

INSPECTION REPORT

GLEBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex

LEA area: London Borough of Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102380

Headteacher: Miss Sarah Lanham

Reporting inspector: John William Paull
Rgl's OIN: 22028

Dates of inspection: 27 to 30 January 2003

Inspection number: 246197
Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary with nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Sussex Road, Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex
Postcode:	UB10 8PH
Telephone number:	0189 563 4169
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr J Buckingham
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22028	John William Paull	Registered inspector	Design and technology Music Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9275	Candy Kalms	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
8696	Abul Maula	Team inspector	English Educational inclusion English as an additional language	
20063	Gerry Slamon	Team inspector	Mathematics History	How well are pupils taught?
32180	David Sleightholme	Team inspector	Science Geography Physical education	
15600	Colin Richardson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Special educational needs	
32207	Jennifer Thomas	Team inspector	Art and design Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Glebe Primary School at Ickenham in the London Borough of Hillingdon has 275 full-time four to 11-year-olds on its roll. A further 27 three- and four-year-olds attend its nursery classes for half day sessions. It is larger than most other primary schools. Pupils currently on the roll are from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. The majority are white, including small groups from other European countries and from families attached to the air forces of the United Kingdom and the United States. The largest non-white group is from families that originated in the Asian sub-continent. Just over ten per cent are from homes where English is not the pupils' mother tongue, which is high, although only a few are at early stages of acquiring English. The main languages represented are Gujarati, Punjabi, Arabic and Farsi. Currently, about three per cent are known to qualify for free school meals, which is below average, although this may not be accurate as the school does not provide hot meals. Pupils are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds, and their social and economic circumstances are a little higher than average. Nearly 13 per cent of pupils are identified with special educational needs, which is below average. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties that are dealt with by the school itself. The school also accommodates special resources for up to nine pupils with impaired hearing. These pupils, plus others in the school with a statement of special needs, amount to nearly five per cent of the roll, which is well above average. The overall attainment of pupils entering the school covers a wide range but, overall, is similar to that found nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Glebe is a good school. Its National Curriculum test results of pupils in Year 6, taking the past three years together, show that overall performances exceeded national averages. Current standards in English and mathematics remain above average. In 2002, results were particularly good, with a high percentage of pupils attaining a level above that normally expected. Compared with their starting points, pupils' achievements are often good. Their attitudes to work and their behaviour are very good. This strong picture includes pupils from different backgrounds and those with special educational needs. Leadership and management are good and the headteacher and key staff have a strong capacity to bring about key improvements successfully. Governors share this vision and the staff are very conscientious and hard-working. Overall, teaching is good, so pupils learn basic skills effectively. Taking these and similar factors into account, Glebe offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in English and mathematics is above average.
- Attainment in design and technology is often well above national expectations.
- Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are very good.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good through the school, including very good teaching in nursery and reception classes, and very good aspects in Year 6.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is nearly always good and, for those with impaired hearing, it is very good. As a result, nearly all pupils with special needs make good progress.
- The range of activity that is provided outside lessons is very good.

What could be improved

- By the end of Year 2, attainment in writing is not as high as in other aspects of English.
- Overall standards of attainment in science, by the time pupils leave in Year 6, are not quite as high as in the other core subjects of English and mathematics.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved well since its inspection of November 1997. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are generally higher now, keeping pace with improvements that have occurred nationally. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which

were already good, are now usually very good. Good progress has been made in nearly all areas that the last report identified as in need of development. For example, overall attainment in information and communication technology now matches the nationally expected standard. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are strong in English and mathematics and the information that is gathered is used well in setting targets for pupils and to help track their progress through the school. Planning of what should be taught, and when, is also better now, resulting in stronger links between the content of subjects, such as science and design and technology. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including specially resourced provision for pupils with impaired hearing, is also better now and, as a result, nearly all pupils with special needs make good progress.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	D	A	A
Mathematics	C	B	A	B
Science	B	C	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table indicates that the school's National Curriculum test results are a little erratic. This feature is especially pronounced in English, in which they were about average in 2000; dropped below average in 2001, and then in 2002 rose sharply to levels well above average, both compared with national results and with results of similar schools. Several contributory reasons were found for these fluctuations. The main factors were first, that the proportion of pupils with identified special needs varied from year to year and second, that numbers of pupils who joined and left the school differed considerably in each of these years and affected overall results. Taking the last three years together, results in English and mathematics have been better than in science. Nevertheless, overall trends are generally upward and, since the last inspection, the school's overall trend matches improvements in national results. Work that was seen during the inspection broadly reflects the test results, since standards in English and mathematics are currently above average. However, in science, they are closer to average. Statutory targets that are agreed with the local authority, for results in English and mathematics, are realistic. These targets were met in 2002 and are likely to be met in 2003. In other subjects, including information and communication technology, attainment is around the levels that are normally expected, except in design and technology, and a few elements of history, in which they are above. Based on very good teaching, children make good progress in nursery and reception classes. Several children, especially from families in the American forces, leave the school and are replaced with others who join later on in reception classes. Owing to this movement, children's overall attainment on entry to Year 1 remains around average. This pattern of leavers and new entrants continues through Years 1 and 2, affecting results at the end of Year 2, so standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science remain about average, despite good teaching. National Curriculum test results support these judgements.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good – nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy school. They believe that their teachers like them and work hard on their behalf. Children in nursery and reception classes are kind to each other.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good – pupils behave well in lessons, and around the building even when not directly supervised. They listen to their teachers very attentively. They are helpful towards visitors, offering friendly smiles and holding doors open.
Personal development and relationships	Good – pupils collaborate well with each other when they are asked. They are supportive towards each other and nearly all of them have good levels of self-belief. They are tolerant of different backgrounds and customs. However, a few of them, even in older age groups, are slow to take initiative for themselves.
Attendance	Satisfactory – attendance is about average and pupils are generally brought to school on time. Nearly all lessons begin and end punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching through the school is good. It is very good with regard to pupils with impaired hearing, and in the nursery and reception classes and in Year 6. Two examples of excellent teaching were observed – one in the nursery and another in Year 6. Other examples of very good teaching were spread through the school. Overall, the proportion of good teaching was high and only two examples of unsatisfactory teaching were observed. Other evidence suggests that these unsatisfactory lessons are not typical of the teachers concerned. Teaching of this overall good quality represents an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers understand the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, so the teaching of English and mathematics is good and pupils therefore learn basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively. The contributions of nursery nurses were consistently strong during the inspection, including those for pupils with impaired hearing. Furthermore, classroom assistants used their day-to-day knowledge of pupils skilfully, enhancing the teaching of pupils with special educational needs, who are taught well. However, it is unclear whether pupils at early stages of learning English as an additional language receive necessary specialist teaching or whether the very highest attainers are sufficiently targeted with work that is difficult enough. Nevertheless, teachers have good knowledge of the National Curriculum and use it to plan links between different subjects very effectively. Understanding of what should be taught in nursery and reception classes is also of a high order. Management of pupils is often very good, contributing to very good behaviour and very good effort on the part of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good – what is taught in the nursery and reception classes meets national requirements and the National Curriculum is taught in all classes through the school. Work is enhanced by providing lessons to help pupils who might achieve higher levels with extra support and by a very good range of activities outside lessons
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good – lesson content is adapted well to meet pupils' needs. It includes very good provision for pupils with impaired hearing. Specialists ensure that class teachers and teaching assistants understand how to support learning effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory – a new co-ordinator has recently been appointed and has drawn up a very good plan of action. Pupils' language needs are identified accurately. Subsequent action on the identified pupils now needs to be implemented.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, while provision for moral and social development is strong. The provision of class and school councils provides good opportunities to learn about democracy. Teachers encourage pupils to believe in themselves. Relevant praise and encouragement are offered.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory – local procedures for child protection are in place. Attendance and information about pupils' academic and personal development are recorded satisfactorily. Procedures to ensure good behaviour and that pupils feel valued are strong elements.

Parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. Regular information is provided, including a supplementary written report half way through the year. Parents are encouraged to support pupils in classrooms and a few were seen doing so during the inspection. An active parent/teacher association is also evident.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good – the deputy head ably supports the headteacher, whose leadership ensures the school's future development. The co-ordination of literacy and numeracy are strong and the school's aims are reflected in its work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good – governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and use information about the school to ensure that changes and improvements are put into practice effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good – evaluation of teaching has brought about improvements since the last inspection, especially in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. As a result, lesson content has improved. Improvements in what is taught have also resulted.
The strategic use of resources	Good – priorities and targets are appropriate and funded as necessary. Money that is provided for particular reasons is spent properly to good purpose. Senior staff and governors are aware of the need to check that

	spending will achieve best value by its impact on standards.
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Accommodation and learning resources are generally satisfactory. However, the Year 5 classroom has poor facilities and the school's hall was cold during several lessons in physical education. Staffing is good, leading to small classes and including skilful nursery nurses, both for young children and those with hearing impairment.

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good and their children behave well and make good progress. • The school is well led and managed and the headteacher and staff are approachable. • Their children are expected to work hard. • The school helps their children to grow in maturity and responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality and range of extra-curricular activity.

Parents’ views of the school are very positive and inspectors agree with them. A significant minority, however, felt that activity outside lessons is limited. Inspectors found that the number and range of clubs provided for children are very good and that a residential visit is also offered. It is true that several of these activities are limited to older pupils. Inspectors found that these restrictions are necessary to maintain safety and ensure that numbers are manageable. Opportunities to attend these clubs are equally available to all pupils, as they grow older.

Parents of pupils in Year 1 raised concerns about changes of staff and effects on standards and communication with the school. Inspectors found that governors and senior staff largely accept these criticisms. However, meetings with parents were offered and the original causes were beyond the school's control. Present arrangements are probably the best available and look more settled than those of earlier in the year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the last inspection, pupils' work and the results of National Curriculum tests both indicated that attainment was stronger at the end of Year 6 than in Year 2. This finding remains the case in this inspection. However, whereas in 1997, results of Year 6 National Curriculum tests were above average in English, mathematics and science, in 2002 they improved to well above average in English and mathematics, and remained above average in science. These results indicate that improvement has been good, as the averages with which the comparisons are made are also higher now. The 2002 National Curriculum test results of pupils in Year 6, compared with similar schools, were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and around average in science. At the end of Year 2, National Curriculum test results were average in reading, writing and mathematics, when compared nationally. Compared with similar schools, these results were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Statutory teachers' assessments of work in science were also below average. However, "similar" refers to schools with similar percentages of pupils who are known to qualify for free meals. The accuracy of such a comparison is doubtful at Glebe for two main reasons. First, no hot meals are provided, which means that the number of families who apply for free meals is likely to be lower than the number who are eligible. Secondly, several pupils, often from families with the American forces, join and leave the school during the first two or three years. As a result, a significant proportion of pupils who take the tests in Year 2 are not present throughout their early years.
- 2 Mobility amongst pupils is also the main reason that very good teaching in nursery and reception classes does not have a greater impact on overall progress by the time pupils begin the National Curriculum in Year 1. Children enter the nursery from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, including one or two for whom English is not their mother tongue. In some year groups, these children may be at an early stage of learning English. This wide variation results in significant differences in the characteristics of one year group and the next, as well as within each year group. Furthermore, the number of children with impaired hearing, admitted via the school's specially resourced unit, varies from year to year, as do the extent of these children's special needs and associated learning difficulties. Taken together, all these factors lead to unusually large fluctuations in attainment in subsequent year groups and within each group. To a considerable extent, these factors, compounded with mobility amongst pupils, account for fluctuations in standards of attainment from year to year throughout the school. It is particularly pronounced in younger classes. A number of pupils who have benefited from what the nursery provides leave at the end of their nursery experience. Another significant number often joins in the reception year, thus only partly benefiting from the very good provision that the school offers to young children. Nevertheless, by the end of their reception year, although a broad range of attainment is apparent, nearly all children meet the early learning goals (descriptions of what young children are expected to know and be able to do when they begin the National Curriculum in Year 1).
- 3 Movements in and out of the school tend to lessen amongst older pupils. For this reason, the effects of good teaching through the school accumulate. Individually, pupils' achievements are usually good by the time they leave the school.
- 4 In English, standards of work seen in books and during lessons were average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils' achievements in English are good for similar reasons to those that were outlined above in relation to overall achievement. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening meet national expectations in Year 2, although a wide range of attainment is apparent. It varies between pupils who appear hesitant or lacking in confidence, to others who are always willing to respond freely to questioning. By Year 6, attainment rises to a little above average, including many articulate and lively speakers who argue their ideas logically and who respond to the needs of listeners well. In reading, overall attainment is average in Year 2, as nearly all pupils are

beginning to use their ability to recognise and sound out letters to help them read long or unfamiliar words. Their reading is accurate, if not always fluent. In Year 6, however, a relatively high proportion of very good readers means that, overall, attainment is above average. In writing, the picture is more mixed. In Year 2, standards are currently a little below average, whereas in Year 6, they are a little above. The main reason is that in Years 1 and 2, several pupils do not consistently apply the skills that they learn in handwriting to their everyday work. Presentation is therefore sometimes poor. Furthermore, pupils who join the school after the reception year are insecure in their learning of handwriting skills, partly because the school's scheme involves a system for joining letters from the start, and these pupils miss the earlier steps. Acquisition of spelling and grammar is similarly affected whereas, by Year 6, the advantages of the school's approach have had time to take effect. Many examples of high attainment are evident, so overall standards rise to levels that are frequently above those expected for the age group.

