
55. Links with parents are good and the partnership is fully inclusive. The school is working to strengthen parental involvement to enhance pupils' attainment and learning. The reception area is warm and friendly and there is a designated parents' welcome room.
56. The quality of information provided for parents, including that on pupils' progress, is good. All information is translated into appropriate minority languages. Regular notices and newsletters keep parents up to date with school activities and curriculum details. Parents can speak to teachers about their children's work after school, although few do so. Parental workshops such as that on dental health are well attended. There are three parents' evenings each year, which are also well attended. School reports are satisfactory. The reports give a very short commentary on pupils' efforts and achievements by subjects with some general remarks on their attitudes and personal and social development. Unauthorised absences are recorded. Although targets for

⁶ School Action and School Action Plus are stages through which pupils with special educational needs receive targeted support from school provision and outside agencies.

improvement are given, they are not clearly defined. The prospectus imparts useful information and the governors' annual report is well structured. Both meet statutory requirements. Parents know the school's complaint procedure.

57. The impact of parental involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. The school greatly values the part parents play in pupils' education and encourages their interest in all aspects of school life. The response is mixed. This is due in part to parents not understanding sufficient English to give their children as much support as they would wish. Family literacy days to improve their command of English are valuable and popular. Some parents, especially those of younger pupils, visit the weekly toy library to borrow learning games to help their children. However, very few parents come into school for assemblies or to assist in classes. Many parents provide little help with homework and home-school diaries are not kept. A significant number of parents fail to conform to their undertaking in the home-school agreement about good attendance and punctuality. Co-operation with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are involved in the drawing up of individual education plans and in annual reviews of progress. There is good liaison with parents over ongoing progress.
58. The school has no parent-teacher association, but an informal parent group arranges fund raising events. The most important of these is the annual International Evening, which is very well attended. Parents come in traditional dress and provide a variety of foods and entertainment. The money raised is used to improve school resources.
59. Although many parents support and enrich their children's education within the constraints imposed by language, some do not fully recognise the importance of their role in reinforcing the school's work. They rely heavily on school staff and contribute little themselves either to the learning process or the school community. Pupils would benefit both in academic performance and personal development by greater parental involvement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. Mowlem Primary School is well led and managed. After a period of temporary leadership, the school has a newly appointed headteacher, ably supported by an efficient, conscientious acting deputy headteacher. The acting headteacher, now the newly appointed head, together with the acting deputy headteacher have strongly contributed towards the smooth running of the school through a time of uncertainty and ensured that there have been satisfactory improvements. The headteacher has a clear vision and has firmly set the direction for the work of the school. She is well aware about what the school needs to do next to improve still further; this is shared effectively with the staff and governors through a clear management calendar, which sets out key tasks that need to be implemented. In her bid to include and inform all the staff and governors of the direction of the school, a school conference was held, which reviewed the aims of the school and evaluated and set targets for the new school improvement plan. There is a strong commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed as staff and governors work effectively together.
61. The headteacher is generating a strong team spirit amongst the staff. The staff fully support each other, with the acting deputy headteacher carrying out a pastoral role amongst them. There is consistency in approach that ensures that the vast majority of the school's fundamental aims and values are reflected in everything they do. The school aims to meet the needs of all pupils by developing their moral values, respect for other beliefs, cultures and races in a friendly and supportive environment, whilst working in partnership with parents and carers. The school is successful in these aims. However, it is less successful in providing pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. The dedication and hard work of everyone associated with the school creates a purposeful, secure environment. Staff are sensitive to the personal circumstances and characteristics of each pupil. This is a school that is particularly caring, has good racial awareness and ensures all individuals are valued and respected. This makes the school a positive, multicultural establishment where all pupils and staff are valued and respected making it a harmonious community.

62. Delegation to staff of management responsibilities has continued to develop. Key responsibilities are held by the senior management team and they monitor teaching and learning with the assistance of the local education authority. Changes in staff have meant that several subjects have very new co-ordinators, for example, in history, geography, art and design and mathematics but they are enthusiastic and have already looked at planning and resources and devised an action plan for their subjects. New members of staff and teachers who have finished their first year in teaching are taking on responsibilities. These strategies are helping to raise the quality of teaching and subsequently standards. However, the management and curriculum load the headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher carry is still too great. The headteacher and senior management team, together with the local education authority, have temporarily taken over the responsibility for the Foundation Stage while management, responsibilities and provision are being reviewed in order to ensure that the Nursery and Reception classes work as a cohesive unit.
63. The leadership of the co-ordinator for special educational needs in ensuring that pupils' needs are recognised and met is good. However, this responsibility falls on the acting deputy headteacher who already has a substantial management and class teaching commitment. This limits her ability to work closely with teachers and teaching assistants and to some extent curtails developmental work on improving provision. She is also the co-ordinator for English as an additional language but is not able to devote as much time to supporting these pupils as is needed.
64. The governing body has continued to develop its role since the previous inspection. It has a better strategic role through its involvement in the school improvement plan and deficit budget plan. It recently established curriculum links with co-ordinators to enable governors to find out more about different subjects but it is too early to have had a significant impact on the work of the governors. Their monitoring and evaluating role of the curriculum does not ensure that the school meets curriculum requirements at present. Statutory requirements are not met in the implementation of the curriculum for information and communication technology. The governors fully support the headteacher in her vision for the school. They have a satisfactory awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are aware that raising standards is still the most crucial area of the school's work. They are becoming better informed about the performance of pupils' in National Curriculum tests, through the good analysis of data from the local education authority.
65. The school's strategy for performance management is appropriate and contributes satisfactorily to pupil's learning. Teachers' performance is reviewed through a process of direct lesson observation, which is linked to the school improvement plan. The induction procedures for newly qualified staff and the effectiveness of their training provision are good. The headteacher is responsible for the induction and training of new teachers and the acting deputy of the support staff. A comprehensive induction programme is drawn up including external courses, in-school discussions, monitoring and support from an appointed mentor. The mentor for newly qualified teachers is an experienced teacher with appropriate communication skills, while the mentor for new support staff is the class teacher. New staff are acquainted with the school's ethos and values and introduced to its routines and working practices.
66. Financial planning is unsatisfactory. The school has a large financial deficit, which restricts its support of educational priorities, such as purchasing more computers. A plan has been agreed with the local authority to clear the deficit within the next three years. Already the school has worked to clear some of the deficit. Local education authority monitoring of the school budget to meet the agreed plan has been arranged. The last external audit of three years ago identified many financial irregularities and recommended remedial actions. Following that audit, the school employed a firm of financial consultants to oversee improvements. A very good finance manual is now in place and financial procedures and practices have been reviewed and strengthened. Responsibilities for financial management are defined and understood. Most, but not all, the recommendations from the audit have been addressed. Another external audit is due. The school fund is well managed. Aspects of school administration other than finance are good. Procedures are sensibly organised, efficient and unobtrusive, allowing teachers and support staff to focus fully on their teaching and pastoral duties.

