

INSPECTION REPORT

THE SHERWOOD SCHOOL

Mitcham

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102646

Headteacher: Mr K Tyzack

Reporting inspector: Mr D Manuel
21090

Dates of inspection: 7th - 11th October 2002

Inspection number: 246222

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 10 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Abbots Road
Mitcham
Surrey

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Fax number: 020 8765 0265

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Nicholson

Date of previous inspection: 9th June 1997

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| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 21090 | Mr D Manuel | Registered inspector | Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Art and design English as an additional language | What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 9619 | Mr R Miller | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 24019 | Mr K Parry | Team inspector | Mathematics Geography Design and technology Special educational needs Educational inclusion, including race equality | |
| 30438 | Mr R Guest | Team inspector | Science History Physical education | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 32257 | Mr R Chalkley | Team inspector | English Music Religious education | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Sherwood School is a community primary school in Mitcham, Surrey. Until two years ago it was a first school. Since then it has undergone extensive changes. It has retained its top year for two consecutive years and will become an all-through primary school in a year's time. Pupils are currently aged from three to ten years. It has 323 full-time pupils on roll, from nursery to Year 5, above average size for this type of school, with 178 boys and 145 girls. There are 47 pupils on the register for special educational needs (14 per cent – below average); three have a statement of special educational need. Ten per cent of pupils are identified as being eligible for free school meals (below average). There are 60 pupils from minority ethnic groups and 74 children speak English as an additional language, only two at an early stage of acquisition. Attainment on entry indicates that children are below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Sherwood is a good school. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has managed the changes in the school's structure well. The school provides a very caring and inclusive environment which is naturally incorporated into the daily life of the school. Pupils' achievements and wellbeing are at the heart of the school's principles. Staff work effectively as a team and all show a commitment to provide the best opportunities to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential. This is evident in the good planning and teaching and the above average standards in six subjects by Year 5. Governors, parents and pupils all acknowledge the efforts of the headteacher and the staff. Much has been achieved, although there are still a few areas for improvement, of which the school is aware. Taking all factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school provides a very caring approach which encourages all pupils very well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and sets a very clear direction for the school.
- By Year 5, pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, history, and physical education.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils' obvious enthusiasm for school is reflected in their good relationships and behaviour.
- The school has good links with parents, and parents themselves have very good views of the school.

What could be improved

- Curriculum provision and procedures for monitoring how well pupils are achieving.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in June 1997. Progress in the identified areas for improvement has been satisfactory overall, bearing in mind the significant changes taking place in the school's structure. The need to improve assessment practice has been identified and new procedures have been implemented but there is still a need to track and monitor pupils' progress more closely as they move through the school, in order to challenge all pupils to reach their full potential. Curriculum planning has been improved by creating guidance for what should be taught in all subjects but there is still a need for regular review to cater for the full intended age range of the school. An agreed marking policy has been successfully introduced to ensure consistency in practice. Teachers with subject responsibilities still need to be more closely involved in monitoring and observing teaching and learning and sharing good

practice. In addition to these previous issues, good improvement has been made in raising standards in English, mathematics, ICT, history and physical education.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | Similar schools |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| reading | B | B | A | C |
| writing | B | B | A | B |
| mathematics | D | B | C | D |

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

Over the past three years, the trends in test results for pupils in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics exceed the national results. In tests in 2001 at the end of Year 2, results were well above average compared to the national average in reading and writing and similar to national averages in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results were above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. The good achievement by pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language and the very good achievement by higher attaining pupils contribute to these good standards.

Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average and inspection evidence shows that at the end of the reception year, attainment is at the expected levels relating to the early learning goals in all areas except mathematics, where attainment is still just below expected levels. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils in Year 2 achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics and achieve satisfactorily in science. Standards have improved in all aspects of English and in mathematics since the previous inspection. By Year 5 pupils attain standards in English and mathematics which are above expected levels, maintaining the good learning seen in Years 1 and 2. Standards in ICT, art and design, history and physical education are also above expected levels. Standards have improved in ICT and physical education. In all other subjects, attainment is at expected levels.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils' have high levels of enthusiasm and interest in their work and these good attitudes contribute well to their academic achievements. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good and is a significant factor in the happy life of the school. High standards are set and pupils respond well. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and carry out their duties conscientiously. These qualities contribute to the purposeful atmosphere and the climate for learning. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Current attendance is in line with the national rate. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons with almost three-quarters being good or better. There are now higher proportions of teaching that are good or better than at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently good and enables all children to make good progress in their learning. In Years 1 to 5, teaching is good and effectively builds on the good teaching of the younger children. The characteristics of the good and better teaching include good management of behaviour and high expectations of what pupils should achieve. These factors create a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons. Teachers question and prompt pupils skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions. However, in a very small number of lessons that were satisfactory overall, relative weaknesses include not sustaining the levels of challenge throughout the lesson and inadequate use of assessment information to track progress and plan the next steps in learning.