- 5 In mathematics, attainment is currently around average in Year 2 and above average by Year 6. These standards represent good achievement. Again, this is for the same reasons that are apparent generally, but also because attainment in solving problems has been emphasised and older pupils are now better at this aspect. Strengths are also evident in pupils' understanding of number and in the way that they use their mental arithmetic skills. Many pupils attain highly in these areas by the time they reach Year 6.
- 6 Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills widely through the school. Many pupils read well and use this skill to access information across the curriculum, both from books and the Internet. Nevertheless, shortage of time and the use of worksheets to record results and findings sometimes restrict opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects. Pupils were seen using their skills to measure, read and present data in charts and graphs in science, and in design and technology lessons.
- 7 Overall, attainment in science is currently average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are sound compared with their starting points, rather than good, as in English and mathematics. Worksheets are sometimes used too much to record work. This feature is more apparent in classes for younger pupils than in older age groups. Nevertheless, it restricts opportunities for pupils to acquire skills in scientific enquiry and to organise their writing – an area of literacy that the school has itself identified as in need of improvement. These features result in slower progress than might otherwise be achieved.
- 8 In information and communication technology, standards towards the end of Years 2 and 6 broadly match national expectations. Good teaching has resulted in considerable improvement recently, so pupils now learn basic skills and achieve soundly. Attainment in other subjects also broadly matches national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, in design and technology, standards are well above expectations by Year 6, owing to pupils' very clear understanding of the subject's characteristic skills of designing and evaluating models and products. This good understanding results in making products of good quality. Pupils sing well, which enhances the quality of assemblies.
- 9 Arrangements for pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue are not sufficiently systematic but, nevertheless, these pupils are represented across the range of attainment in the school. It is likely, however, that those few at early stages of learning English are held back owing to their lack of confidence in the use of written English, even though they are coping orally with everyday classroom situations. Conversely, those pupils with English as an additional language who already speak English fluently are well represented amongst the school's highest attainers.
- 10 Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and those with impaired hearing make very good progress. This progress is based on staff's good understanding of pupils' needs and effective identification and intervention. Records show that pupils entering the nursery with delayed language skills, associated with impaired hearing, are often attaining normally expected levels for their age a few years later, which is evidence of very good achievement. The school adapts work well for pupils of broadly higher attainment, and its 2002 National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 6 showed that many achieve at a level above that normally

expected. Conversely, it is less clear how it caters to the needs of those who are

especially gifted and talented at much higher levels across the curriculum. Little evidence was seen of particular challenges to such pupils to develop their own interests in learning or systematically to share their advanced understanding and skills to raise expectations.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development were all reported positively. These strong aspects have been maintained and contribute strongly to the quality of learning and pupils' achievements. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are generally very good throughout the school. Pupils have very good relationships with both teaching and non-teaching staff and with each other. No exclusions of pupils have been necessary in recent years.
- 12 In the nursery, children settle quickly into daily routines. They establish good working habits and become confident, cheerful learners. They are attentive for their age and participate well in groups, taking part in activities well. They co-operate very well with each other, growing in confidence. Children in reception classes continue to develop the very good attitudes to learning, and to each other, that they began in the nursery. By the time they enter Year 1, nearly all children match the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development, and many exceed them with particularly mature responses for their age.
- 13 Pupils display very good attitudes through Years 1 to 6, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue. They enjoy school and want to learn. They are enthusiastic, well motivated and interested. They concentrate, listen carefully to their teachers and respond well to the good teaching that they receive. These good attitudes contribute strongly to the progress that they make. Nearly all pupils are keen to answer teachers' questions and willingly join in discussions and contribute their ideas. For example, in two English lessons in separate Year 6 classes, pupils contributed well to discussions on poetry. Pupils' behaviour is very good. It benefits both life around the school and the learning that takes place. Pupils know the standards of behaviour that are expected of them and they adhere to it very well in lessons. They play well together in the playground. Pupils who were asked agreed that they work in an atmosphere that is free from oppressive behaviour and where bullying and harassment are extremely rare. Pupils also expressed their confidence that teachers listen to them and that their headteacher takes their concerns seriously. Documentary evidence confirms that incidents of poor or oppressive behaviour are rare and that what does occur is followed up quickly.
- 14 Relationships across the school are very good. Pupils of both sexes and of different ethnicity and backgrounds get on very well together. In lessons they settle to work quickly and work effectively either independently, in pairs or small groups. They co-operate and collaborate, sharing ideas, equipment and resources sensibly as required. Pupils in a Year 4 science lesson, for example, worked well with a partner with whom they were allowed to talk, discussing how to investigate changes in the brightness of a light bulb. Pupils care about each other's wellbeing. For example, pupils in a Year 3 history lesson willingly helped others, especially those with impaired hearing. Pupils are sensitive to, and respectful of, each other's feelings, values and beliefs and understand that their actions can have an impact on others' feelings.
- 15 Pupils' personal development is good. They speak highly of their school, and are friendly and polite to each other and to other adults, including visitors. From an early age, they conscientiously carry out the duties given to them around the school and in classrooms, such as returning registers. Older pupils volunteer to control the school's audio equipment during assemblies and whole school singing lessons. Several also help to supervise and look after younger pupils when the weather is too bad to play outside during break times. Pupils enthusiastically participate in both class and school councils, developing an understanding of democratic decision making processes. For example, after discussions, they are now allowed

personal drinking bottles in hot weather and are currently discussing how to improve lunchtime activities.

- 16 Levels of attendance in the school have remained satisfactory. This contributes to the standards achieved by pupils. Overall levels, however, are affected by pupils staying at home for health reasons and by pupils taking holidays during term time. Punctuality is satisfactory although a small number of pupils arrive late, some frequently.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 17 The overall quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. This judgement matches the views of nearly all parents who returned questionnaires, other than a group who raised concerns about teaching in Year 1. The headteacher and governors accept that staffing difficulties led to an unsettled period in this year group. However, more permanent arrangements have now been made and, overall, what was observed in these classes suggests that teaching is now good, including examples of very good teaching. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was good through the main school and was very good in nursery and reception classes, Year 6 and in the specially resourced provision for hearing impaired pupils. An example of excellent teaching was observed in both the nursery and in Year 6. These lessons occurred because of very good planning and understanding of the needs of pupils and excellent ongoing assessment of how they were learning. As a result, teaching was adapted constantly throughout the lessons to ensure thorough acquisition of skills at a fast pace. Overall, good teaching is ensuring that pupils of different backgrounds and groups, including those with special educational needs, impaired hearing and for whom English is not the mother tongue, learn basic skills at generally similar rates. Teaching and non-teaching staff are generally aware of the need to check that the latter sufficiently understand tasks that are required of them. However, planning is not based on enough information about the extent of pupils' experience of English at home. It is, therefore, unclear whether a few pupils might benefit from opportunities to use their mother tongue to help with acquisition of English at a faster rate. A similar lack of information is apparent in the case of exceptionally gifted or talented pupils. As a result, although work is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils who attain at a level above that normally expected, it is unclear whether the needs of very gifted pupils are fully met.
- 18 Improvements in teaching reflect the expectations of the headteacher and the value that senior management and governors place on supporting staff to give their best. Monitoring of teaching and learning, and a very good strategy for appraisal and managing performance, identify teachers' strengths and areas that they need to develop. These features, together with a strong team spirit and a high commitment to do their best, result in good practice. Weaknesses in the last inspection, which related to teachers' knowledge of information and communication technology, and their understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those with hearing impairment, have been successfully dealt with. These pupils are now supported very well. Work is adapted skilfully to their needs. Specialists work alongside them in classrooms, whenever additional support is necessary. This support extends to the use of signing on those occasions when it is needed to communicate effectively.
- 19 During the inspection, the proportion of good teaching throughout the school was high and included many very good lessons. Two unsatisfactory lessons occurred. In one, teaching lacked clear purpose and work was not hard enough to challenge pupils' thinking. In the other, some of the teacher's methods were not appropriate to what was being taught. However, in the case of both these teachers, other lessons demonstrated that these features were not typical of them. Examples of very good teaching were seen in several classes, spread through the school. Special features of these lessons were tasks that were sufficiently challenging and that helped pupils to learn at a fast rate. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, for example, all pupils were actively involved in finding the position of a square on a grid, and describing its position using the four compass points. Very good planning included a range of interesting activities, including the use of information and communication technology and opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their ideas. Imaginative teaching methods and well briefed teaching assistants helped to ensure that pupils made very good progress. This type of creative and stimulating teaching was the main factor in the good and even higher quality lessons that separated them from what were, nonetheless, satisfactory lessons. Another feature of the most successful teaching was the very

good balance between direct instruction, independent learning and group activity. Where this balance was not as strong, as for example, in history and in a geography lesson that was seen, pupils did not have enough chance to use and combine information from a number of sources or to plan their own research. However, in a very good geography lesson in Year 6, the opposite was the case. The development of pupils' independent learning skills was identified in the lesson plan. In consequence, not only did pupils gain a very good understanding of different mountain environments, but they also acquired research skills to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

- 20 A feature common to lessons throughout the school is effective management of pupils' behaviour through the promotion of positive relationships. As a result, pupils learn in a very secure environment with the minimum of interruption and no disruption. Classroom routines are well established, so little time is lost in checking behaviour. For example, in an excellent Year 6 art lesson, the outstanding relationships established resulted in pupils evaluating each other's efforts respectfully, and working hard to produce work of which they were justifiably proud. This very good management of behaviour is apparent as soon as children enter nursery and reception classes. Teachers and nursery nurses emphasise the need and impact of kindness amongst these young children and encourage them strongly, whenever they show it. The area of personal, social and emotional development is therefore taught very well indeed.
- 21 The overall quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good, though the teaching of literacy is a little stronger in nursery and reception classes and in Years 3 to 6, than it is in Years 1 and 2. Overall, the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which contribute well to the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. Assessment of learning is strong in these subjects. When pupils are writing, most teachers move from group to group to see how well learning is going. Lessons are well planned with tasks that generally closely match pupils' needs. Teachers have good knowledge of these subjects. In the good, very good and excellent lessons, teachers were very clear about what pupils needed to learn, having evaluated their learning in previous lessons. Where teachers stick too rigidly to the shared lesson plan and do not adapt it sufficiently to the particular needs of their own class, the pace of learning is sometimes adversely affected. At times, in subjects across the curriculum, worksheets deprive pupils of opportunities to write or to present their work in their own ways, which limits the use of available time to develop writing and skills of data-presentation. Although the overall quality of teaching in science was good, occasions arose when teachers' planning was not clear about the independent skills to be developed. Conversely, an example of very good science teaching was observed in Year 6. In this lesson, very good learning was achieved as the direct result of providing pupils with a wide range of interesting, challenging tasks, which developed their independent enquiry skills at a fast pace.
- 22 All other subjects are taught at least satisfactorily and sometimes teaching is good or even very good. For example, the overall quality of teaching in information and communication technology was very good, while teaching in design and technology and physical education lessons was nearly always good. When teaching reached this quality in these other subjects, it was closely linked to teachers' knowledge of the subject and high levels of expectation of what pupils can achieve. For example, in a physical education lesson in Year 3, pupils made good progress in the control of movement during a range of exercises because the teacher knew how such movement could be improved. In lessons that were otherwise satisfactory, it was this level of expertise, knowing precisely how to develop skills in the subject, which was less apparent.
- 23 Teachers make good use of time, support staff and resources to support pupils' learning. They make sure that learning support assistants and parent helpers are aware of the aims of lessons. The consistent and hard-working approach of the support staff effectively helps pupils' learning throughout the school. The school's team of nursery nurses in both nursery and reception classes and in the specially resourced provision for pupils with impaired hearing are particularly skilful in their approach. They make a strong contribution to the overall quality of teaching, leading groups of young children and supporting teachers conscientiously.