67. The school improvement plan is good, with improved consultation taking place between the headteacher, senior management team, staff and governors. It provides clear targets and responsibilities, gives outline costs and indicates success criteria and improvements in pupils' learning. The plan addresses school priorities for the current year, which makes references to subsequent years. The governing body plays some part in managing and monitoring budget expenditure.
68. The effective use by the school of its specific grant is satisfactory. The fund for ethnic minorities is fully spent, the great majority being on staff with the balance on resources to ensure they are satisfactory. Teaching and teaching assistants are used primarily to support pupils rather than teach them. This impacts favourably on pupils' attitudes and relationships and by supporting them with their work. The fund for pupils with statements of special educational needs is properly and fully spent helping pupils to be fully integrated in all aspects of school life. Other pupils, with special educational needs, benefit by teaching assistants supporting them within smaller groups during lessons.
69. The school's use of new technology is satisfactory. The school office has several up-to-date computer software packages available, but it awaits training in some and prefers not to use others, such as that for attendance. The office computer is used for both general and financial administration. It is not yet linked to the local education authority.
70. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. The principles are well understood by the headteacher and guidelines are being developed. Before decisions are taken, cost comparisons are made and local schools consulted through the headteachers' council. The school has incorporated value for money criteria into spending decisions and, within its delegated powers, contract quotations are required before purchasing, for example in premise improvements.
71. The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources in the school is satisfactory overall. The matching of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school has sufficient full-time teachers for all classes and they are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and teach it satisfactorily. One temporary teacher is on a graduate-training programme. In the last two years, the turnover of teaching staff has been high, but with the appointment of the headteacher and other senior staff there is now greater stability. This is already having a favourable impact on pupils' learning. The pupil to teacher ratio and average class sizes are similar to the national average.
72. The match of support staff to the needs of the National Curriculum is also satisfactory and they have qualifications and experience suitable to their appointments. All support staff are closely involved either with individual pupils or in working with designated groups under the direction of the class teacher. Their roles and responsibilities generally complement those of the teachers they support. All classes have teaching assistants, those in the Foundation Stage and in the infant classes being bilingual. Bilingual assistants give good support to pupils and help them to take part in school activities. In junior classes, teaching assistants oversee some class projects, Year 6 mathematics being an instance. There is not, at present, a dedicated teacher of English as an additional language. The school has, instead, chosen to use the funding from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant to employ teaching assistants. Non-teaching staff are caring and industrious and act as a good link between the school and local community. The site premises manager contributes effectively to extra-curricular activities and runs the school football club.
73. The adequacy of accommodation is good and assists the satisfactory delivery of the curriculum. The premises consist of a modern main building and a separate older annex used by the breakfast club and for some lessons such as music. Playground space includes hard-surfaced free play and games areas, a grassed quiet area and a secure wild life garden. The interior of the main building is airy, bright and cheerful and it has a number of very good features. Offices are well situated and resource and storage space is good. The school has a separate computer suite and a newly sited library and a well-appointed medical room and parents' welcome room. The boys' lavatories and hall roof require attention. Classrooms and corridors are colourful and interesting and there is a satisfactory range of displays, models and paintings celebrating pupils' work. Learning resources

are satisfactory and used effectively to support the curriculum. Resources for most subjects are adequate, some are good and those for religious education are very good.

74. The budget received for each pupil is considerably higher than average, resources are satisfactorily used now and overall the school provides sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

(i) Raise standards in English by:

- increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking;
- ensuring pupils have sufficient experience of writing in different forms, at length, including independent, creative writing;
- providing opportunities for pupils to plan, draft, edit and refine their writing;
- emphasising the importance of correct spelling, taking greater care of handwriting, including writing in subjects other than English;
- developing the use of literacy skills across the curriculum;
- increasing the range of books suitable for older and higher attaining pupils; and
- increasing opportunities for pupils to extend their research skills by using reference books, CD Roms and the Internet.

(Paragraphs: 3, 5, 22, 29, 87 – 94, 110, 118, 127, 129 and 150)

(ii) Improve the provision made for ICT by:

- ensuring that all elements of the ICT curriculum is fully implemented;
- ensuring pupils' skills are taught in a progressive manner;
- planning how pupils' ICT skills can be developed through work in other subjects;
- developing assessment procedures to track pupils' progress more effectively;
- ensuring teachers have sufficient training opportunities to use ICT more effectively and with confidence; and
- taking steps to ensure that maximum use is made of ICT equipment.

(Paragraphs: 7, 22, 29, 64, 114, 118, 123, 130 – 132, 134 and 135)

(iii) Ensure that the curriculum is balanced and all aspects of the foundation subjects are covered by:

- reviewing the overall time allocation for all foundation subjects;
- ensuring the delivery of the curriculum is balanced in all subjects; and
- ensuring all aspects and programmes of study are planned systematically to enable pupils to learn skills and knowledge in a progressive manner.

(Paragraphs: 2, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 64, 107, 117, 120, 1223, 128, 139 and 152)

(iv) Review the management and provision in the Foundation Stage by:

- reviewing the management role of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator in order to develop a cohesive team between the Nursery and Reception classes to ensure continuity of teaching and learning;
- reviewing curriculum planning so that it is based on all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum for both indoor and outdoor activities; and
- developing assessment and recording systems to include regular observations of children's achievements, in order to chart progress and determine the next steps in learning.

(Paragraphs: 19, 38, 49 and 62)

(v) Ensure that the strategic financial planning is strictly adhered to in order that the deficit budget plan is effective and the deficit is eliminated; ensure that all outstanding recommendations in the Audit Report are addressed.

(Paragraph 66)

In addition, these minor issues should be addressed:

- Develop systematic assessment systems in science and the foundation subjects in order to:
 - monitor pupils' progress over time; and
 - ensure work is matched more accurately to pupils' prior attainment.

(Paragraphs: 49, 51, 95, 120, 136 and 149)

- Ensure that all teachers are consistent in their marking of pupils' work to help pupils know what it is they need to do to improve their work in order for them to have more accurate knowledge of their own learning.

(Paragraphs: 50, 96, 114 and 115)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	7	16	19	4	0	0
Percentage	0	15	35	41	9	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 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)	24	181
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	119

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	39

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	185

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	17	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	13	12	15
	Total	18	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (83)	74 (93)	91 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	6	5
	Girls	12	15	14
	Total	17	21	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (90)	91 (93)	83 (76)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	10	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	7	10
	Girls	5	6	7
	Total	10	13	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (73)	62 (88)	81 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	8	10
	Girls	6	7	7
	Total	11	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (65)	71 (69)	81 (81)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	18	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	141	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	1	0
Black or Black British – African	8	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	1
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240.5

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	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	861,858
Total expenditure	855,805
Expenditure per pupil	4,036.82
Balance brought forward from previous year	-92,129
Balance carried forward to next year	-103,955

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	183
Number of questionnaires returned	83

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	87	11	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	33	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	39	2	0	1
The teaching is good.	65	30	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	36	4	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	24	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	65	30	1	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	54	31	7	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	30	2	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	25	8	0	7

Some of the totals may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.