The teaching of English and basic literacy skills is good. Teachers provide a good range of activities that develop pupils' communication skills and engage their interests. Teachers provide good opportunities in other subjects to develop pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The teaching of mathematics is good and mental calculation is a strong feature of all mathematics lessons. Although there are some links made with ICT when pupils are involved in calculating, measuring and presenting information in graphical form, opportunities for using and applying mathematical knowledge are limited. Pupils' learning in this aspect is only satisfactory. In most literacy and numeracy lessons, pupils work well and share ideas to develop their learning. Great credit is due to the teachers and their assistants for their good support of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. This support results in good level of achievement for these pupils and the good standards achieved by the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The school provides a good and stimulating range of learning opportunities for pupils in the nursery and reception classes and a satisfactory range of work for Years 1 to 5. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Provision for these pupils is very good. They enjoy full and equal opportunities to the curriculum and achieve well as a result. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | The significant number of these pupils, receive the same good quality provision as other pupils due to the very good extra support they receive. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. All aspects are promoted well through assemblies, religious education and other lessons. Pupils are encouraged to discuss a range of issues and show due respect for the opinions and feelings of others and their associated cultures. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | A good level of care is provided. The wellbeing of all pupils is a fundamental priority for the school. |

The school has created a very good partnership with parents. Their views are very positive and they welcome the very supportive approach of the school and all its staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides very good leadership and gives a clear direction for the school. Key staff are in the early stages of leading and managing developments in their subjects and more work is needed in setting challenging targets for the full primary range. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Governors carry out their duties well and provide good support for whole-school development with the best interests of pupils in mind. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Effective strategies have been developed which ensure that the school takes decisive action to improve. |
| The strategic use of resources | Overall, resources are used well and support learning in all areas of the curriculum. The levels of staffing are satisfactory and the accommodation and its use are good. The school applies the principles of best value well. |

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children make good progress in school. • Behaviour in school is good. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping children to become more mature and responsible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would like the school to provide a more interesting range of activities outside lessons. |

The inspection team endorses all the positive views of parents. With regard to what parents would like to see improved, the team confirms the need for a wider range of activities. The headteacher and governors are aware of the need to increase the range of activities as the school admits the older pupils in the primary age range and have begun plans to increase them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery classes with levels of attainment which are below average for this age. Children make good progress in the six areas of learning during their time in the nursery and in the reception year. By the time children enter Year 1 standards in mathematics are still just below expected levels of the early learning goals. In the other areas of learning, namely communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, standards are at expected levels.
2. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 for seven-year-olds in Year 2 were well above the national average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics. Results show that almost one third of pupils achieve Level 3, which is above the expected level. Trends over the past four years have exceeded the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These results show that good levels of teaching and learning are maintained during Years 1 and 2.
3. Targets for the year 2001 were challenging but attainable and results were close to predictions. Targets for the current Year 2 pupils show that proportions of pupils attaining average and above average results are expected to be close to the 2001 results in English, mathematics and science. The school is committed to raise standards further and is well placed to do so.
4. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the current Year 2 attain standards in English which are above expected levels in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Pupils read fluently, accurately and with expression and develop a love of books. They develop good writing skills in a range of good learning opportunities. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and to each other and are confident in expressing their ideas in lessons. In mathematics, standards are above expected levels. Pupils have a good knowledge of number and calculate accurately. They are confident when describing the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. In science, pupils attain expected levels, particularly in physical processes and knowledge of different materials. In the other subjects, standards are above expected levels in ICT, art and design and physical education. These judgements indicate that since the previous inspection, standards have improved in English, mathematics, ICT and physical education, which previously had been at expected levels. In all other subjects, standards are at expected levels.
5. The current Year 5 pupils achieve well and attainment in English, mathematics, ICT, art and design, history and physical education is above expected levels. It is not possible to compare these standards with the previous inspection because at that time the school was still a first school. All groups of pupils achieve well and build systematically on their knowledge and understanding in most subjects. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress throughout the school as a result of teachers' careful motivation and the sensitive support of teaching assistants. Some pupils have more significant learning needs and a few have a statement of special educational need. These pupils also make good progress because of the extra support that they are given. Although a small minority with particular problems remain a long way behind their classmates, they achieve well in relation to their targets.