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

- 24 What is taught meets national requirements satisfactorily. All subjects in the National Curriculum are taught through the main school and enhanced with a good range of activities outside lessons, a local scheme that promotes awareness of the misuse of drugs (known as *DARE*), and personal, health and social education (PSHE). Religious education is based, as required, on the locally agreed syllabus and includes study of a range of world faiths. The content of lessons in nursery and reception classes is firmly rooted in the areas of learning set out in national guidance. Planning for these young children is very good and results in provision of high quality. Considerable improvement is apparent in what is taught in information and communication technology through the school and, furthermore, design and technology has improved from an already strong position in the last inspection. However, the school allocates more time than most other schools to teaching mathematics, English and, to a lesser extent, physical education. Although, in some respects, this situation is laudable, it also has the outcome that less time is available for other subjects. Nevertheless, adequate policies and good schemes of work are in place for all subjects, and the National Literacy Strategy is soundly understood and, overall, has been introduced successfully into the school's practice. One exception to this picture was found. The use of independent writing is sometimes limited by the use of worksheets in other subjects, and this shortcoming may be linked to the shortage of allocated time that has already been outlined. Nevertheless, literacy hours follow the nationally recommended patterns, as do numeracy sessions, in which the national strategy has been introduced well. Classes to boost pupils' performance in English and mathematics are organised in Years 5 and 6 and an advanced skills teacher provides the school with additional support and advice about what should be taught and how. An extra session is set aside each week for all pupils to practise writing for an extended amount of time. Instrumental tuition in violin, 'cello and woodwind is also available.
- 25 The curriculum is enriched by a very good programme of activities and clubs after school and at lunchtime. These clubs currently include tennis, fitness, football, cricket, orienteering, chess, information and communication technology, a basic course on the playing of ocarinas and a film club. Visits are organised to places of interest, such as museums, theatres, churches and local towns. These visits provide valuable learning experiences for pupils and a residential school journey to Devon is also available to pupils in Year 6. This journey supports pupils' personal and social development, as well as enhancing areas of the academic curriculum.
- 26 Overall, pupils have equal access to the full range of opportunities that the school provides. Staff and governors alike are aware of the need to ensure that all pupils are fully included in what it provides. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Work is prepared at appropriate levels, and they receive good support from classroom assistants and from the special needs co-ordinator. Extension activities are provided for higher attaining pupils, although no particular arrangements are identified to meet the needs of exceptionally gifted and talented pupils. No significant differences in the opportunities offered to boys and girls were found. Similarly, no differences were seen in opportunities extended to pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Generally, individual and/or group education plans for pupils with special educational needs are written clearly and contain measurable targets to help them improve. These targets focus on achievement in literacy, numeracy and, when appropriate, physical, medical or emotional needs. However, it has not been the school's practice to include targets for science, and this could hold them back. What is provided for pupils with impaired hearing is very good. Adaptations of the curriculum are entirely consistent with their needs and ensure that they often achieve very well compared with their starting points when they first joined the school. Classroom assistants and teachers are also active in ensuring that pupils with English as an additional language understand what to do to get on with their work, although expertise in dealing with those at early stages of learning English is less apparent.
- 27 Provision for pupils' personal, health and social education is good. The school has gained the nationally recognised award of *Active Mark* in recognition of its commitment to physical education, exercise and healthy living. Through school and class councils, pupils have good opportunities to debate topics of interest and to have a voice in relevant aspects of school life.

Participation in *DARE*, which is supported by the police and involves the school nurse, also gives Year 6 pupils a good opportunity to improve personal safety skills such as recognising danger from strangers, tackling bullies and how to avoid unsafe situations.

- 28 The school enjoys good relationships with members of the local community. For example, senior citizens in Ickenham are invited to join Christmas and Harvest celebrations. The development of the school's library was sponsored by a local business and pupils are encouraged to support several charities. Other members of the community, such as the clergy, police and musicians, visit school to lead assemblies or to support pupils' learning. Teams also take part in local competitions and festivals such as swimming galas, district sports and the Ickenham Arts Festival. Pupils' work is also displayed at Ickenham station. Such public displays of their work motivate pupils to perform well.
- 29 Good links have been established with other educational institutions. Links with other primary schools exist, for example, through the local authority, including meetings for co-ordinators and newly qualified teachers. Staff visit local playgroups to meet children before they transfer to Glebe, and close liaison occurs with staff from the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. The school works closely with Brunel and South Bank Universities, offering experience to students, who are training to become teachers. Such students were present during the week of the inspection and what was observed suggests that the school's involvement in such training is of good quality.
- 30 The presence of pupils from a range of ethnic backgrounds makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff from non-European backgrounds provide further opportunities for pupils to develop favourable attitudes towards people from different traditions. Overall, what is provided to help pupils' personal development is satisfactory. However, arrangements for their moral and social development are good. This picture is similar to that reported in 1997.
- 31 A satisfactory basis exists for the spiritual development of pupils. The school's assemblies meet statutory requirements for collective worship. Those who lead assemblies promote pupils' participation. Furthermore, when pupils show excitement, or demonstrate a positive spiritual or aesthetic response about work or ideas in lessons, they are allowed and encouraged to do so and teachers are very aware of the need to promote pupils' self-esteem. For example, praise and encouragement were generally used appropriately and freely during the inspection, so pupils could understand the need to value each other and each other's work, interests and achievements.
- 32 Provision for moral development is good. Pupils are taught right from wrong and systems exist to promote positive moral attitudes. For example, when pupils show respect, or are helpful to others, an award system is used to reinforce it. Rules are displayed clearly in classrooms and these expectations are regularly explained to pupils. Teachers provide positive role models for their pupils and celebrate their good behaviour, values and attitudes. Issues of morality are discussed in assemblies and pupils who were asked were confident that their teachers would be willing to discuss dilemmas that might face them.
- 33 Provision for social development is good. Opportunities for pupils to collaborate on tasks and topics are planned in lessons across a range of subjects. For example, in music, pupils perform compositions together. 'Talking partners' are also arranged, so pupils have someone with whom they discuss and try out their ideas or check their understanding. They are also encouraged to carry out jobs, routines and activities to help their classrooms run smoothly, such as carrying registers to the office, handing out resources to each other and operating equipment. The school also provides the opportunity for them to act as class and school councillors. Members of these councils are elected in each class, so pupils gain early experiences of democratic processes.
- 34 Sound opportunities for cultural development are available. In a range of subjects, such as music, geography, art and religious education, opportunities are planned for pupils to learn about features of other cultures. However, during the inspection, little evidence was seen that the school makes

use of pupils' own knowledge of their home cultures to underline and celebrate diversity. Western heritage is promoted well in history and pupils are given opportunities to appreciate poetry and story telling in literacy hours and reading.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 35 At the time of the last inspection, procedures to ensure pupils' welfare were sound. The school has continued to offer pupils a caring and supportive environment where day-to-day personal care is particularly apparent. Procedures to assess and keep track of pupils' progress have improved considerably in the areas of literacy and numeracy and enable teachers to plan work for all pupils, individually and for different groups, including those with special needs and those with impaired hearing. Parents are both invited and positively encouraged to attend reviews of arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, at which their children's future targets are discussed.
- 36 The headteacher and staff know pupils well and are committed to ensuring that they feel safe, comfortable and secure while in their care. Daily first aid, care for pupils who are unwell and those with specific needs are efficiently co-ordinated by the welfare assistant. Procedures for child protection conform satisfactorily to local guidance. However, documents do not contain enough clear information for staff about signs and symptoms of abuse, and a regular, formal pattern of staff training is not routine. Regular safety checks of equipment are carried out and recorded. Regular checks of the site and premises occur and appropriate action is taken when it is needed. However, this work is not systematically documented and the health and safety policy has not been updated recently. These, and other minor health and safety issues, have been drawn to the attention of the headteacher and action is planned.
- 37 Pupils' personal development is promoted through the school's caring atmosphere and very good relationships that are evident between teachers and their pupils. Class teachers are very aware of individuals' personal needs, difficulties and requirements for learning. They use this knowledge to monitor personal development informally. Any serious concerns are discussed with the headteacher, although information is not always recorded in a standard format. Procedures that recognise pupils' achievements and good work with awards are recognised in a weekly 'awards assembly' and again each term in an 'achievement assembly'.
- 38 The school has good procedures for promoting pupils' behaviour. The headteacher and staff have high expectations of conduct. These expectations are not directly dependent on rewards or inducements and have become firmly embedded in the values and atmosphere of the school. Class teachers have individual discretion on managing behaviour in their classrooms, within a general framework of simple rules, and incidents of seriously inappropriate behaviour are discussed with the headteacher and recorded. When necessary, individual programmes are introduced to monitor pupils whose behaviour and attitudes give rise to concern. Pupils who were asked agreed that bullying is extremely rare and were confident that teachers would take any reported instances seriously.
- 39 Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. Class teachers have overall responsibility for monitoring the attendance of pupils in their class and following up unexplained absence with the administrative support of the school's office staff. Together with an administrative assistant, the headteacher is informed of unresolved issues. However, central monitoring of registers (for example, weekly) to establish particular patterns of absence or lack of punctuality does not take place regularly.
- 40 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress are satisfactory. Improvements have been made in English, mathematics and science, and procedures are now particularly good in English and mathematics. Information is gathered from a range of sources, including teachers' assessments, and regular use of voluntary and statutory National Curriculum tests. This information is recorded and used to keep track of pupils' academic progress and to inform teachers of patterns of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' past learning that have implications for future planning. A computerised system has been introduced to help with this

analysis. The school's deputy headteacher has taken responsibility for this work and manages it ably. He plans to extend its use to include science and information and communication technology in the near future. This system provides subject co-ordinators and class teachers with predictions about the levels of work that individuals should be capable of reaching in the future. From these predictions, targets are set for individuals, classes and whole year groups. Such information is also used to identify pupils whose performance in National Curriculum tests might be boosted with extra teaching in *Booster Classes*. Records of assessment in other subjects of the curriculum indicate the levels that pupils are working at, but do not make the systematic links with planning that are evident in the core subjects.