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

75. The school admits children into the Nursery and Reception classes twice a year, in September and January. Few have had the benefits of pre-school education beforehand. Most children transfer from the Nursery into Reception. Older children attend the Nursery full time in readiness for entry to the Reception class, thus ensuring a smooth transition. A very high percentage of children who enter the Foundation Stage speak English as an additional language and some are not proficient in their own languages. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment is well below average and much lower than is expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional skills. Provision and teaching are satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage with good features. This helps most children make good progress in all areas of learning in the Nursery and, by the time they enter into the Reception class, standards have improved, but are still well below average in communication, language and literacy, and below average in other areas of learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, a few have attained the Early Learning Goals and are well prepared to start Year 1 work but the vast majority of children are not.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority in the Foundation Stage and is taught effectively. Children make good progress from a very low starting point and by the end of the Foundation Stage many will achieve the Early Learning Goals. In both the Nursery and Reception, adults encourage the children to be independent and make choices about their activities. There is a good balance between directed activities and free choice. Good opportunities exist for the children to play together, for example in the role-play areas in Reception and the outside area in the Nursery. Reception children worked together well to 'paint' the fence outside, using the resources in the class decorators' and painters' shop. One child very sensibly got water from the classroom and several children co-operated happily and concentrated on the activity for a considerable time. Children are aware how many can play in each area and negotiate if there are too many. For example, when a third child wanted to join in the computer activity in the Reception, the situation was resolved as one child decided to move to another area. The management of children is firm but gentle and effective because staff have high expectations of the children. They respond positively to instructions, are keen and eager to take part and listen well, whether it is a music lesson in the hall for Reception children or a carpet / story session for Nursery children. The bilingual assistants make a good contribution to the children's learning as they interpret if necessary and often share the reading of the story. This ensures all the children fully understand what is required of them.

Communication, language and literacy

77. On entry to school, children's communication, language and literacy skills are generally low with little higher attainment. This is because over 80 per cent of the children who attend the Nursery speak English as an additional language and are at the early stages of English language acquisition. Adults in both the Nursery and Reception provide good opportunities for speaking and listening and for children to communicate their ideas in writing and in imaginative role-play situations; this helps most of them to make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was effective in the Nursery and helping children to learn. There was a particularly good focus on communicating and listening to one another as the children responded to the 'hello' song. Children are beginning to understand that print conveys meaning, where the title is and recall familiar stories in sequence. They enjoy sharing books with the teacher on the carpet. All the children are able to join in the lesson because the nursery nurse works well with the teacher, translating the text page by page. Storytelling is made fun and the children enthusiastically join in with the actions and sounds. Older children are encouraged to try their own writing in little books, which they read back using appropriate book language.

78. Teaching in Reception was good during the lessons observed. The organisation for the Literacy Hour is new and working well and helping children learn effectively. The children listen carefully during the introduction and then sensibly choose activities from a good range both inside and outside of the classroom, while the teacher and support staff work with small groups of children. During the introduction to the lesson, they are encouraged to speak to their classmates as they tell each other what they saw at the painters' and decorators' shop on a recent visit. The bilingual nursery nurse effectively supports children in their responses. There is good reinforcement of non-fiction writing and recalling information as the teacher and children share the book made about their visit. Children are encouraged to retell the events in their own writing, which is a mixture of letters and symbols and they are aware that print carries meaning. Children spontaneously write lists on the white board in the 'decorators' shop'. When reading a known book with the teacher, higher attaining children recognise the title, know the direction that print is read and try hard to read simple text. Good attention to looking at initial sounds helps the children to 'read'. A few children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in reading by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Mathematical development

79. When children enter the Nursery, their attainment in mathematics is well below average. The quality of teaching of mathematics and the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language is good. There are lots of opportunities for learning to count, order numbers and size and recognise shape and colour through a good range of creative and mathematical activities. Children make good progress and by the end of Reception a few are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals, but most will still be working at levels below those expected for children of a similar age. In the Nursery, counting and recognising shapes is often integral to other areas of learning. Children learn about numbers in a range of independent activities, for example two children were observed threading beads and making a repeating pattern. During carpet sessions, children enjoy joining in with number songs and rhythms and are encouraged by the teacher to look carefully at pictures in a book and join in and count what they can see. Children respond well and learn because teaching is made fun.
80. Reception children are developing an understanding of shape, size and number through a good range of practical tasks both within the classroom and outside. With good bilingual support and an emphasis on mathematical vocabulary, children learn to recognise the properties of a square and rectangle and the similarities and differences between them. Teaching on the carpet is lively and during the inspection, this kept children focused and they quickly learnt to match the correct size bowl, spoon and chair to each of the 'Three Bears'. Good promotion of mathematical language meant some children worked out the appropriate terms for each of the bears and included 'middle sized' for mummy bear. Children joined in reciting numbers. With good support from the bilingual assistants, they recited numbers to ten and beyond, many of them securely. Mathematics is skilfully extended into other activities, for example in the role-play area; when the teacher asked the children 'How much is the paintbrush?' they responded with appropriate amounts such as "50 pence".

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Provision and teaching for children to develop aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world around them is satisfactory overall, with good provision in ICT. From a very low starting point children make good progress and a few are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals but most will not. Children learn about their own and others' beliefs and values through religious education in Reception, when they learn about different festivals in Britain and from other countries. For example, they discussed harvest festival and took part in the school assembly. To ensure children have an understanding of their locality, Reception children were taken for a visit to the local painters' and decorators'. This helped them understand the purpose of shops as well, when they set up their own shop in the classroom with wallpaper, paints and brushes. Children are learning about the recent past as they described the visit to each other and their teacher. This is helping them to develop a sense of time passing. Learning to explore and investigate is made fun as

children start to acquire early scientific concepts, as when they used torches to make patterns in a dark area.

82. Good progress is made in ICT and attainment is likely to be in line with what is expected for many children by the end of Reception. This is because teachers give children good opportunities to use computers and tape recorders independently as well as teaching ICT skills. In the Nursery, children know how to switch the tape recorder on and off, adjust the volume and rewind a tape. Many Reception children know how to operate the computer and use the mouse with confidence and dexterity when they match the correct sized bowl and spoon for each of the 'Three Bears' on the screen.

Physical development

83. The quality of teaching in physical development is satisfactory overall, with some good features because the outside areas are used to promote physical development. Most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in physical development by the end of the Foundation Stage. In the Nursery, children tend to choose their own activities but lack of regular recording of pupils' skills in the past does not give staff the knowledge of the next steps in learning. However, they are learning to climb, jump, run and steer vehicles with increasing precision as they play co-operatively and exercise outside with their classmates. Indoors, children have good control and move with pleasure and confidence in the soft play area. Good opportunities were observed during the inspection for children to develop fine motor control as they threaded beads and carefully transferred pasta with a spoon and fork into a bowl.
84. In the hall, Reception children moved to Mexican music, with most following the teachers' instructions appropriately. They behaved well and clapped to the rhythm of the music as they turned in different ways, although a few got confused about the direction to turn. Instructions are repeated in Sylheti, which helps children to respond appropriately. There is a good balance of outside activities that are guided by the staff and those that children choose. For example, when children practised their throwing and catching skills with the nursery nurse this helped them improve their skills; also some children carefully built a complex structure with bricks. Children handle scissors, glue, pencils and brushes with increasing competence and their handwriting, cutting and sticking skills develop well.