6. Higher attaining and average pupils have achieved well this year, due to the greater emphasis on planning and more challenging opportunities to extend their skills. As a result, these pupils make good progress towards higher standards and this is reflected in the proportions that achieve above average levels in national tests at the end of each year. The significant proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve their full potential. Teachers value all pupils equally and carefully identify those who are disadvantaged or need additional support in order to achieve their potential. In all classes and in subjects across the curriculum, good examples were seen of these pupils being provided with appropriate work and therefore being suitably challenged to achieve well. These opportunities were seen to good effect, particularly in literacy, numeracy and history lessons. Good reinforcement of ICT skills was seen supporting work in literacy, mathematics and art and design.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good overall and very good in Years 2 and 5 due to a high proportion of very good teaching. Pupils enjoy school and are eager to learn. The parents who responded to the questionnaire wholeheartedly agree. Pupils in Years 2 and 5 respond particularly enthusiastically to learning in English and mathematics and are eager to contribute in these lessons. In class, pupils settle quickly to work. They listen attentively to each other and to adults and are always willing to answer questions and discuss their ideas. In almost every lesson, pupils show good levels of concentration. Good co-operative working was seen in Year 3, during a history lesson, when pupils researched facts about the ancient Egyptians and helped each other to complete their tasks. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 often work independently. They are keen to use the ICT suite regularly to gather information and extend their knowledge of subjects.
8. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. High standards are set and pupils respond well. Pupils play and work well together, sharing equipment. No evidence of bullying or other oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. Pupils are very polite and friendly to each other, staff and visitors. There is no damage or litter around the school buildings and pupils use resources with care. Relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils are consistently of a high order and the school is a racially harmonious community. This has a good impact on standards achieved. Three pupils were temporarily excluded from school last year, reinforcing the school's high expectations.
9. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own values and beliefs as well as those of other faiths. Pupils in Year 4 have used role play to discuss choices they could make in their own lives to improve the lives of others, for example, sharing what they have with those less fortunate in society. Despite the lack of a formal policy, personal development is good, due to the inclusive approach by everyone in the school. Pupils learn quickly to adjust to the school routines and are soon settled into the school community. They respond well when given the opportunity to show initiative and many are confident and independent. There are missed opportunities, however, for the older children to use their research skills more often. Pupils exercise responsibility in class as they prepare for lessons and perform duties sensibly, such as returning registers to the office.
10. Attendance, at just over 94 per cent, is broadly in line with the national average and has been steadily improving over the past year. Medical reasons and family holidays taken

during term time account for most of the authorised absences. Punctuality is generally good and lessons get off to a prompt start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The overall quality of teaching is good and meets the needs of all pupils well. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons with nearly three-quarters of lessons being good or better. Good standards in teaching have been maintained since the previous inspection and with a higher proportion of very good teaching.
12. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Strengths include teachers using question and answer sessions skilfully with the whole class at the beginning and end of lessons. This approach enhances children's learning by ensuring their understanding of tasks and assesses their levels of learning. Teachers support children's development of early reading, writing and mathematical skills very well and so successfully develop these basic skills. Teachers and teaching assistants have very good systems for recording how pupils achieve in relation to the areas of learning and the early learning goals. This information is used well to ensure that all activities on a daily basis are relevant and purposeful for all children, taking account of their prior learning. There is good use of the outdoor space to enhance children's learning in all areas of their development.
13. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 5. The characteristics of the good and better teaching include good management of pupils' behaviour and high expectations of what pupils should achieve. These factors create a purposeful working atmosphere in classrooms, particularly in the literacy and numeracy sessions. Teachers value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs. The relationships between teachers and other adults in these lessons are good and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work. Teachers question and prompt skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways. These particular strategies were used well in a Year 5 literacy lesson, when pupils were learning about narrative and suffixes and prefixes. As a result pupils were keen to answer to show their understanding.
14. In most lessons, teachers discuss with pupils, what they are expected to learn and constantly remind them as the lesson progresses. This approach enables pupils to gain a good understanding of the extent of their own learning and how it relates to their specific learning targets. However, in a very small number of lessons which were satisfactory overall, relative weaknesses include not sustaining the levels of challenge throughout the lesson and missing opportunities to extend pupils' learning beyond the set task. Another weakness in these lessons is insufficient use of assessment to identify the intended steps in learning to challenge pupils more rigorously.
15. Other strengths include good subject knowledge and the use of subject-specific vocabulary to extend pupils' learning significantly. These strengths were demonstrated well in a Year 2 numeracy lesson which required pupils to identify the properties of different three-dimensional shapes reinforcing new words such as circular, rectangular and vertices. In most lessons, resources are used adequately to support the activities. This was evident, for example, in art and design when pupils could select their choices from a wide range of famous landscape prints. Teachers' subject knowledge is used well in the planning of these lessons and good links are made between subjects.

16. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy well by providing a good range of activities that develop pupils' communication skills and gain their interest. Teachers plan opportunities in subjects other than English, to develop pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. These are particularly evident in history lessons where pupils' work contributes to their progress in the basic skills of English. Sessions focusing on personal, social and moral education, when pupils hold discussions about issues that relate particularly to their personal development, are successfully used by teachers as opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Number work is effectively promoted and mental calculation is a strong feature of all mathematics lessons. Adequate links are made with other subjects such as ICT, when pupils are involved in calculating, measuring and presenting information in graphical form but teachers do not systematically plan tasks which encourage pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge. Pupils' learning is supported in other areas by teachers' clear understanding of how skills in one subject can be consolidated by experiences in another subject, as in links between literacy, art and design and ICT. Pupils are positively encouraged to work independently and in pairs, sharing ideas. These opportunities help them increase their levels of social and moral development successfully.
17. Overall, the quality of teaching of pupils with special needs is good because teachers focus on their particular learning needs to help them meet their individual targets. Teachers and assistants are patient and are clearly aware of pupils' emotional needs while supporting them academically. As a result, they grow in confidence when tackling new learning and are willing to try new tasks. When pupils are withdrawn individually or in small groups for extra help by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), teaching is very good. In each of the sessions seen, younger pupils made clear gains in basic reading skills and in their personal development as a result of her focused and explicit teaching. This makes a significant contribution to the above average standards achieved by the school in the national tests for reading at the end of Year 2 and throughout the school. The timing of such withdrawals is varied so that the pupils do not miss the same lesson each time.
18. Teachers make very effective use of the good number of classroom support assistants to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Good examples of this were seen in literacy lessons. Great sensitivity is shown for pupils with other special needs as shown in a reception class dance lesson when the teaching assistant's support enabled the full participation of a child with particular difficulties. Good provision for the all-round development of pupils supports the strong inclusive approach of the school and helps to create the very good relationships and good attitudes throughout the school. Homework is set regularly and all pupils have regular practice in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this successfully consolidates their learning in lessons.

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

19. There is good, broad curriculum provision for pupils at the school which meets statutory requirements. Its balance is satisfactory overall but the time allocated to some subjects, such as science, has been limited. The provision for the school's older pupils is satisfactory at present as they develop as Year 5 pupils who will remain at the school until the end of Year 6. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the Foundation

Stage are good. Very good provision is also made for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