- 41 Teachers and support staff are committed to the wellbeing of pupils from the full range of ethnic groups that are represented in the school. In the case of pupils for whom English is not their home language, teachers are careful to check that pupils know what to do to make progress. However, it is unclear how far the needs of those one or two pupils with only a little English are met. Nevertheless, a new co-ordinator has recently been appointed and a very promising action plan has been drawn up.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 42 Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, together with those who responded to the questionnaires, were generally very supportive of the school and what it offers their children. Responses in questionnaires were particularly complimentary about what the school offers. Very few parents indicated disagreement with any of the statements that were put to them, although a significant minority felt that the school's range of extra-curricular activities is limited. The inspection team considered this concern, but found a very good range of activities. For example, these included visits to places of interest, musical opportunities, sports, work with computers, as well as a residential school journey. It is true, however, that most of these activities are provided for older age groups. Analysis of parents' responses on the basis of their children's ages suggests that this finding might account for the views of the minority. However, owing to the popularity of its clubs, the school has to limit numbers, partly for reasons of safety and partly so that the quality of experiences that it provides is not compromised or swamped by too large an attendance.
- 43 The main concern of parents at the pre-inspection meeting was about unsettled staffing in Year 1. Parents of pupils in this year group were concerned that their children had been adversely affected by staff changes and that their attainment would not be as high as it might otherwise have been. Several of these parents also believed that they had not received the same amount of information as they had during the time when their children had been in nursery and reception classes. Inspectors found that although these concerns may be justifiable, the headteacher and governors had taken matters very seriously in seeking solutions. Inspectors confirm the headteacher's view that present arrangements for Year 1 classes are the best that are available and look far more stable than earlier in the year. Furthermore, observations of lessons in these classes found no appreciable differences in quality from that found in the rest of the school.
- 44 At the time of the previous inspection, the school's partnership with parents was sound and information that was provided was satisfactory. Both these aspects are now good. The school has developed its links with parents successfully. Induction procedures establish positive links that continue over pupils' time in the school. Nearly all parents believe that management of the school is good. Several commented about the headteacher's qualities of approachability and willingness to listen and think seriously about what they say, even when she does not necessarily agree with them. They are also pleased that this open approach extends to their children, whom they overwhelmingly believe enjoy going to school. Parents are invited to class assemblies, concerts, an annual open day and consultation evenings about their children's progress. Each year a questionnaire enables parents to express opinions about specific areas of school life. A recent focus has been upon homework. Parental support is encouraged and several make an important direct contribution to pupils' learning by helping in classrooms. A supportive parent/teacher association arranges social and fund raising events that make a considerable contribution towards particular projects such as the computer suite, as well as subsidising outings and visits to ensure that all pupils have equal access to them.
- 45 A large majority of parents work with their children at home. From reception onwards, pupils are encouraged to take reading books home and parents respond well, supporting the school and their children by sharing books, listening to them read and signing their reading diaries. Other appropriate homework is usually set regularly and supports what pupils learn in lessons.
- 46 Information for parents is generally good. Frequent newsletters and other letters provide a flow of information about important deadlines, forthcoming events and related matters. The prospectus

contains useful information about what is available and is supplemented with a helpful induction booklet for parents of pupils joining nursery and reception classes. Each term, parents receive outlines about themes and topics that will be covered during lessons. This information is sufficient to enable parents to talk about these topics with their children and to support them generally. Meetings are arranged from time to time to provide insights into what is taught in particular subjects. A recent science evening is a good example. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting spoke very highly of this meeting, explaining that it had been both enjoyable and informative. Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress through two formal consultation evenings and two written reports. They receive a brief report during the year, in addition to a full written report on individual subjects in the summer term. These documents provide parents with clear information on their children's strengths and weakness and include targets for improvement. Parents are also offered the opportunity to discuss these reports should they wish to do so. This level of provision is better and more frequent than that usually found and represents good practice.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 47 At the time of the last inspection, leadership and management were described as effective, although some improvement was required in the areas of monitoring of performance, procedures and use of records of assessment and the management of procedures for pupils with special educational needs. These areas have received attention since then and, overall, both leadership and management are good now. The headteacher is a very good leader. Her qualities of accessibility and approachability are still apparent. She has a strong commitment to both the professional and personal wellbeing of her staff and to the care of pupils and the standards that they achieve. As a result, the management of staff training and performance are strong features that have contributed to improvements in the overall quality of teaching and to the issues for improvement that were identified in the last report. Her deputy headteacher supports her ably and has taken a particular responsibility for developments in the systematic use of assessments of pupils' progress. This work is currently paying dividends in raising standards in English and mathematics. Plans have been drawn to extend such procedures to science, and information and communication technology. The co-ordinators of these subjects are particularly knowledgeable and effective, so it is likely that these developments will have a similar strong impact, which is the outcome that is being sought. All the school's co-ordinators have similar commitment to the subjects and areas of work that they manage. Particularly effective co-ordination is apparent in design and technology, and development of provision for children in nursery and reception classes. The special educational needs co-ordinator also provides good management of the support and provision that is made for pupils with such needs. Provision for pupils with impaired hearing is managed very well. Provision for pupils from backgrounds where English is not the mother tongue is managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator. He has begun with the preparation of a very good action plan. However, not enough time has elapsed for this plan to be put into practice.
- 48 Governors carry out their responsibilities well, although a minor omission from their report to parents was apparent. They acknowledge the part that the headteacher plays in encouraging their involvement and share her vision for future direction and high standards. Through a structure of committees, they discuss what the school provides for its pupils. They monitor information to ascertain whether standards and features that have been identified for improvement are being addressed and managed adequately. Several governors visit the school regularly. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs, for example, explained arrangements whereby co-operation between staff and parents is encouraged and assured.
- 49 Evaluation of the school's results and monitoring of its overall performance are now good. Action taken to improve the quality of teaching has been effective since the last inspection. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching that was observed in the 1997 inspection was considerably higher than it is now, whereas very good and excellent teaching is higher than it was then. Areas identified in the school's current improvement plan are very close to those found in the inspection. Commitment to strengthen these aspects is strong, both amongst governors and staff. Furthermore, the school's procedures for assessing and improving the performance of teachers

are strong, with very clear links between training and meeting both the school's and the individual's needs. Arrangements for newly qualified teachers meet both local and statutory requirements and are thorough.

- 50 The school's use of its resources, including its funding, is good. The cost of implementing its plans is worked out and governors keep a check of spending through a finance committee. Adequate funds are made available to introduce new initiatives and to ensure that planned developments occur. When the school receives funds that are earmarked for a specific purpose, senior managers ensure that subsequent spending of this money is legitimate. The school's last budget showed a relatively high figure to be carried forward. However, mobility of pupils led to uncertainties over funding in the next year so, in the event, much of this figure was eventually paid back to the local authority. New technology is generally used well. For example, the budget, records of assessment and individual education plans for pupils with special needs are all computerised. Nearly all teachers are confident to use computers and new technology in support of their teaching. The headteacher and chair of governors are aware of the link between seeking best value for money and educational standards, ensuring that money is spent wisely.
- 51 A good number of teachers and teaching assistants with sufficient expertise and experience meet the needs of pupils, including those with impaired hearing. Administrative, welfare, caretaking, cleaning and midday supervisory staff all make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. Accommodation has improved since the last inspection, with the addition of a new computer suite and library area, which is currently undergoing development. New demountable classrooms have been introduced for pupils in reception classes, Year 4 and Year 6. These rooms have good amenities and sufficient space to teach the National Curriculum effectively. However, they are situated at some distance from the main school, which results in valuable teaching time being lost for these pupils when they travel to the main building for subjects such as physical education and information and communication technology. The older demountables that house Year 5 classes are unsatisfactory, lacking important facilities and beginning to show signs of disrepair and ageing. The school hall is spacious and supports physical education well, except during cold weather, when its temperature drops considerably.
- 52 Resources for teaching and learning have also been improved since the last inspection. They are very good in information and communication technology and for pupils with impaired hearing. Good resources are also apparent for children in nursery and reception classes. Resources are at least adequate to support learning in all other subjects. The newly developed library area is close to the point when it can be put into full use. Its stock has been checked and arrangements are in place for further support by loans from local services.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 53 Senior staff and co-ordinators have worked hard to meet the issues for improvement that were identified in the 1997 report. They have also identified other factors to make an impact on raising attainment further. The main items that have been identified by the inspection team already form part of the school's improvement plan.
- 54 The headteacher, staff and governors should continue to raise overall standards further, especially (but not exclusively), in writing in Years 1 and 2, and in science, through the school, so standards match those achieved in English and mathematics, by the time pupils leave in Year 6, by:
- (1) continuing to focus on handwriting and spelling (see paragraphs 4 and 85);
 - (2) reviewing the effectiveness of how time is allocated to subjects across the curriculum, with a view to allocating more time to those that could make a strong contribution to standards in writing (such as religious education and history) (see paragraphs 6, 21, 24, 88, 119, 122 and 141);
 - (3) placing greater emphasis on identifying and tailoring work for pupils who are especially gifted and/or talented (see paragraphs 10, 17 and 26);

- (4) putting into effect, as quickly as possible, the action plan drawn up by the co-ordinator of English as an additional language (see paragraphs 9, 17, 26, 41, 47 and 87);
- (5) reviewing the consistency of planning of scientific enquiry (see paragraphs 7, 21 and 99);
- (6) introducing a system for tracking and targeting pupils' progress in science that is similar to that used in English and mathematics (see paragraphs 40, 47 and 103);
- (7) reviewing the use of individual and group education plans to ascertain whether the inclusion of targets for science would help to raise attainment of pupils with special educational needs, including those with impaired hearing (see paragraphs 26 and 98).

Other features that governors might wish to include in an action plan

- (1) Improve accommodation for pupils in Year 5 (see paragraph 51).
- (2) Pursue improvements to heating in the school hall (see paragraph 51).
- (3) Improve uses of assessment in subjects across the curriculum (see paragraphs 40, 109, 115 and 138).
- (4) Involve pupils at firsthand in the celebration of cultural diversity (see paragraph 34 and 143).

SPECIALLY RESOURCED PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH IMPAIRED HEARING

- 55 The provision is Hillingdon Borough's special resource for pupils with impaired hearing, from nursery age to Year 6. It has places for nine pupils. Pupils have varying degrees of hearing loss in a range that is technically described as from severe to profound. This description means that the potential effect on their learning is considerable. Pupils are normally assessed before they enter school and are supported by the Borough's *Service for Sensory Impairment* which refers pupils to the school. Pupils nearly always have a statement of special educational needs before their arrival.
- 56 The provision, the quality of teaching and the teaching content are very good. As a result, pupils with impaired hearing are making very good progress. The policy of early intervention is proving very effective in its impact on their learning. Pupils entering the nursery with language delay associated with their hearing difficulties are often able to achieve standards of attainment in English that match national expectations by Year 6. Similar progress is also found in science and mathematics. Records show that a few pupils with impaired hearing achieve very well indeed compared with their starting points, attaining at a level above that normally expected for their age. This very good achievement is a clear improvement since the last inspection when pupils with impaired hearing were nearly always attaining below normally expected levels. Pupils who enter the school at a later time tend not to reach such levels, although they clearly make very good progress while at Glebe. As numbers of pupils attending the unit are comparatively small, it is not statistically valid to comment about trends.
- 57 Very good teaching is based on very careful planning and the commitment, experience and dedication of teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants. Close links exist with class teachers and other adults in the main school. This very good practice ensures that class teachers' weekly planning is well informed with regard to the associated learning difficulties and needs of pupils, which are mainly in skills of language acquisition. As a result, the inclusion of pupils with impaired hearing into classes in the main school is of a high order. Nevertheless, it is not rigid or prescriptive, so when pupils can benefit, they are withdrawn into small groups for literacy, which provide specialised teaching and support and, in mathematics, consolidation and reinforcement of skills learnt during classroom numeracy hours. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their pupils' abilities, and use their experience in teaching such pupils to devise appropriate support. As a result, expectations of what pupils with impaired hearing can achieve are high. Teachers have a very good rapport with their pupils, which helps with communication. Although placement into the special provision is based on oral learning, teachers sometimes use signing in lessons in the main school. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the specialist teacher wanted to ensure that a pupil with impaired hearing had grasped a particular teaching point, so signing was used as a quick means of checking that did not disturb the flow of the class teacher.