Creative development

85. Provision and teaching in creative development is good overall, particularly when a specialist music teacher works with the Reception children. As a result, all children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and the majority are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. Children learn about colour, texture and pattern in pictures, for example when Nursery children carefully put on paint with cotton wool sticks to make a pattern and Reception children learn to experiment and mix colours. However, there was very little evidence of three-dimensional work on display or models having been made.
86. Opportunities for role-play are particularly good in the Reception and successfully taken into the outside environment. Reception children enjoyed working with the teacher painting the fence and going to buy extra equipment from the painters and decorators shop. Good intervention by the teacher helped to develop children's speaking and listening skills as well as their imagination. Children enjoyed singing and joining in with action songs during carpet sessions in the Nursery, which enabled all to be involved fully. Reception children responded and behaved very well in their music lesson. The teacher very skilfully included all children in the activities and through a mixture of demonstration and practice, children learnt to hold and play a variety of instruments during the lesson. Children had lots of fun but instantly responded to instructions and were not even tempted to play the instruments until they were given the signal to do so.

ENGLISH

87. Standards in English in the work seen are well below what is expected for pupils in Year 2 and below average for pupils in Year 6. Baseline assessment shows that many children enter the Nursery with low levels of attainment in communication and literacy and a very high number come from homes where English is not spoken. Despite good achievement, many still have well below average attainment, when they enter compulsory education. Given their attainment on entry, pupils achieve well as they move through the school. However, pupils' attainment in writing is well below average throughout the school and this has a negative effect on their progress in other subjects.
88. At the time of the last inspection, standards in English were just below those found nationally. This is still the case. Standards in English are improving slowly, though fewer pupils in Year 2 are reaching the higher Level 3 in reading and writing. This is also the case for pupils in Year 6 attaining the higher Level 5 in English. Unconfirmed results for the 2002 National Curriculum tests show that standards have risen in both Years 2 and 6. Considering that 20 per cent of these pupils had special educational needs and that around 80 per cent had English as an additional language, these results show how well pupils are achieving during their time in school.
89. When pupils start school, their confidence in speaking and listening is well below average. Many of the pupils speak English as an additional language. In lessons and in assemblies, most pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other but many lack confidence in expressing their ideas. Many need a lot of encouragement to speak and tend to offer one-word answers. Several younger pupils rely on nods or gestures to make their needs known. In some lessons teachers provide specific opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher asked pupils to work in pairs to discuss their ideas about the points of view of different characters in 'Macbeth'. In Year 1, the teacher asks questions of specific pupils to ensure that they take part. The teacher and teaching assistant encourage pupils to speak in sentences when they answer questions. Over time, pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and in Year 6 their attainment is in line with national expectations.
90. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 in reading is well below average. Many pupils can only recognise a few words and they do not have a secure knowledge of letter sounds. This means that they do not have good strategies for working out unfamiliar words and many wait passively for help. They do not use the pictures or context to work out the meaning. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher focused on this and helped pupils to use their knowledge of sounds in their spellings. Pupils do take books home to read but several parents say that they are not confident in helping their children read in English. The school has previously run family literacy sessions and these have been very popular. They are due to start again once the improvements to the building have been approved. The higher attaining pupils talked about the stories they enjoy, but do not know about a good range of books. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and are able to sequence stories correctly. Few pupils are confident or enthusiastic readers.
91. The overall attainment of pupils in Year 6 in reading is below average. Many lower attaining pupils are still hesitant and do not have a good range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar texts. Few pupils said that they enjoy reading. Only one of the Year 6 pupils in the reading sample talked about favourite books. The pupils do not know about a wide range of books and authors. The range of books available in the classroom is very limited. It includes very few examples of challenging texts at the appropriate level for Year 6. The books chosen by the pupils were well within their capabilities and at an interest level more appropriate to younger pupils. This means that pupils are not being helped to develop the reading skills that would help them attain higher levels. They do not use texts to gain information about characters or plot or to predict what might happen next in the story. Older pupils are developing their reference skills and some are confident users of dictionaries and reference books. However, they do not use these regularly for independent study. Some older pupils are able to read quite difficult words but without an understanding of the text. Whilst several pupils are competent readers and can cope with most texts in the curriculum, they do not demonstrate a critical appreciation of a range of books. Their response to the texts they read is limited. Their difficulties in reading have a negative impact on their progress in other subjects, for example, in history where pupils are expected to find information from a range of sources.

92. Standards in writing are very low throughout the school. The school recognises this and improving writing is a high priority in the school improvement plan. The youngest pupils do not show good knowledge of sounds and this is reflected in their written work. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were being taught to use sounds systematically in their spellings. The Year 2 teacher also focused on the teaching of spelling strategies. As yet, pupils are not confident in using these and many are inclined to wait for help rather than trying to spell words for themselves. By Year 2, pupils are able to generate some good ideas but lack the skills to record these effectively. Some pupils are still writing strings of letters rather than words and sentences. Their handwriting and presentation skills are weak.
93. The writing of older pupils gives cause for concern. Spelling is a major weakness and has not been addressed over time. Pupils do not have a good range of strategies for spelling and their written work shows that they do not have a good understanding of sounds or a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils' written work covers the range of writing expected by the National Literacy Strategy but there is little evidence that pupils work with understanding and they do not transfer the skills they learn to their independent writing. In one sample of Year 6 work, there is evidence that the teacher is helping pupils to evaluate their work and try to improve it. This was also observed in the lesson. Pupils each have an editing key, which helps them to check their writing for specific features. They are encouraged to use a range of adjectives; to write complex sentences and to check their grammar and punctuation. These strategies are helping pupils to improve their written work but as yet have not had enough impact. In Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils are given some opportunities to write at length but are not using the drafting process to edit and improve their work.
94. Throughout the school, pupils do not write fluently for a range of purposes or audiences. In several lessons, pupils showed good understanding of the learning objectives but they lacked the skills to record their ideas effectively. Their written work is let down by poor spelling and handwriting skills and they find difficulty in expressing their ideas. Pupils do not have the writing skills they need to attain the levels expected for their age. This affects their work in other curriculum subjects. Pupils regularly practise forming letters correctly but most have not developed a fluent personal style. Teachers do not expect good standards of handwriting and presentation in subjects other than English.
95. Teaching in English is satisfactory overall, though examples of good and very good teaching were observed. There was also one unsatisfactory lesson. The best teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 6. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and implement it effectively. However, in some lessons teachers do not take sufficient account of the learning needs of pupils and of their previous attainment.
96. Teachers explain to pupils at the beginning of lessons what they are going to be learning. In the more effective lessons, this is done well and teachers regularly refer to the objectives during the lesson. Not all teachers provide different work for pupils with different learning needs. In the less effective lessons, teachers tend to plan the lesson around what the pupils will do rather than on what they will learn. At the end of lessons, teachers do not all refer back to the learning objective, which means that some pupils are not clear about the focus of the lesson. The more successful teachers have good subject knowledge and use time and resources well. They make good use of questions to check pupils' understanding. The school has a code for marking pupils' written work. This is not used consistently and, too often, marking does not give pupils guidance as to how to improve their work. Where teaching is less effective, the tasks are not well matched to the learning objective, which results in pupils becoming confused.
97. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans and in most lessons are well supported by effective teaching assistants. Despite the support they receive, these pupils' literacy skills are well below average and although they work hard, learning is a struggle for them.
98. Management of English is good. The subject has been led by the headteacher before her promotion and she is still leading the development of English until a new co-ordinator is appointed. She has a clear action plan, which identifies necessary improvements. She carries out surveys of pupils' work each term and has a programme for monitoring teaching.