20. The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 is good. It is broad, balanced and relevant. National Curriculum requirements are fully met. Continuing provision for pupils in Years 3 to 5 is satisfactory at present, as the school continues to prepare to cater for the full range of pupils from seven to eleven. It will be two years before the curriculum for these pupils is fully developed and many plans are already in place to develop curriculum provision effectively. The emphasis which the school has successfully put on the teaching of literacy and numeracy has put some pressure on the teaching of other subjects, noticeably science, history and geography. In science in particular, standards, whilst satisfactory, are not progressing as effectively as in other core subjects at present. The computer suite enhances the provision for ICT, which is used well to support many curriculum areas. The use of equipment and the development of skills amongst younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 have improved since the previous inspection. The provision for literacy and numeracy skills is good and the school has successfully implemented the national strategies for both subjects.
21. The school ensures very good equality of access and opportunities for all pupils whatever their background or needs. This success makes the inclusive nature of curriculum provision a strong feature of the school. Pupils with special educational needs learn alongside their classmates and therefore are involved in learning about the same subjects and topics. They have individual learning plans of good quality which are drawn up by the SENCO in consultation with class teachers and teaching assistants. They include targets that are relevant to pupils' needs and are achievable. They help, therefore, to motivate pupils to succeed. In a few sessions, individuals and small groups are taken out of the classroom to work on particular tasks related to the class work. This happens mainly to support pupils who are having difficulties with literacy and contributes strongly to the good progress they make in reading and writing. Emphasis within the school on early identification and intervention further strengthens provision.
22. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Health education is taught separately and supported by references in both science and physical education. The school has a good new policy on sex education, which fully caters for the emerging needs of older pupils. This is part of a well planned programme of personal development.
23. The school offers a good range of visits and a few extra-curricular activities. The current extra-curricular activities provided are unsatisfactory in range for a primary school. The views of parents are supported by the inspection team in this respect. As a former first school and now a designated primary school, the need to support all pupils with a range of activities to increase learning opportunities outside the school day has been identified as a priority for future development.
24. Similarly, during this period of transition, the school plans to extend the good links previously created with middle schools, to secondary schools, as Years 5 and 6 pupils are established. Parents and the local community value the school and think highly of it. The current need for security checks on all adults helping in schools and the backlog in clearing this meant that many of the parents and others in the community who help, were not in school during the inspection. Good links are established with the community and many intend to return and help the school when clearance has been obtained.
25. The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This maintains the good standards identified in the previous

report. Pupils' spiritual development is good. It is promoted effectively through religious education, in assemblies and in the caring approach within lessons. Pupils are helped to reflect on their own feelings and behaviour, and this encourages them to think about the effect of their actions on others. Teachers use good strategies which value pupils' views and relate their learning to a wider context, such as, 'why do we need to help starving children?' Teachers also use good strategies and provide a range of opportunities to encourage pupils to appreciate the feelings and emotions of each other, particularly evident in class discussions about matters such as 'why we need to try hard' and 'whether girls should play football'. In the school's very supportive environment, pupils flourish and respect each other's talents.

26. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. A strong moral code is taught through a whole-school culture, which incorporates all aspects of school life and forms the basis of the good relationships observed during the inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good role models by dealing with pupils in a calm and confident manner; as a result, pupils respond in a similar way. The school's values are reflected in the class rules that are displayed clearly in classrooms. Pupils know and understand these rules and show high levels of respect for each other and all adults in the school. Individual pupils add their own ideas for encouraging respect for promoting all forms of equality and care of property.
27. The very good provision for pupils' social development is firmly rooted in the school's strong, inclusive approach to creating a community where everyone is valued. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to share and work co-operatively and this is clearly evident throughout the school. Pupils understand that there are people less fortunate than themselves and enthusiastically raise money for charities such as Save The Children Fund. This caring attitude supports their social development well. In the playground, pupils are encouraged to share their games together in small groups, boys and girls, and in mixed ages. Well-organised educational visits provide good opportunities for pupils to extend their social interaction, while at the same time extending their learning in a range of subjects, such as literacy and art.
28. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good, an improvement from the satisfactory judgement made at the time of the previous inspection. Examples of interest in other cultures, include a range of music such as Indonesian, African and Indian and African and Indian dance workshops. In literacy, different year groups study the style of West Indian poetry and in art and design, Year 5 pupils study and work in the style of Aboriginal artists. Pupils also appreciate and learn about other faiths, such as Hinduism and Judaism, and their special festivals. Pupils learn about their own culture through visits to nearby art galleries and to ballet and opera. Inspired by these visits, pupils perform in a range of their own concerts and other performances. The good provision is effective in helping pupils develop an awareness of the multicultural society in which they live and prepare them for playing an active role as citizens of the future.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. Pupils are provided with a caring, happy and supportive environment. Parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and that they enjoy coming to school. There are satisfactory systems in place for safeguarding pupils' health and safety. Regular safety inspections are carried out and appropriate action is taken where necessary. Effective first-aid arrangements are in place for dealing with accidents and illness. The school provides a high standard of pastoral care through consistently good implementation of its agreed policies, including those for racial equality and special educational needs.