- 58 Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are generally very good. They appreciate opportunities to take part in learning, either with other pupils of their age in the main classrooms, or in withdrawn groups alongside other pupils with impaired hearing. They show enjoyment in their learning and their ability to complete set tasks. Other pupils accept their presence very well and involve them in learning, both in pairs and groups. A good example occurred when a pupil with impaired hearing and a fully hearing friend helped each other in finding objects that contained right angles. Their discussion indicated that they accepted each other on a completely equal footing, questioning whether a certain object actually did contain the required angle.
- 59 The teacher in charge of specially resourced provision provides very good management and leadership and has taken a major role in the many improvements and initiatives that have been undertaken since the previous inspection. An example of this progress is the introduction of the looped system (apparatus that supports hearing electronically) installed in the school's hall. This system makes assemblies and other functions a lot easier to follow both for pupils with impaired hearing and for visitors with deafness. The two teachers of the hearing impaired and their support staff work very closely as a team, combining their experience and knowledge to optimise learning experiences for their pupils.
- 60 Assessment in the form of notes taken in lessons and observations of pupils' progress are formally reviewed on a regular basis. Parents are invited to meetings that focus on pupils' statements of special needs, meeting all statutory requirements, and records are used to help plan future work.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	78
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	23	31	20	2	0	0
Percentage	3	29	40	25	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	14	275
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	21

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	39

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	54

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	22	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	22	24
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	41	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (82)	85 (100)	90 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	25	23
	Girls	18	18	19
	Total	41	43	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (97)	90 (90)	88 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	34	22	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	30	33
	Girls	20	15	19
	Total	50	45	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (76)	80 (82)	93 (97)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	30	33
	Girls	16	16	20
	Total	42	46	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (68)	82 (55)	95 (84)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
169	0	0
0	0	0
9	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
18	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
6	0	0
47	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.2
Average class size	19.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	302

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
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	£
Total income	928,916
Total expenditure	869,447
Expenditure per pupil	2,429
Balance brought forward from previous year	23698
Balance carried forward to next year	59,469

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate: 31%

Number of questionnaires sent out	289
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	29	3	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	51	42	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	40	2	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	48	12	1	8
The teaching is good.	54	36	7	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	55	11	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	1	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	36	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	39	47	8	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	64	29	3	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	45	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	28	27	1	17

Overall, parents' opinions are very supportive of what the school does for their children. Just over half of all responses registered strong agreement with statements. Strong disagreement was very low.

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

- 61 Currently, 22 children attend the nursery class each morning and another 45 attend full-time in two reception classes. Children are usually admitted in two main groups in either September or January, depending on their birth dates. However, discussion is currently underway to admit younger three-year-olds at the beginning of the summer term.
- 62 Children's backgrounds are varied, including families in both the Royal and United States Air Forces, and attainment when they first join the school also covers a very wide range. For example, a few pupils enter with impaired hearing. These pupils often display associated delay in their acquisition of other skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy. One or two pupils each year come from backgrounds where English is not the mother tongue. Understandably, these pupils sometimes display a limited English vocabulary. Nevertheless, another significant number of pupils have very advanced skills and vocabulary for their age. With this broad range, the fairest summary is that attainment on entry is around average, when judged overall. In nursery and reception classes, children are taught the six areas of learning that are nationally required for their age. The overall quality of teaching is consistently very good and includes aspects of excellence, which is an improvement since the last inspection. This high quality is based on very good leadership on the part of the co-ordinator for the age group, high levels of commitment to meeting children's needs and knowledge of what should be taught and how. Teamwork amongst all teachers and nursery nurses is high. As a result of these strengths, planning and expectations of what the children can achieve are also high. However, records show that a significant number of children join the nursery and then leave again before entering Year 1. Several others join in the reception classes. Therefore, not all children are present throughout this early stage of their education, so not all of them benefit fully from the high quality teaching that is provided. Overall attainment therefore remains at around average by the time that work on the National Curriculum begins in Year 1. The results of tests that are set for young children when they begin school are broadly consistent with these findings.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 63 Children's personal, social and emotional skills cover a wide range when they enter the nursery. Several have had experience of local playgroups, but others come straight from home. Care is taken to assess children's different experiences and adults work hard to instil a sense of belonging, based on personal care and making children feel comfortable and liked. At first, a few of the children find it hard to sit still and listen, and to take turns. However, very good teaching, which emphasises kindness to each other and planned activities that both entail and require co-operation, soon result in good social learning.
- 64 Very good teaching of these skills continues into reception classes, so children who have attended throughout both age groups attain high standards. Overall, nearly all children are likely to achieve the nationally described early learning goals that are set for personal, social and emotional development. Several children are likely to exceed them.

Communication, language and literacy

- 65 Individually, children make very good progress through the stepping stones (descriptions of what young children are expected to attain at different points in nursery and reception classes), towards the attainment of the early learning goals in this area of learning. Nearly all children currently in the reception classes are likely to reach the goals by the time they begin the National Curriculum. However, a few children may not do so because they join the school too late to benefit fully from the very good teaching that takes place, or because their starting points in this area were well below what is usual. Conversely, other children, usually those who have been at

the school throughout, are already matching what is described in early learning goals and are therefore on course to exceed them by the time they enter Year 1.

- 66 Children in the nursery learn to recognise letters and to write them down. During the inspection, they were fully absorbed in a theme about puppets, so they wrote related words that began with “p”. They also learnt the associated sound, demonstrating good concentration and listening skills. These were also apparent when the story of *Elmer* was read to them. Most children spoke with confidence and clarity in response to questioning about the colour of Elmer and the other elephants in this text.
- 67 Very good provision for, and teaching of, reading development continues in reception classes. Children share big books, reading together in groups and engaging in individual reading at home and at school. They have a growing number of words that they recognise in text. Opportunities are frequently taken to emphasise sounds that different letters make and to extend vocabulary. Nearly all children are able to write simple words and several are able to write phrases or sentences, especially when they are supported by their teacher or a nursery nurse. Children with impaired hearing learn basic skills very effectively. This finding was exemplified both in main classrooms and when they were withdrawn for extra support. In a session in the unit, three children listened very attentively when their teacher read from *Dear Zoo*. They demonstrated good understanding of the text, when answering questions and considerable enjoyment, persevering with speaking, and supplementing speech with signing to communicate ideas that they could not make clear in words.
- 68 Teaching of communication, language and literacy is very good. In both nursery and reception classes, plenty of conversation is used across a wide range of experiences and activities. Children are constantly encouraged with supportive praise, such as “Well done, what a superstar!” whenever they try or achieve something new. Each pairing of teacher and nursery nurse work together outstandingly as teams, with excellent understanding of children of this age. As a result, children learn to appreciate stories, making progress at a fast rate.

Mathematical development

- 69 Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals for mathematics. In the nursery, children count forward and back and recognise numerals at least as far as ten. Their awareness and understanding are acquired during frequent short sessions and also incidentally. Their teacher and nursery nurse are very quick to take opportunities to ask questions about number, such as “how many?” The teacher is adept at using opportunities across the areas of learning to develop mathematical ideas and she uses mathematical language well.
- 70 Reception children receive a daily session that is similar to a numeracy hour. For example, in a very good lesson, all children were actively engaged in sorting and identifying objects by shape and colour, with particular emphasis on ideas such as this shape has three sides, so “...it must be a...?”. The brisk pace and well-chosen tasks resulted in all children making quick gains in their learning. Other children enjoyed using a computer to draw and label shapes, including squares and circles.
- 71 Teaching of mathematical development is very good. In the nursery, both the teacher and the nursery nurse have a thorough knowledge of this area of learning. Opportunities to talk about shapes in the environment, to count and to consolidate ideas about number are frequently followed up. In the reception, very good teaching continues. It is based on very careful planning and lessons that prepare pupils well for what they will meet further up the school. This style of teaching therefore supports learning very effectively.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 72 In nursery and reception classes, children are provided with a variety of good experiences, which help to extend their knowledge about the world. Nearly all of them are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area.

- 73 Every day, children in all classes receive opportunities to play educationally and to experience resources that promote learning about the world. In the nursery, well-chosen stories and a range of different activities help to develop their understanding of ideas about places that are near and places that are a long way away. They use sand and water; use construction kits; make pictures and models, and use toys that help them to learn about, for example, different means of transport, animals and farms.
- 74 In the reception classes, similar work helps children to learn about life at an earlier time in the past and in other countries. Imaginative uses of home corners in all the classes promote the acquisition of vocabulary very well. For example, in one room children explored ideas associated with animals and veterinary surgeries.
- 75 During the inspection, a strong feature in all three classrooms featured the use of computers. Children used the keyboard and mouse to operate a range of programs that supported literacy, knowledge of mathematical shapes, art and knowledge of the world. A very good lesson, in a reception class, helped the acquisition of children's skills in the computer suite.
- 76 Teaching of this area of learning is consistently very good in nursery and reception classes. Teachers and their nursery nurses are very knowledgeable and understand how to engage young children's interest and how to develop their learning. Teachers are particularly adept at using children's enthusiasms to carry their understanding forward. For example, a snowfall had fascinated children in the nursery class. However, it was insufficient to make a snowman. To overcome the disappointment, their nursery nurse drew an outline on the ground, so children were enabled to "build" their snowman by piling snow within the shape.

Physical development

- 77 Teaching of children's physical development is very good; nearly all children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time enter Year 1.
- 78 All children in the nursery receive regular opportunities for physical activities such as running, jumping and balancing, unless the weather is poor and they are unable to go outside. A variety of wheeled, steerable toys and climbing equipment are available for children's use in the fenced outdoor area. In reception classes, children have timetabled access to the school's hall, field and playground areas. In a very good lesson in the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse led activities very well, encouraging children to use the equipment inventively. For example, they acted as traffic lights, so children learnt to control stopping and starting.
- 79 Throughout the nursery and reception years, children are provided with frequent opportunities to use small tools and instruments, including paint brushes, pencils, scissors and crayons. Children learn to use their hands and fingers accurately, and develop co-ordination of these fine movements. Management of the children is usually very good, which ensures that they are safe when using apparatus and simple tools alike.
- 80 In nursery and reception classes, the children have opportunities through art, music and daily activities to develop creative abilities. As a result, most children are expected to achieve the early learning goals in this area; some are currently on course to exceed them, and only a few are below standards that are typically seen.
- 81 Children in the nursery explored colour and texture while building a theatre for puppets. They painted sections of the cardboard model; they demonstrated care and skilful use of brushes for children of their age. They also enjoyed singing simple number songs and chants from memory and responded well to clapping rhythms. Such skills are developed further in reception classes. For example, children were observed using rubber shapes to print patterns of their own, choosing

colours and arranging their own designs. Similarly, opportunities to sing and practise rhythms build further on what they do in the nursery.

- 82 Teaching is very good in all classes. Teachers plan a wide variety of creative activities, including listening to and making music, simple dance and artwork. Good resources and equipment are used very well to promote learning.