99. The school is now analysing pupils' results in English tests by gender and ethnicity. There is a new computer program for recording pupils' results and tracking their progress over time. Staff have yet to receive training in using this, so it is not yet an effective tool for improvement. However, the school uses data provided by the local education authority to analyse progress and set targets for groups and individuals. Staff are working together to produce a portfolio of writing so that teachers in each year group have appropriate expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve. Although pupils' attainment in English is still below average, standards are beginning to rise and improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

100. Standards in mathematics are in line with the national average across the school. The provisional results of National Curriculum tests in 2002, for pupils in Years 2 and Year 6, show that standards are in line with national averages and have risen since 2001. Average standards have been maintained since the last inspection and show a rising trend. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the school's good use of analysis of test results are contributing to this performance. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The majority of pupils enter compulsory school with mathematical skills, which are below those expected for pupils of this age. Most pupils, for the majority of whom English is not their first language, achieve well and are making good progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall, although approximately a third made good progress and attained Level 4 in mathematics in the 2002 National Curriculum tests.
101. By the beginning of Year 2 pupils calculate number bonds to ten confidently and use mathematical terms such as "add", "minus" and "equals". Most pupils understand place value with two digit numbers and write numbers to 100. They describe two-dimensional shapes by features such as corners and long and short sides and name correctly three-dimensional shapes such as cones, cubes and spheres. They recognise sequences of shapes to form patterns and, with their teacher's guidance, carry out simple investigations. Higher-attaining pupils carry out tasks with greater rapidity and accuracy but all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve some success.
102. By the beginning of Year 6, most pupils divide by 10, 100 and 1000 and recognise that multiplication and division are inverse operations. They multiply three-digit by two-digit numbers in writing and use a variety of mental calculations to solve number problems. They are learning to estimate the addition of three-digit numbers and to check their results with a calculator. Higher attaining pupils recognise negative numbers although they are not secure in adding them. Pupils use mathematical terms correctly and present their work in an orderly way. They explain clearly their methods of working and are developing a sound approach to investigation. There is less evidence of work on shape and measures. In Year 5, pupils show a developing understanding of how to present data on a graph and to interpret the results. There is little evidence of numeracy in other subjects although ICT is used to present information in different forms, such as bar graphs, pictograms and pie charts. Overall, lower-attaining pupils are making sound progress in number. On occasion, higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Year 1 and Year 2 and satisfactory, with good features, in Years 3 to 6. All teachers implement the Numeracy Strategy effectively and pupils respond well to the balance between teaching and individual practice. They consolidate learning well when whole-class reviews involve them in identifying and demonstrating what they have learned. The lively start to lessons, when pupils carry out mental calculations, sets the pace and contributes to pupils' enjoyment of mathematics.
104. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils carried out an investigation of the number of sides of patterns using five squares. The lesson was well prepared with appropriate resources. The teacher pitched her explanation well so that all pupils followed and she modelled the investigation carefully. As a result, almost all pupils drew shapes, cut out and pasted them neatly, counted the number of sides and recorded these methodically. Pupils with special educational needs were helped by their

teaching assistant to take part in the lesson, completing much of the task. By the end of the lesson, pupils were ready to draw conclusions from their findings. They had enjoyed their work and made good progress in understanding.

105. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils made similarly good progress as a result of well-prepared teaching and good management of the key learning. Pupils learned to estimate the addition of three-digit numbers and to check results on calculators. Pupils concentrated hard and successfully carried out the operations. They recorded their work systematically and were well practised in explaining their methods and reasoning. This helped them to consolidate what they had practised.
106. The school analyses the results of national tests in detail and this information is used to group pupils according to their level of need within each class. In group work, teachers offer some variety of challenge in the level of tasks set for different groups. In general, this works better for lower-attaining pupils. Higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their understanding. Teachers track pupils' ongoing progress through end-of-unit tests. More detailed use of such assessment would help teachers to target work more effectively and raise standards.
107. The school provides a daily mathematics lesson for all pupils. Additional time is allocated for 'Numeracy Plus' to extend or support pupils. The distribution of this time across classes is uneven and its use is left to individual teachers. This sometimes results in an over-emphasis on mathematics. For instance, a Year 4 class had an hour's mathematics lesson in the first session with a further hour of mathematics at the end of the morning.
108. The co-ordinator for mathematics joined the school this term. She has plans to monitor the work of all teachers and to moderate pupils' work so as to ensure that they are working at appropriate levels. She is aware of the need to rebalance the curriculum in mathematics.

SCIENCE

109. Pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 are achieving a standard that is below national expectations. Standards are overall below average because few pupils reach the higher levels in science. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, there was a slight improvement in results over those achieved in 2001 because a number of pupils achieved the higher levels. In 2001, no pupil achieved Level 5, although a good proportion of pupils reached the average level. The 2002 teacher assessments of attainment for Year 2 pupils also indicated that standards are likely to be below national expectations. The pattern of attainment for these pupils follows that for Year 6, except that in 2001 a few pupils in Year 2 obtained the higher levels whereas in 2002 a greater number achieved this higher level. Data for 2002 is not yet available to compare attainment with national standards. Since 1998, standards throughout the school have been generally rising despite a drop in standards in science in 2001.
110. From a very low starting point on entry to school, most pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress. This is because the work is not always sufficiently adapted for their needs and support from teaching assistants is not always effectively used. Higher-attaining pupils make sound progress throughout the school. In the factual aspects of the subject their responses are in greater depth due to their higher level of writing skills but their investigative and experimental work is not at a significantly higher level than other pupils of the same age. The low level of writing skills throughout the school however, has a negative effect on attainment.
111. Year 2 pupils know that animals, including humans, have babies and that they grow into adults and all move in different ways. They have an awareness of the variety of different food groups, the importance of sensible eating and that the incorrect use of medicines can be harmful. They understand the need for exercise to stay fit and healthy and know that the heart beats faster during physical activity.
112. In Years 3 to 6 pupils begin to develop their investigative skills and scientific knowledge and make good progress. By the end of Year 6, most pupils know, with teacher support, how to approach a

scientific investigation, to predict and carry out a fair test. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to understand that all factors need to be kept the same, apart from one, when comparing the rate at which different solids dissolve. These pupils also show a good understanding of a change of state such as water into a vapour by evaporation. Most pupils in Year 6 understand the effect of heat on materials, how these materials change and whether these changes are reversible or irreversible. They know that results can be represented in different ways such as in tables and line graphs.

113. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, teachers are particularly good at asking open-ended and probing questions such as how a variety of animals move. These encourage pupils to think hard and generate well thoughtout answers. Teachers insist on complete sentences in their responses and this enables pupils to reinforce and enhance their literacy skills. In Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, relationships between pupils and teachers are mostly good and class control is secure. Pupils work well together in groups sharing ideas. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were asked to identify how they would design and carry out an investigation to test how sugar dissolves in water. This led to valuable group discussion and good use of open-ended questioning by the teacher, which helped move pupils' understanding of the scientific method forward.
114. Inspection evidence indicates that throughout the school, some teachers' knowledge in the subject is insecure with factual work incorrectly marked. There is an imbalance between investigations, factual learning and recording. Too much time and reliance is placed on 'writing-up' with too few opportunities for 'hands-on' experience and involvement in a variety of activities that would hold pupils' interest. As an example in a lesson with older pupils, insufficient resources were provided for the size of the group, which resulted in many pupils not being fully involved, or 'having a turn'. This limits the depth and amount of curriculum coverage offered to pupils, and, ultimately attainment. At times, lesson pace is slow and this was noted at the last inspection. In most lessons pupils all carry out the same teacher-directed work, which has often not been sufficiently adapted to meet the varying abilities of the pupils. Consequently, the higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and they do not have the opportunity to design and carry out open-ended investigations by themselves. Computers are not sufficiently used to obtain information or to record results in a variety of ways. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to the Science and the Natural History Museums.
115. Since the last inspection, marking remains inconsistent and often irregular. At its best, it gives helpful information to pupils on what they have or have not done well and how they can improve. However, on some occasions it does not identify pupils' misconceptions in order for them to learn from their mistakes.
116. The school has moved some way in addressing the issues noted in the last inspection by placing more emphasis on pupils' understanding of a scientific way of working and their knowledge of the skills required. This is an improvement. The school generally follows the QCA scheme of work but this has not yet been adapted to suit the needs of the school or the abilities of the pupils. Planning in each year broadly covers the recommended work from the scheme and assessments are made at the end of each unit of work. However, the results are not sufficiently fed into planning so that work set ensures continuity and progression for pupils of all abilities. Inspection findings indicate that many pupils would benefit from working at a higher level than the scheme suggests. This is rarely offered to pupils and indicates that sometimes teachers' expectations of pupils' abilities are too low. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator analyses previous test results in order to identify areas of the science curriculum that may have had insufficient coverage. There is regular termly monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

117. Currently the attainment in art and design in Year 2 and Year 6 is below that expected. This judgement is based on limited evidence – displays, two lessons and a discussion with Year 6 pupils. This is because the inspection was early in the school year and art and design was not being taught to some pupils at present. The school has introduced a curriculum plan for art and design, based on national guidance, which pays greater attention to the acquisition of skills.

However, pupils have not had sufficient time to develop their understanding, knowledge and skills, which means standards are below average. This is because the school has quite rightly focused on raising standards in the core subjects. In addition the curriculum plan and timetable arrangements for teaching art and design are inconsistent throughout the school year. In some classes, the subject alternates with design and technology but in others, art and design is taught for two half terms consecutively and then not for some time and in some cases insufficient time is allocated as in Year 2 and 5. These factors mean that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make unsatisfactory progress over time. However, in one lesson observed in Year 3, pupils learnt well and made good progress, in the other lesson in Year 5 satisfactory learning took place.

118. Evidence from displays indicates that pupils have satisfactory observational skills and at times good, when drawing historical costumes and religious artefacts. Year 2 pupils carefully added details such as braiding, pattern and buttons when they drew old costumes. Detailed pictures of Ganesha and Lakshmi were drawn by Year 4 pupils, which supported their work on Hinduism. Sound links are made with other subjects but the use of ICT to support art and design is underdeveloped. A paint program has been used effectively by Year 2 pupils to create patterns in the style of Mondrian and an Australian painting has been used to support techniques in expanding pictures and printing them. But such opportunities are limited. There are some literacy links, for example, drawings of plants for science are labelled appropriately and speech bubbles are used in illustrations but generally too few.
119. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but some good teaching was observed. During a Year 3 lesson, pupils looked carefully at the vegetables before they started to draw and paint and produced some good work. This is because the teacher taught artistic skills well. However, pupils needed a lot of guidance and support for quite basic tasks such as colour mixing but by the end of the lesson most mixed suitable colours for peppers and aubergines. Teachers have good management strategies and are consistent in their approach, but time is taken away from teaching whilst they insist that a few pupils exhibit appropriate behaviour and co-operation, as in Year 5. The teacher led a good discussion about Egyptian art and pupils learnt that the face was drawn as a profile. Some of them quickly organised themselves and worked hard with a partner and produced their drawings but a few found it difficult to co-operate with one another and get down to work; this had an impact on their rate of learning.
120. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time but is already aware of some of the shortcomings of the subject. She has expertise in art and design, is keen and enthusiastic. The curriculum is unsatisfactory at present. It is not sufficiently broad nor is it balanced. Pupils have too few opportunities to experience a range of materials, such as clay and textiles and making three-dimensional works of art, both individually and within groups. The subject makes a limited contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Too little attention is made to promoting cultural and aesthetic awareness, although Year 1 pupils have produced some tie and dye work based on Nigerian designs. Work representing the range of ethnic backgrounds of the pupils and the wider world is lacking and little reference is made to famous artists and craftspeople. There are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' work or the progress they make.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. Standards in design and technology are about average for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and they make sound progress. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' previous work, lesson observations, teachers' planning and discussions with Year 6 pupils. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection and although teaching was good there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching throughout the school.
122. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils developed an understanding of how to evaluate their caterpillar model and their chosen range of joining techniques. With teacher support, they were able to identify the varying merits of each technique from the range used such as gluing, stapling, pipe cleaners, treasury tags and split pins. They then were able to identify and record the merits of the joining

materials they had chosen for their model and make suggestions as to how they would change their product in the future. Work on display for Years 1 and 2 showed pupils were able to design their own vehicle and join wheels and axles to allow movement at a standard in line with that expected for their age.