30. There are suitable arrangements for dealing with child protection issues and staff training has been undertaken to keep them updated. The headteacher is the designated person. Mid-day supervisors are kept informed where there may be concerns about any pupils and links with outside agencies are satisfactory.
31. There are good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements but unexplained absences are not always followed up quickly enough. There is effective liaison with the education social worker who works closely with the school in dealing with a small number of individual problems.
32. Good arrangements for promoting high standards of behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying, have been developed after consultation with parents, staff and the pupils. There are simple rules for the pupils, rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour. All staff throughout the school consistently apply these rules and governors carry out monitoring of the policy. Mid-day supervisors are also actively involved in applying these procedures. The school has good procedures in place to track pupils' personal and social development and is effective in the manner in which it sets targets for improvement. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and in actively involving the pupils in their own personal and social development. The needs of individuals with special needs are dealt with sensitively and supportively. There are high levels of awareness among teachers, assistants and other pupils.
33. The school has made satisfactory progress in establishing assessment procedures since the previous inspection. Although there have been improvements since then, this still remains an area for further development in order to assist the school's ongoing efforts to raise standards. Overall, the school's assessment procedures are satisfactory but as the school continues to move towards establishing classes for Year 6 pupils, it will need to develop more precise systems to track and monitor progress more closely. Based on the assessment information available, pupils in Years 4 and 5 are taught in sets of similar ability in mathematics. Evidence shows that this has been very effective in helping higher, average and lower attaining pupils to make good progress.
34. Pupils are assessed carefully when they first enter the school in order to identify their particular strengths and weaknesses. This information is used effectively to form groups and plan termly teaching programmes. It is also used as a first step in identifying pupils with special educational needs and for planning the extra support pupils might need as they enter their reception class. At the end of Year 2 the pupils are formally assessed as required by statutory regulations. The school has chosen to use the optional national tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 in order to monitor progress in mathematics and English and prepare pupils for the national tests at the age of eleven.
35. In other subjects, where national tests are not available, assessment methods do not match pupils' performance closely enough to National Curriculum levels. Teachers need to plan more accurately the next stage in learning in order to move pupils on from one level to the next. There is evidence, in English and mathematics, of good systems for assessment of academic progress which include assessment of work samples, portfolios of work, teachers' individual records of the work covered and class test results. However, these systems are applied inconsistently in other subjects and there is a lack of sufficient monitoring to provide a more precise picture of the stage of learning each pupil has reached in each subject. The assessment co-ordinator is aware of this and is preparing new procedures that will provide better opportunities to

track individual progress, identify strengths and weaknesses and, as a result, set well-focused and challenging individual targets for learning up to the end of Year 6 ready for the complete primary age range.

36. The school makes satisfactory use of the information it gathers through the current assessment process. Throughout the school, English assessment is used to form groups within the class for literacy lessons and in Year 5, mathematics results are used to form the numeracy classes. The headteacher and senior staff analyse the results of the national tests and assessments in English, mathematics and science in order to make comparisons with previous years' results and other schools. They also identify and address any areas of weakness and difference in the performance of pupils, for example, boys and girls. An example of the effectiveness of the school's analysis of results is in English. Scrutiny of the data revealed girls performing better than boys in writing – a national trend. Careful planning to meet the needs of the boys has resulted in an overall improvement to help them to reach the same levels as the girls. The annual reports to parents contain information about the levels of attainment in English and mathematics and comments on how pupils might improve.
37. Procedures for assessing pupils' special educational needs are good and ensure that pupils receive correct levels of support. All teachers are alert to the needs of individuals and this helps them to identify difficulties at an early stage. This is reflected in the very good provision made for these pupils in the reception classes. Individual education plans are reviewed and updated regularly and the SENCO keeps a close eye on pupils' progress. As a result, she and the class teachers know these pupils well and have a clear awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. In their responses, parents consider The Sherwood to be a very good school. They are very happy with what the school provides and achieves. They feel their children progress, reach acceptable standards and behave well. This is continuous improvement since the previous inspection.
39. The vast majority of parents attend consultation evenings and a reasonable number help in school and on trips. There is a parent association that actively secures funds for the school through organising events. Resources such as books, computer and playground equipment have been purchased as well as paying for a theatre company to visit the school.
40. The quality and quantity of information for parents is good. Information includes letters and newsletters from the school, parent association and governors. There are notices strategically placed around the school informing parents of forthcoming events as well as curriculum information for the forthcoming term. The school prospectus and the annual governors' report are both informative but lack certain legally required detail such as attendance rates, admissions information and details of provision for disabled pupils. The end-of-year reports are well written but sometimes lack sufficient detail about what a child cannot do and target information to help parents contribute to their child's education at home.
41. Good provision is made for parents to discuss the progress of pupils who have special educational needs. Opportunities are made for parents to be kept fully informed of the contents of individual education plans and to attend review meetings. The vast majority of parents find the staff of the school very approachable. They feel confident that any