ENGLISH

- 83 The 1997 inspection report judged standards of pupils' attainment in English as in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. According to the 2002 National Curriculum test results, standards in reading and writing were close to the national average at the end of Year 2, though well below average in comparison with similar schools. Pupils' performance at the end of Year 6 was well above average both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Current inspection findings are largely consistent with an improving picture overall.
- 84 Based on work during the inspection, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is currently in line with national expectations in Year 2 and is a little above what is normally expected in Year 6. Many Year 2 pupils contribute to classroom discussions well. Higher attainers sustain concentration and respond positively to opportunities such as teachers' questions to develop their oral skills. However, the range is wide, and several lower attainers lack confidence and appear hesitant when answering questions. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, many – particularly those with high attainment generally – are both very confident and articulate. However, a significant minority of pupils through the school, particularly those with special educational needs or speaking English as an additional language, are less confident when speaking to an audience. During the inspection, little evidence was found for pupils to practise such skills on a regular basis in, for example, improvisation or drama.
- 85 Overall, reading standards are above average in Year 6, owing to several higher attainers who read very fluently and demonstrate advanced skills such as understanding of characterisation and clear ideas about how stories that they read might develop. These higher attainers are clearly very good readers. They combine information from a variety of sources, including non-fiction and the Internet and interpret it accurately and creatively. Their skills of scanning and skimming are well developed. Examples of such skills were evident in lessons that focused on how Walter de la Mare used words and phrases to create images in *The Listener*. Strategies, such as guided and silent reading, have begun to pay dividends in terms of pupils' responses to literature and thereby overall progress. In Year 2, standards are closer to average. The majority of Year 2 pupils have a developing awareness of the sounds that letters make and nearly all read accurately, if not always fluently. Several display good understanding and expression. However, a few pupils are more hesitant. Many pupils through the school explained that they enjoy reading poetry. Owing to redevelopment work, the school's library was not fully operational during the inspection. Nevertheless, pupils knew how to use a library, although several younger pupils did not have favourite authors.
- 86 Currently, standards of writing are a little above average at the end of Year 6, but slightly below average at the end of Year 2, although pupils are clearly being given opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Year 2 pupils, particularly higher attainers, describe characters from stories, demonstrating the use of appropriate adjectives and basic punctuation. However, a significant minority, especially those with special educational needs and a few of those learning English as an additional language, have difficulty with writing correct sentences independently. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate understanding of how to structure stories. Pupils of all abilities, particularly higher attainers, pay increasing attention to grammar and punctuation. Year 3 pupils have started extending their vocabulary in writing instructions while those in Year 4 demonstrated imaginative uses of adjectives in descriptions of a magician's room. Older pupils were observed building skills related to drafting and evaluation of writing. However, a significant minority of pupils throughout the school have difficulty in coming up with ideas to sustain writing at length. Spelling and handwriting are improving features, although difficulties persist for a few pupils in Years 1 and 2. Some of them do not relate their good handwriting practice to everyday situations.
- 87 Overall, teaching is good, including a high proportion that is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In the good teaching, effective questioning reflected good subject knowledge. It enhanced pupils' response and understanding well. Teachers use resources imaginatively, engaging pupils in their own learning, and establishing a brisk pace. Planning for these lessons is often linked to homework, and good organisation and management have a

positive impact on pupils' behaviour. When teaching did not reach this high standard, it was either because planning did not take account of the different needs of pupils sufficiently, or because learning was not sufficiently assessed and emphasised in plenaries at the end of the lesson. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, providing them with clear explanations of what to do, thereby supporting teachers effectively. As a result of this generally good teaching, pupils' learning is also good. Nearly all pupils show high levels of motivation and concentration. Younger pupils answer questions co-operatively and older ones engage readily in discussions. Many pupils show the potential to carry out independent research of their own, although opportunities to do so were infrequent during the inspection. For example, pupils are enthusiastic about activities and collaborate well, when opportunities arise, as when older pupils sought examples of alliteration and onomatopoeia. Uneven numbers of boys and girls in recent years have produced statistical differences in the results of the genders in National Curriculum tests. No such differences were apparent in work that was seen. Although pupils with English as an additional language often attain good results in tests, it is unclear how the needs of those few at early stages of acquiring English are met initially. A new co-ordinator has been appointed and has drawn up an action plan that has the potential to rectify this matter.

- 88 Co-ordination is sound and has resulted in the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy since the last inspection. This development benefits from the support and advice of a teacher with officially recognised advanced skills and of a local authority initiative known as *Closing the Gap*, which seeks to raise pupils' achievements in English. Assessment procedures are being developed well with the support of the deputy head and resources are also well managed. Books, both in classrooms and the library, include a suitable and accessible range of literature including non-fiction. The co-ordinator is also aware of how opportunities to write and research in other subjects can have an impact on literacy.

MATHEMATICS

- 89 Overall attainment is currently in line with the national average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6, as it was at the time of the last inspection. However, these judgements indicate that standards are better than they were, because national averages are higher now than five years ago. More pupils are therefore achieving at the expected level and at a level above that normally expected for their age than previously.
- 90 Pupils enter Year 1 with sound levels of attainment in mathematical development. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is generally good and, as a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. A weaker element is that worksheets are often used, so pupils do not learn to present their work for themselves, or to explain their thinking in their own ways. Nevertheless, teachers' knowledge of the subject and their good planning of steps that pupils need to make are good, so basic skills of number are acquired effectively. The quality of teaching is also good overall in Years 3 to 6, so pupils continue to make good progress in their learning, particularly in number work and its application, which are central elements in the National Curriculum. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and expect it to be neatly presented. However, marking does not always indicate to pupils how they might improve, or show them what to do next.
- 91 Teachers throughout the school have good knowledge of the subject and plan their lessons well, sharing learning objectives with pupils. However, some teachers tend to adhere too rigidly to the year group plan and do not adapt it to meet the needs of their particular pupils, changing it where necessary. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are generally well used to give pupils an understanding of their own learning. Common features of good and very good lessons are the way in which teachers motivate all pupils to learn and how effectively they structure their lessons with a good balance between direct teaching and independent learning. Inspired teaching in a Year 2 lesson, for example, resulted in enthusiasm for learning and pupils building on what they already knew to devise strategies for working out missing numbers in subtraction sums. The class teacher took advantage of the small number of pupils in her class to teach all at their own level, ensuring a very good balance between direct teaching and independent learning. A high quality environment for learning was established and a strong relationship with pupils resulted in

excitement and joy in learning. In lessons similar to this one, rigorous questioning is well used to challenge pupils' thinking and to deepen their understanding. In a very good Year 4 lesson, high quality teaching was used to challenge pupils to devise strategies for finding areas of different rectangular shapes. In consequence, pupils gained a very clear understanding of how to divide irregular shapes into rectangles and to use simple formulae for finding the area of each and adding them to get the result. When lessons did not reach this high quality, it was usually because pupils' interest was not captured to the same degree. For example, teachers tended to keep the whole class sitting on a carpet for too long, rather than providing activities that challenged pupils with ideas at their own level in groups. As a result, the pace of learning slows and teachers do not spend enough time building on what pupils know, can do and understand.

- 92 The recommendations and content of the National Numeracy Strategy are mostly well used to support learning and, many features, such as oral sessions and discussions of strategies, have a secure place in teachers' methods. An analysis of pupils' books shows that applying mathematics to problem solving, shape, space and measurement are covered systematically and thoroughly. The only weakness in provision is that opportunities to develop data handling skills are infrequent.
- 93 Development of mental computation is strong through the school. All pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons, and their understanding of mental strategies is often good. In the most successful lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in these activities. The very good relationships that exist in the school give pupils of differing attainment the confidence to offer answers, knowing that they will be appreciated. Teachers use a good range of resources such as number fans and miniature white boards to allow all pupils to have a go at all questions during oral sessions. This good practice also permits teachers to assess how all their pupils are getting on. In the best of these sessions, questions are carefully targeted to challenge both the whole class and to target the needs of individuals. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 3, the class teacher rigorously directed questions at groups of pupils as they worked with a computerised toy.
- 94 The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and includes support that allows them to be fully included in each lesson, so they make progress at similar rates to those of other pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are also fully included in lessons. No difference was apparent in meeting the needs of boys and girls. Teachers generally ensure that boys and girls work in mixed groups, according to their current levels of attainment.
- 95 Pupils develop a good understanding of the basic number system and of place value. Most pupils currently in Year 2 are beginning to understand how the place that a digit occupies alters its value and the effect on a number as a whole. They sequence numbers to 100 and beyond, with a good understanding of which numbers are odd and which are even. At the end of a very good lesson in Year 2, higher attaining pupils calculated in their heads that 55 and 45 makes 100, while nearly all other pupils managed similar additions as far as 50. Because of the teacher's good questioning, pupils went on to apply their knowledge to solve subtraction problems such as "what do you take from 20 to get 12". Work shows that by the end of Year 6, pupils' understanding of place value is sufficient to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals quickly by 10, 100 and 1000, and to calculate fractions and percentages of quantities. A consistent approach to the teaching of mathematical vocabulary is apparent through the school so, by the end of Year 6, pupils describe situations mathematically with symbols, words and diagrams. Pupils are taught to use formulae to find areas of squares and, in Year 5, they are taught to identify all the symmetries of 2-dimensional shapes. A strong feature of most lessons is that teachers make links between using and applying mathematics, numeracy and algebra, and also shape, space and measurement, to ensure that all are understood to sufficient depth.
- 96 Subjects such as science, geography and design and technology make a good contribution to pupils' uses of number and measurement. Homework is regularly set to support pupils' learning and to prepare them for the next stage of their education. Parents are well informed by the school how to help their children's understanding at home.

- 97 The subject is very well managed and conscientiously led by a well-informed co-ordinator, who is ably supported by the previous co-ordinator. Both are very good teachers and are able to offer good advice and example to others. Teachers' plans and pupils' work are closely monitored to ensure that what is taught is planned effectively. All teachers have been observed in their classrooms and given feedback and advice to help achieve consistency of practice. National and other tests are set and analysed to identify weaknesses in pupils' understanding, or to identify any groups of pupils who might be underachieving. Very good procedures are in place for checking the extent and rates of pupils' progress and for setting realistic but challenging targets for future work. Classes to boost pupils' performance are very well used to prepare Year 6 for their National Curriculum test. Higher attaining pupils are given opportunities to enter mathematics competitions and challenges. They achieve very good results in these, which reflect good teaching of the subject. A satisfactory range of resources supports teaching and learning and these are well managed. The co-ordinator has a clear vision about further improvements. She has, for example, planned to continue to improve teaching and learning, and to increase resources to support the rising standards. Learning support assistants are well trained, efficiently prepared, and provide very good support to pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

- 98 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is currently in line with national averages. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 were above national expectations, with those of Year 2 in line. Results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests of pupils in Year 6 were above average. The main reason for these differences is the different make up of the individual year groups. Pupils with English as an additional language generally attain at expected levels for their age by the time they reach Year 6, and some of them do better than this. Pupils with special educational needs receive the support of teaching assistants and specialised teaching. However, it has not been the school's practice to include targets for science in pupils' individual education plans, which could be holding back their progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been addressed well in a number of areas. For example, liaison between class teachers and teachers of pupils with impaired hearing is now consistently good. Nearly all pupils now make at least satisfactory progress through the school, and many older pupils make good progress. This is a clear improvement since the last inspection when progress was simply satisfactory throughout. Furthermore, information and communication technology is now used regularly as a means of recording, or for extending pupils' knowledge. In Year 6, for example, pupils used a CD-ROM to find out about the heart.
- 99 Pupils in Year 2 have completed a topic about themselves, demonstrating knowledge and understanding at expected levels. They are beginning to understand inherited differences between individuals. For example, they know that some babies inherit brown hair while others have black, and that some have blue eyes whilst others have brown. Pupils sort animals according to criteria, such as numbers of legs or whether they have wings. They have developed a good understanding of healthy foods that help growth. Pupils know how to make electrical circuits that will light a bulb or make a motor work. However, recording of scientific enquiries frequently involves the completion of worksheets. Although these sheets remind pupils that they must plan what to do first, what to do next and the need to make a prediction, they limit the planning of tests and experiments that pupils do for themselves.
- 100 The school has adopted nationally recommended schemes of work in science and, by the end of Year 6, pupils experience the full range of what is required in the National Curriculum. Units of work are taught in a way that builds upon prior experiences well. For example, in Year 6, pupils undertake further activities on electricity, building on work that they undertook in Year 4, which in turn builds on what they began in Year 2.
- 101 Work that pupils have carried out recently in Years 5 and 6 shows good understanding of life and the processes of living organisms, including parts of animals and plants. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils visited five places around the room, where they were given specific tasks to complete. One task involved working with a model of the body. Pupils were asked to locate

heart, lungs and rib cage. As they did so, a parent helper asked them a very good range of probing questions to check understanding and to take their learning further. At another place, pupils used a CD-ROM to help them see how the heart works. They disassembled a diagram, and then reconstructed it. The lesson ended with pupils sharing information. Pupils were amazed by the many facts that emerged and proceeded to test one another. Understanding of physical sciences, such as the use of newtons to measure forces, magnetism and electricity meet national expectations.