123. Work undertaken by older pupils in the school provided evidence that the skills of measuring, marking, cutting and gluing had been used to produce individual moving vehicles. These involved the use of a higher level of skills than the work undertaken by younger pupils and confirmed that satisfactory progress is being made in some aspects of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 confirmed that during their time at school they had had opportunities to use a variety of sources of energy such as wind and electric motors to move their models. Work displayed showed pupils had designed, made and evaluated their own soft drinks recipes, which they enjoyed. During the year, pupils are involved in a limited number of projects that provide opportunities to design, develop their craft skills and evaluate their work. Experience in using textiles is limited and few opportunities are provided for pupils to enhance their skills using an ICT control program. However, the one-hour per week time allocation is shared with art and design over the three terms and consequently the subject is given limited curriculum time. If more time was devoted to the subject and each area of learning taught to greater depth, attainment would improve.
124. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the subject and is aware that time devoted to the subject is insufficient. Teaching and learning are monitored on a regular termly basis. The school's existing scheme of work is based on the Wirral scheme, which has been modified to suit the needs of the school by the addition of other activities. Resources are good. Staff are confident and interested in the subject but do have difficulties undertaking practical work without extra classroom help. There are good links with outside agencies such as the London Technology Centre who have undertaken workshops in school to advance the skills and knowledge of both pupils and teachers.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

125. During the inspection no lessons in geography were timetabled and almost no geography work seen in pupils' books. This section therefore, focuses on the school's work in history.
126. Standards in history are in line with expectations by Year 2 and below expectations in Year 6. By Year 2, pupils are beginning to develop awareness of past and present. They are learning to identify differences in the way people lived in different periods. They recall simple facts, for instance about how the Great Fire of London started and why it spread so rapidly. They are beginning to understand the use of eyewitness accounts.
127. By Year 6, pupils also recall some facts about the periods studied. Pupils in Year 3 recall a simple narrative about Boudicca's fight against the Romans but cannot identify key facts. In Year 5, pupils recall basic facts about agriculture in Ancient Egypt. In Year 6, pupils are beginning to compare the lives of poor children in the Victorian era with their own. They listen to contemporary accounts of conditions in factories and mines and try to draw inferences from photocopied images of Victorian families and children. The conclusions they draw are superficial and do not use the evidence well. Pupils have little experience of evaluating evidence and of how to use it to support valid statements. Their knowledge of history is largely confined to facts about the periods studied and they lack historical understanding and skills.
128. The reasons for this are mainly curricular. In Years 3 to 6 especially there is too little time allocated to history and geography to allow time for the full development of historical and geographical understanding. This is compounded by the uneven time allocations to each subject and across years. This makes it very difficult to plan progressively to develop pupils' understanding and skills in both subjects. As a result, learning is largely confined to limited knowledge about periods or places studied and too little attention is given to applying this to understanding its significance, causes and effects.

129. The teaching of history is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and less so for older pupils. Younger pupils are taught to use contemporary evidence and classify it in a systematic way. Teachers know the subjects sufficiently well to identify key issues, events and people. They use modern accounts of contemporary evidence and visual aids such as artefacts and costumes to bring the subject alive. Pupils respond well. Where teaching is less successful, class activities are sometimes too undemanding and their purpose is not sufficiently explored. In such cases, the opportunity to develop pupils' understanding through full class discussion is missed. There is little evidence of extended writing by pupils in which they can develop ideas and draw conclusions from their knowledge. Pupils' knowledge remains fractured and there is little progress in skills or understanding as they move up the school. The co-ordinator has been in post for a very short time and has had insufficient time to monitor and evaluate teaching and provision effectively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

130. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and the subject does not meet statutory requirements. The last inspection did not specifically identify standards in ICT but did identify that a computer suite had been installed and that teachers and teaching assistants had undergone extensive training. Inspection findings indicate that pupils do not experience the full range of the ICT curriculum at a level appropriate to their abilities. Consequently, they make insufficient progress of their knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject and this is a weakness. This is a change from the previous inspection when no weaknesses in attainment were identified.
131. In Year 2, most pupils are developing simple keyboard skills although these are limited. Most, following teacher instructions, can enter short simple text, use the arrow key, delete and replace a letter, as well as add a space. With teacher support, most can save and retrieve work but a few lower achievers need individual help. Their word processing abilities are not sufficiently developed for their age and abilities and they have not yet become independent users.
132. Older pupils continue to use ICT to present text, but there was no evidence of any lengthy pieces of this in the work scrutiny or in lessons during the inspection. Pupils in Year 4 are able to delete text and insert replacement text while pupils in Years 5 and 6 make enlarged labels in a variety of font styles and colours and well as using computer generated art borders and adding a text box incorporating class rules. Most pupils have a developed awareness of the use of information and communication technology in the wider world - use of the video and CD-roms. They have experienced the use of a digital microscope and printed off the images seen. They have yet to use sound when combining different forms of media.
133. Discussions with higher-attaining Year 6 pupils (who have computers at home) indicate that they know how to log onto the Internet, send an email and use a search engine to locate information such as the weather around the world. They have used ICT to present information in different forms such as bar graphs, pictograms and pie charts in mathematics. They have also experienced the use of a graphics program to draw, find pictures and add text in a box. In school use has been made of a control program to make angled shapes such as hexagons or pentagons and it was recognised that a sequence of instructions is required for this activity, which was then tested.
134. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and teaching was satisfactory overall. Teachers employed good strategies to ensure pupils were aware of the learning objectives of the lesson and positively praised their efforts and contributions. However, work is not provided for pupils at the appropriate level for their age. Although teachers have undertaken some training, their subject knowledge and teaching of basic skills is unsatisfactory as pupils are not making the expected progress in the subject.
135. Insufficient ICT was seen during the inspection to judge its quality through the school and there was little evidence of pupils' completed work. Computers in the classrooms were not in use during any of the lessons observed and most were turned off. They are not used sufficiently for cross-

curricular learning or to extract information from CD-Roms. Year 6 pupils indicated that the teacher sometimes used the classroom computer but the only time they were used by pupils was to make labels. A pupil with special educational needs is supported by the local education authority (LEA) and has access to his own computer to aid learning.

136. Currently, the school is without an ICT co-ordinator and the headteacher has taken on the role temporarily. All staff have undertaken NOF⁷ training with additional twilight sessions at the LEA professional development centre and they all have their own laptops. The school has the benefit of an ICT specialist from the Borough one day per week to support teachers in the ICT suite. A staff 'audit of need' has been undertaken and teachers as well as teaching assistants are due to have focused training delivered by the specialist. There are a number of weaknesses within the provision. The school follows the QCA scheme of work but currently the school is without any system to assess pupils' skills. Consequently, higher-attaining pupils and those who have access to computers at home have not been identified. During lessons observed, work was not planned to build on what pupils know, understand and can do. This has an adverse effect on the development of skills and pupil attainment.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES - FRENCH

137. French is taught to pupils in Year 5 for 40 minutes per week and in Year 6 for 30 minutes. The school's stated aim is to familiarise pupils with learning French before they move on to secondary school.
138. The standards pupils achieve are low but in line with expectations given the small amount of time allocated. In Year 6, pupils can speak three or four simple phrases, understand single words or short phrases in a familiar context and copy correctly familiar words. They do not develop skills in speaking independently and have little opportunity to hear spoken French. They increase their knowledge of vocabulary in the second year but make little progress in language skills.
139. Teaching is mostly in English and focuses on vocabulary and simple expressions about personal details. Pupils listen attentively and respond but have little opportunity to use French independently. The planned work in French is taken from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidance on teaching French in primary schools. However, the overall objectives for the two years have not been sufficiently thought through and it is not clear what pupils are expected to achieve from learning French. In reviewing the whole curriculum the school needs to reconsider the rationale for teaching French, the time allocated and the specific language objectives pupils are expected to achieve.

MUSIC

140. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music lessons. Pupils sing with enthusiasm and are developing control of pitch, dynamic and rhythm appropriate for their age. They are beginning to use a range of percussion instruments to create sound pictures to illustrate stories.
141. In Year 3, pupils explored the instruments and discussed how they could illustrate a story about animals. They built on their previous work by putting the sounds together to illustrate an animal story. This linked well to their listening activity when they heard part of the music of 'Peter and the Wolf'; a piece in which orchestral instruments are used to depict different animals. In Year 6, pupils have well developed rhythmic skills. They follow musical notation to clap short rhythmic patterns including rests. They have learned hand signals to show different musical pitch. When listening to music, they identify the different ways in which pieces of music are organised and relate this to their work in poetry. They are learning to make up simple melodies to short rhymes using three notes, though they find this quite difficult.

⁷ NOF – New opportunities funding – specific funds are allocated to training and projects, such as ICT training.

142. The music lessons observed were taught by a specialist teacher. She is working at the school as a consultant to provide professional development for staff. She works with classes in turn to provide three demonstration lessons for teachers. The following term, she is to demonstrate the first lesson and then work with teachers to plan the rest of the sequence. At the end of the term, there will be opportunities for her to work with teachers on reviewing their work and giving them further support. This is a very effective method of developing teachers' expertise and confidence and is greatly appreciated by staff. The teaching observed was very good overall. The teacher has excellent subject knowledge and this enables her to teach pupils the skills they need in order to make progress in music. She teaches pupils the specific vocabulary for music and makes very good use of resources to support their learning. She makes regular assessments of pupils' progress and uses these to plan further work. Class teachers support the lessons and this helps to develop their own skills and understanding.
143. The specialist teacher has recently revised the music curriculum. This is based on national guidance and the teacher's own knowledge of the National Curriculum programmes of study. As she is currently teaching all the music lessons, she does not have a monitoring role. The curriculum is enriched by visits from professional musicians who perform for pupils. For example, a group of Indian musicians visited the school to take part in an assembly for Eid. The school has made satisfactory progress in music since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

144. Standards at the end of Years 6 and 2 reach those expected in the aspects of the physical curriculum that were seen during the inspection. Inspection evidence and teachers' planning for physical education indicate all elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered but need updating. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress.
145. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 respond to their teachers' instructions quickly. They work safely individually and in pairs and in small groups following safety rules reinforced by the teacher. Younger pupils move in a variety of ways using one or two feet and include running, hopping and turning movements. They use space well and most develop good control of movement and balance. Pupils' eye and hand co-ordination developed well during the lesson as they became more proficient at controlling a ball by bouncing and catching.
146. Pupils in Year 6 continue to consolidate their skills with greater consistency and sustaining more vigorous activities. They learn to control a ball using a racket and, in pairs bounce the ball into a restricted area. Pupils in Year 5 have the opportunity to take part in swimming and most reach the nationally expected standard for their age. Most Year 6 pupils perform adventurous activities during the residential school visit and practise orienteering.
147. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching throughout the school. However, there were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The quality of teaching and learning seen in Year 1 was very good. In this lesson, learning objectives were shared with pupils and due emphasis was placed on the important vocabulary for the lesson such as speed, drop and catch. There was good attention to literacy and links with science when the words were displayed for pupils to read and pupils reminded of the need for exercise in order to stay healthy. Very good discipline and subject knowledge ensured all pupils stayed on task, achieved well and enjoyed the lesson. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning seen was satisfactory. Each part of the lesson was made clear. The teacher involved pupils to demonstrate correct ball control and positively reinforced correct responses.
148. The attitudes to their work in physical education by younger pupils was very good and with the older pupils it was satisfactory due in part to some silly behaviour by some pupils in the lesson. With a few exceptions, they are mostly attentive to their teachers and follow instructions.
149. Currently, the school follows the Dudley scheme of work and all programmes of study are covered. There is no system for assessment. The school intends to review the scheme in the near future

and improve staff confidence by involving the 'Sport for England' co-ordinator who is based at a local secondary school. The PE policy is not up to date, as it has not been amended to take account of Curriculum 2000. The headteacher monitors planning, teaching and learning but this is not carried out on a regular basis due to many other management commitments. There is a satisfactory range of resources available for both indoor and outdoor equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

150. By Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress and enjoy their lessons. Pupils in Year 1 greatly enjoyed learning about naming ceremonies in the Christian, Jewish and Islamic faiths. They understand that the ceremonies are important in welcoming a baby to the faith community and are able to talk about the groups to which they belong. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is also in line with what is expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Year 4 pupils know about the Hindu place of worship, the Mandir. They enjoyed learning about the artefacts used by Hindus in prayer and showed respect towards the artefacts displayed. However, pupils do not have well-developed speaking skills and this hampered the discussion of why the artefacts are important in Hindu worship. Many of the pupils are from families with a strong faith background. They are knowledgeable about their own faith and show respect towards other faiths. When answering questions in lessons, pupils show understanding of what they have learned, but their very weak writing skills make it difficult for them to record their work.
151. The school is very sensitive to the faith backgrounds of its pupils. The co-ordinator recently invited parents to a meeting with a local Imam, to discuss the school's religious education policy and to address parents' concerns. This was well attended and as a result, no pupils are withdrawn from religious education or visits to different places of worship.
152. The quality of teaching in religious education varies. It is satisfactory overall, but both good and unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teachers vary in their confidence and subject knowledge but are very willing to teach RE and feel well supported by the co-ordinator. Although the school plans its programme for RE in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, the balance of the curriculum needs to be reviewed. The school is attempting to address all six major world faiths in depth. The syllabus requires that Islam, Christianity and Judaism should be studied in depth and that Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism should be introduced to pupils during their time at school. The school is aware that the balance of the curriculum needs to be reviewed. However, the local education authority is about to introduce an updated syllabus. Understandably, the school is awaiting new guidance before revising its provision.
153. Management of RE is effective. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has identified the school's strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has an appropriate action plan. She gives good support to colleagues and monitors their planning and pupils' work on a regular basis. The school has a very good collection of artefacts and resources to support teaching in religious education.