- 102 In all the lessons that were observed, the quality of teaching was at least good, which is an improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. This good teaching is based on good planning and management of pupils that ensures thorough learning of basic skills.
- 103 A good programme of monitoring and advice develops teaching and checks on standards of attainment. Action plans are devised to address areas for development and these are closely monitored by a good, knowledgeable co-ordinator, who is a member of the senior management team. Teachers undertake assessments at the end of scientific topics and complete records for their class, reflecting what each pupil has achieved. However, at present these records do not track individual progress as thoroughly as those in English and mathematics.

ART AND DESIGN

- 104 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and, in Years 2 and 6, attain standards that are in line with national expectations. This picture maintains standards that were found at the time of the last inspection.
- 105 By the end of Year 2, pupils explore ideas using a variety of materials and processes. They try out tools and techniques and apply them to their work. They learn about the work of artists such as L. S. Lowry and Van Gogh and create their own images in a similar style. They study texture and colour by looking closely at natural materials. They mix paint, creating different shades and tones, and experiment successfully with different media such as paint, pastels, pencil, clay and collage, sometimes combining these into one picture.
- 106 From Years 3 to 6, pupils consolidate previous learning and practise new skills and techniques well. However, the quality of sketching is sometimes not as good. In a work scrutiny, the difference between the work of older and younger pupils was not consistently clear. Pupils learn about the work of artists such as Cezanne, Degas and Paul Klee, and create pictures based on these artists' styles. They begin to evaluate and discuss different methods and approaches used in their own and others' work.
- 107 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In one of the lessons that was observed, excellent teaching occurred. This lesson was in Year 6 and featured very good subject knowledge and excellent use and encouragement of artistic vocabulary. As a result, pupils' learning was particularly thorough. Teaching employed very good methods, such as the use of pupils' and artists' work and of photographs to evaluate different techniques. Excellent contributions of support staff also contributed to very good learning. Pupils learnt to experiment with different techniques, used correct technical vocabulary themselves, and many of them successfully created the effect of movement in their pictures. The results of pupils with special educational needs were largely indistinguishable from the results of other pupils, which contributed strongly to their self-esteem. Teaching was less effective when pupils received less obvious opportunities to develop their own ideas, restricting their creativity and imagination.
- 108 Cultural and spiritual links to other subjects are evident. For example, in history, pupils record information using skills of sketching and drawing. Good examples were gas masks in their study of World War II, and Tudor portraiture. In information and communication technology, pupils use programs such as *Colour Magic* to create images in the style of Mondrian and Jackson-Pollack.

Pupils' self-esteem and perseverance are encouraged by teachers and result in good attitudes. Pupils enjoy art, generally taking pride in what they achieve and valuing each other's work.

- 109 The co-ordinator is new to the role. However, she has correctly identified that assessments do not provide sufficient information about what pupils need to do next, so this feature is an area for future action.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 110 At the time of the last inspection, overall attainment was described as in line with national expectations by Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Currently, standards are above what is normally expected in Year 2 and often they are well above by Year 6. Pupils' achievements are often very good. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school whereas, in the last inspection, it was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Improvement since the last inspection has therefore been good. Little difference is apparent in the progress of different groups of pupils. For example, those with special educational needs attain similar standards to others.
- 111 In similar lessons in parallel Year 2 classes, pupils worked on designs of *Joseph coats*. They tested various textiles for durability and colour. Good planning, which was followed through into teaching, ensured that pupils understood the need for bright colours. The use of technical language was a strong feature. Words and phrases such as "seams", "methods of joining", "evaluation of different techniques" and "sewing" were either explained when necessary or used naturally by adults and pupils in both lessons. Nearly all pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of why they should carry out tests on a range of materials and try out methods of joining them before designing and making their coats. Their ideas for joining textiles were particularly good and included sewing, stapling and gluing. Their reasons for decisions about these methods were firmly based on what they observed. By Year 6, pupils have acquired knowledge of many types of technology, using simple hydraulics, electricity and mechanical devices to design and make working objects. Written evaluations of their work showed thoughtful assessment of how it might be improved and of the difficulties that they encountered and solved during construction. Some of the hats with moving parts that they designed and made during a whole school project to mark the school's recent jubilee were of a very high quality. It is also clear that what is taught builds carefully on previously acquired skills. For example, in another good lesson in Year 4, pupils used their knowledge of electrical circuits to test different types of switch to see what would work best in a torch that they had designed. Links with science were strong in this lesson and good links with other subjects were also apparent in other years. For example, in Year 3, pupils were working on ideas for an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus with a lid that would open by remote control.
- 112 The high standards that are evident in this subject are firmly based on consistently good teaching. In all lessons that were observed, expectations of pupils were high and planning was good. Teachers explained what they wanted pupils to do and how they were to achieve it with considerable care and clarity. As a result, pupils were enthusiastic about their tasks and worked at a good pace. Resources were readily available and met the requirements of what was set. Learning was therefore advanced thoroughly. A good example of this was in a lesson in Year 3. When pupils were asked about how they might finish their work, it was clear that several had already looked at ancient Egyptian patterns on the Internet. This good use of computers also resulted in good ideas about how hieroglyphs might be used as appropriate decoration.
- 113 Co-ordination is clearly good and has contributed much to the standards that have been achieved. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and shares ideas and expertise willingly. A portfolio of work is being gathered, partly as a celebration of work that pupils carry out, and partly to exemplify levels of attainment that are achievable in each year through the school.

GEOGRAPHY

- 114 Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. These findings are the same as those of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make progress at similar rates to their classmates, based on their prior attainment.
- 115 The school has worked successfully on a number of issues since the last inspection and improvement is sound. For example, lesson plans have become more detailed, providing fuller information about specific tasks, and what pupils are expected to know at the end of lessons.

However, planning is inconsistent in providing for groups with different prior attainments. This factor is more evident in Years 1 and 2, where whole classes frequently use the same worksheet, than in classes further up the school. These worksheets sometimes lack sufficient difficulty for higher attaining pupils, and depend on adult support for slower learners to make progress. Nevertheless, a scheme of work that was introduced at the time of the last inspection is now well known to teachers, who generally use it well. As a result, learning is based on good sequences of acquired knowledge and skills. Assessment procedures are in place. As in the last inspection, teachers assess pupils when they complete topics, identifying those who have not yet acquired the knowledge that was expected, as well as those who have exceeded it. However, such assessment is seldom used on a daily basis to inform future planning.

- 116 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been following the travels of Barnaby Bear. Barnaby or one of his relatives visits many places around the world, accompanied by members of staff or pupils. Teachers use the photographic evidence, souvenirs or postcards from Barnaby's travels to promote learning. Pupils acquire good information about similarities and differences between Ickenham and the places that Barnaby visits. For example, Year 2 pupils speak knowledgeably, and with interest, about the visit of a former member of staff, who posed as Barnaby when visiting Africa. World maps are displayed in classrooms showing Barnaby's travels and whereabouts. Pupils develop a good understanding of how the use of land influences jobs, settlements and how people live. They are also beginning to relate patterns of weather and climate to food production, explaining some of the challenges that people may face when the weather lets them down. Pupils in Year 2 spoke confidently about their recent study of the seaside. Good links with history emerged when they made comparisons between the seaside now and in Victorian times. For example, pupils explained ways of travelling to the seaside that are different compared with the past. Furthermore, they pointed out that entertainment and leisure have also changed since Victorian times. Through these links, pupils are developing a good understanding of the changing uses of land and some of the factors that influence it.
- 117 Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and includes several good features. A very good lesson was observed in Year 6. Other teaching that was observed directly was satisfactory. As a result of this teaching, effective learning takes place. These judgements confirm that teaching has improved since the last inspection when its quality was described as simply satisfactory through the school. In Year 6, pupils were compiling a fact file on mountainous regions. Their teacher reminded them about different types of sources that are available to them when seeking information. Very good subject knowledge ensured good uses of technical language, such as "...including secondary sources of evidence when undertaking research". In response, pupils suggested several such sources, such as the Internet, library books, maps and, indeed, their classroom displays. This lesson was very well-planned, indicating the new knowledge that pupils were expected to acquire. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm contributed to successful learning about several natural features of mountains. A good task for pupils to take home ensured that this learning would be consolidated.
- 118 Learning resources are systematically checked and updated. Information and communications technology is used for research and for printing maps and photographs. The present co-ordinator has only recently taken up leadership of the subject, and has already identified a number of priorities for development in an action plan. So far, he has not had opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, but this element is planned for the future.

HISTORY

- 119 Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with what is normally expected for the age groups. These standards have been well maintained since the time of the last inspection. Teachers and pupils have a high interest in history, and pupils are offered an interesting curriculum, which fully meets statutory requirements. As a result, their knowledge of certain features, such as the order of historical events, is often good for their age. The main weakness is that, on occasions when worksheets are used, the historical skill of combining, in writing, information from different sources is not developed.

- 120 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 find out about the past by hearing about events before they were born. Adult visitors from the local community are invited into their classrooms to help with this work. They are also encouraged to involve their parents and grandparents. They are provided with simple sources of information, such as pictures and toys from the past to estimate when they were made and to stimulate interest. However, in lessons seen during the inspection, the range of books that was used to support learning was limited. A display of pupils' work shows that they are taught to recognise changes that have occurred in their own lives as well as to make comparisons between life now and the childhoods of their parents and grandparents. Analysis of past work shows that younger pupils learn effectively about the lives of famous historical characters, such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. Teachers are beginning to make increasing use of literacy lessons to teach aspects of history. For example, during a week that was focused on non-fiction texts, reading was based on the Romans in England. This clever use of time ensures that the National Curriculum is fully taught, even though the time allocated to the subject is less than in other schools. By the end of Year 2, pupils show an increasing sense of the passage of time and begin to perceive why people in the past acted as they did. The understanding of pupils with special educational needs is often similar to that of other pupils. However, they struggle with written work, so what they record tends to be less detailed. Conversely, more able pupils generally write more than others.
- 121 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop their sense of chronology and understand that the past is often divided into eras with distinctive features of costume, architecture and art, such as Ancient Egypt, and Tudor and Victorian England. Their learning is thorough and completed work is well presented, showing pupils' interest in the subject. In Year 6, knowledge and understanding are generally at nationally expected levels, although pupils have a good understanding of the order of eras and changes within them. Places of interest such as Hatfield House, Hampton Court, the Victorian School Room and the British Museum are visited to support learning and used well to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school also makes effective use of dramatic storytellers, such as a Roman soldier and Florence Nightingale, to excite their interest. Overall, however, the range of sources that pupils use is not as broad as it might be. Opportunities for them to develop skills of historical enquiry, combining what can be learnt from artefacts, books, documentary evidence from past times and similar evidence are therefore not strongly emphasised.
- 122 Teachers generally recognise how the subject can contribute to pupils' writing skills. However, in some lessons seen, pupils spent too much time sitting on the carpet, leaving them with too little time to practise enquiry skills and to research and record for themselves. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are prompted to reflect on questions such as "should children work in factories?" and to consider what it was like for these children. Similarly, they questioned the reasoning that lay behind the evacuation of children during World War II. As a result of such considerations, they increase their understanding of moral dilemmas and of the importance of treating all people with respect.
- 123 The scheme of work, linked to recent national recommendations about what should be taught and how to teach it, guides teachers' planning. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic leadership. Assessment procedures linked to this new national guidance are being introduced, so teachers can be more effective in determining what pupils know, understand and can do in the future. Recent improvements made in provision for information and communication technology and development of the school library mean that the school is now well placed to help pupils develop skills of enquiry more fully.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 124 Standards of attainment in information and communication technology are in line with what is nationally expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. This level of attainment is a clear improvement on the previous inspection when standards were below national expectations. These improvements in pupils' attainment owe much to good in-service training that has increased

teachers' confidence and competence in the use of new technology, and the school's investment in a computer suite with modern computers, in addition to keeping at least one system in every classroom. Pupils are therefore receiving more, and better, teaching of the subject.

- 125 By Year 2, younger pupils are able to use a computer mouse to access and control programs for themselves. They enter text from the keyboard, print out their work and close programs. For example, they used *Starting Graph*, a simple program for processing data, to produce a bar chart of the colours of friends' eyes. Skills in word processing are developing well. For example, even pupils of younger ages changed font sizes and styles confidently. In a lesson on *Colour Magic* (a computerised art program), they demonstrated how to draw straight lines both vertically and horizontally and to fill in areas of the screen with different colours. This lesson provided strong links to pupils' cultural development and knowledge of art, when they produced pictures similar to those of Mondrian. Good teaching in this lesson enabled pupils to understand both artistic and technical vocabulary. Language, such as "warm and cold colours", "fill button" and "print routines", was featured and understood.
- 126 Very good lessons were observed in Year 6, in which the teacher's strong knowledge of the subject led to very rapid learning of skills associated with producing spreadsheets. Pupils' confidence in the use of toolbars and buttons to control an *Excel* program demonstrated that nearly all of them have skills that match what is expected for their age. Pupils who experienced difficulty with this program were supported well by adults. Those with special educational needs often attained equally to other pupils. Skills are developed well from Year 3 to Year 6. In Year 3, pupils used *Compose*. In this program, buttons on the screen have musical notes attached to them. Some of these buttons are for the beginning of the piece, while others represent the middle and the end. If the user clicks the buttons in the correct order, a tune will be 'composed'. As a result, pupils learn that to control programs, it is sometimes necessary to work in a certain sequence. Pupils enjoyed the challenge and nearly all of them showed musical learning in composing the tune. Higher attainers also learnt how to change the tempo and tune. Pupils of different ages learn to use the Internet, searching for information on given topics and to copy relevant text and pictures.
- 127 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and in several lessons it was very good. Teachers know their pupils well and use appropriate questions to guide learning at a good pace. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Confident and competent use of a digital projector supports effective teaching of whole classes and pupils respond well to this good method. Teachers' management of pupils is another strong feature. It contributes much to the quality of learning, producing good attitudes amongst pupils. When in pairs they work well together, sharing their own expertise with each other. They listen to their teacher and are usually very keen to start a given task. They enjoy their learning and use of computers. This enthusiasm for learning is a testimony to good teaching and the good relationships that pupils enjoy with their teachers and with each other. In all year groups in which pupils with impaired hearing are present, they were included in lessons and made similar progress as other pupils.
- 128 The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership. An informative policy is in place and the subject action plan builds on recent improvements in the provision of new hardware and software. An appropriate scheme of work is in place and new procedures for assessment are being developed. Support is given to colleagues with the planning of lessons and in links with other subjects.

MUSIC

- 129 At the time of the last inspection, attainment was in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6. Singing was tuneful and music in lessons met the requirements of the National Curriculum. These standards have been maintained since then, although the quality of singing in lessons that were seen and during assemblies was often good.

- 130 During a singing lesson that focused on practising hymns and songs for use in assemblies, teaching was good. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 sang particularly expressively. In *Last Night I Dreamed the Strangest Dream*, they controlled the tone and volume of their voices well to match the words that they sang. Older pupils use simple non-standard forms of notation effectively to write down compositions. Furthermore, good provision of instrumental tuition, including violin, 'cello and woodwind, is augmented with a basic course on ocarinas for all pupils in Year 5. As a result, by Year 6, a large proportion of pupils have a sound beginners' understanding of basic elements of standard notation. Pupils listen to music attentively and willingly express opinions about what they hear, offering credible ideas about instruments that might be playing. Younger pupils are taught a good repertoire of simple songs and work on pulse and rhythm using a range of simple percussion instruments. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, pupils sang a Swahili song, paying good attention to its characteristic beat. Later on in this lesson, sound learning of musical opposites such as "loud" and "soft", "fast" and "slow", and "high notes" and "low notes" occurred. By the end of the lesson, nearly all pupils were aware that such opposites are important components of different tunes. Two lessons in Year 3 showed that learning builds carefully on what has previously been taught. For example, in one of these lessons, pupils used a computer program to sequence *Teddy Bears' Picnic*, appraising its pulse and rhythm to decide upon its correctness.
- 131 In lessons that were seen, the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory. Examples of good teaching were also apparent. The quality of instrumental teaching is consistently good. A commercial scheme that includes good advice about resources is used effectively in classes through the school. This scheme enhances teachers' knowledge of the subject and their expectations of what pupils can do. It ensures that non-specialist teachers are empowered to plan effectively and thereby to teach at an effective pace that engages pupils' interest. As a result, learning of basic skills is maintained satisfactorily.
- 132 Music makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Opportunities are planned for them to compose and perform together, and singing and an ocarina club are available outside lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with impaired hearing, are involved in activities alongside other pupils. These groups make progress at similar rates to other pupils. During the inspection, African and American pieces were used to exemplify teaching points in lessons, and Aaron Copeland's *Ho-down* was used to muster classes during assembly. Another assembly provided the opportunity for an ensemble of ocarinas to perform *Muss i'denn*. These pupils played with considerable confidence and aplomb. Concerts and performances to which parents are invited are also planned and provided.
- 133 Co-ordination is good, ensuring that music is valued amongst staff and pupils alike. The co-ordinator's willingness to support teachers with advice and training (both formally and informally) has resulted in non-specialists who are nonetheless confident to teach the subject and to maintain pupils' progress through the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 134 During the inspection, timetabling of work in physical education resulted in observations of dance and gymnastics. Pupils' overall attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with impaired hearing, and pupils with English as an additional language make progress at a similar rate to others. Standards in swimming exceed what is normally found, with nearly all pupils easily meeting the government's minimum requirement for safety, and many achieving long distances.
- 135 The school's policy for the subject is laudable. It includes a decision not to reduce time allocated to it, even in the light of pressures to focus on literacy and numeracy. This policy reflects the school's success in achieving a nationally recognised *Active Mark*, for its work in promoting healthy lifestyles, eating and physical fitness amongst children. A display in the resources area informs pupils of what is on offer, and also includes comments from past pupils about what they valued about physical education when they attended the school. A good plan to promote learning

in the long term is in place for Year 1 to 6. It includes the full National Curriculum for Years 1 and 2, entailing games, gymnastics and dance. With the required additions for older pupils of athletics, which is taught in the summer term, outdoor and adventurous activities and weekly swimming in Year 5, this full provision continues in Years 3 to 6.

- 136 Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated good control of movement and use of space, when working on short sequences in gymnastics. They included different ways of travelling, jumps, landings and rolls. Similar skills were apparent also in dance where they practised movements that were suggested by teachers. Higher attainers showed considerable imagination, including their own varied interpretations of the music. This work built closely on what was taught in Year 1. For example, in a good lesson in Year 1, the teacher ensured pupils' interest with reference to *Bob the Builder* as a source of ideas. Pupils jumped and bounced vigorously, using bent knees, and making sure that they had reasonable space, responding well to suggestions of how pneumatic drills and concrete mixers make movements. In carrying out such activity, pupils responded well to the mood of the music. Skills and understanding are developed well through the school. Pupils in Year 4, for example, explained the importance of warming up. They used demonstrations of their own and each other's work to refine skills. In this way, older pupils acquire understanding of the beneficial effects of exercise. They link skills and techniques into extended sequences of movement and understand how repetition and practice improve performances.
- 137 The overall quality of teaching is good and, as a direct result, pupils learn basic skills well. All teachers place emphasis on a warm-up at the beginning of the lesson, and allow time for a cool-down at the end. Adults dress appropriately for physical education lessons, setting a good example. Pupils match their teachers' example by dressing in the kit that is suggested. Teachers pay due regard to safe procedures, starting each lesson with reminders about safety, and checking apparatus that pupils set up. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons, working well together in groups, co-operating with each other. Teachers encourage them to offer each other feedback. This advice, alongside teachers' suggestions, is a powerful way of improving the quality of physical performance. However, on occasions, activities were directed too much at the start of lessons.
- 138 Co-ordination is good. Resources for the subject are adequate, with generous spaces for the subject inside and outside the building. However, the hall where indoor activities take place was cold during the inspection, especially when snow fell one day. It is likely that this factor inhibits pupils' enjoyment and thereby their achievements. Assessment procedures are in place, although systems have little application in day-to-day planning. Currently the subject is not the focus of review in the school's improvement plan, so formal monitoring of provision is not taking place. A good range of extra-curricular activities supports overall standards well.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 139 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, attain the standards described for their ages in the locally agreed syllabus.
- 140 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their understanding of the Christian faith and other religions including Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Year 2 pupils visit a church and know that symbols such as candles and the cross are used as aids to worship. They recognise that people wear special clothes for special occasions, such as for Baptism and marriage. They know that different religions celebrate similar festivals, such as Harvest, but do so in different ways. They consider Christian stories, such as *the Good Samaritan*, to understand how religions contribute to ideas about right and wrong. In Years 3 to 6, pupils demonstrate greater understanding of the key beliefs of Christianity and continue to develop their understanding of other faiths. They understand that religious belief gives people a sense of belonging and that believers in a faith must show loyalty to its teachings.

- 141 Good links are made with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 have opportunities to carry out independent research. In art, they look at religious paintings, such as the work of Michelangelo and explore Islamic patterns. The subject makes sound contributions to personal development. Year 5 pupils, for example, consider qualities in leaders and other people whom they admire, and pupils in Year 4 write about special places. Particularly high attainment occurred in this work, when pupils recorded ideas about places where people "...go to think or pray" or simply to "...cheer themselves up. My special place is my bedroom. I go there when I want to pray alone or just for some peace and quiet." That said, opportunities for similar expressive writing that might otherwise raise standards in extended writing are often missed, owing to shortages of time. This constraint means that much work is carried out either orally or recorded on worksheets.
- 142 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and contains examples of good teaching. In a good lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher brought alive the Bible story, *Jonah and the Whale*. Questioning was used well to extend pupils' thinking. As a result, pupils produced good ideas about why Jonah responded to God as he did. Pupils demonstrated good learning from religion, when they related the story to their own experience with ideas, such as "Sometimes I don't do as I'm told and mummy gets cross and then I'm sorry." However, sometimes too much oral work takes place and teachers speak for too long at the start of lessons. In one unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's methods were inappropriate in the particular circumstances. Management of pupils, however, is often a strength of teaching. It results in good attitudes amongst pupils. They recognise that different religions have similarities as well as differences and value beliefs that are different from their own. Furthermore, they enjoy opportunities to see and learn about artefacts from various religions.
- 143 Co-ordination is sound overall. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. For example, resources are better and now include artefacts from world faiths other than Christianity, although links with places of worship other than churches are insufficient.