concerns that they have will be listened to and acted upon. The induction procedures when pupils start school are good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. Since the previous inspection, there has been a period of significant change with the school having been designated by the local education authority, two years ago, to change from a first school to a primary school. There has been considerable disruption with building changes and additions. The leadership and management of the school, provided by the headteacher, senior staff and governors, are good overall.
43. The headteacher provides very good leadership and a clear educational direction for the work of the school, setting clear priorities and targets. The disruption and changes have been managed very well. The headteacher, together with the newly appointed deputy headteacher, has maintained the positive teaching and learning environment and very inclusive approach that is naturally incorporated within the school. The headteacher through his visible presence around the school and his formal and informal involvement with pupils sets a strong lead for his colleagues. The shared commitment by all to improve the quality of education provided for all pupils has been acknowledged by governors, staff, parents and pupils.
44. The senior management team is involved and committed to further improvement of the school. The headteacher observes all teachers and monitors standards of teaching and learning. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics manage their subjects effectively and have begun to make important contributions to improve the curriculum planning. The effectiveness of the literacy and numeracy strategies has improved and has resulted in better planning, teaching and achievement. Other subject co-ordinators are at different stages of development. Overall, there is a lack of involvement in monitoring teaching and learning in most subjects and, as a result, there is insufficient sharing of good practice.
45. The SENCO is well qualified and experienced in working with pupils with learning and emotional difficulties. She provides very good leadership. As a result, the positive picture outlined at the time of the previous inspection has been strengthened. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to further improve the very good provision. These include continuing to refine teachers' expertise, particularly in connection with the involvement of pupils in target setting and to respond to national initiatives concerned with disability. The school's provision is strongly supported and closely monitored by the designated governor who has a very clear view of the school's work in this aspect. All statutory requirements related to special educational needs are met.
46. The governing body has a good understanding of its strategic role. The school improvement plan for 2002/3 identifies a range of short- medium- and long-term priorities and targets very clearly, focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Individual governors play a full and active part in the life of the school. The governors fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities and help to foster the very good links in the community. The school's aims and values are very relevant and well communicated to staff and parents, reflecting the positive team commitment among staff and governors.
47. The school has an adequate number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and cover the full requirements of the National Curriculum. The monitoring of teaching and learning is becoming more closely linked to the school's own appraisal procedures, which meet statutory requirements for performance

management. Staff have an adequate range of individual strengths in subject knowledge and these are being increasingly shared to contribute to whole-school development in the curriculum and teaching. Induction procedures are good and new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers, feel well supported when they join the school, enabling them to settle quickly and successfully into their new roles.

48. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a good number of suitably trained and effective learning support assistants. They make valuable contributions to the work of the school and in particular to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. All staff have received computer training and this contributes to the good standards being achieved in ICT. Support staff and lunchtime staff supervise activities at playtimes and this adds to pupils' enjoyment as well as encouraging their social interaction. The efficient administrative staff, meals' supervisors, site manager and cleaners are valued team members and contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.
49. Accommodation is good and an improvement on the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection a computer suite has been added as well as two additional wings to house Years 1, 4 and 5. Provision has also been made for the special needs co-ordinator to have her own room for focused sessions with pupils and there is now a library with a dedicated area for music tuition. All the school buildings and outside areas are well kept and maintained. The interior is welcoming and spacious and provides a good environment in which pupils can learn and develop. Disabled access and toilet provision is also provided. The school has an adequate range of resources overall. They are good in physical education, ICT, English and in the Foundation Stage and considerably enhance pupils' learning in these areas. The school development plan has identified the need to increase the number of non-fiction books. Resources are well organised and easily accessible.
50. The overall efficiency of the school is good. The school has maintained the good standards of financial planning reported at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and governors have developed suitably structured procedures that effectively support the school's educational priorities. This is a process that now involves all members of staff in an annual review of the work of the school in order to identify and agree future priorities. Good use is made of new technology in all aspects of school life to improve efficiency levels and to support the curriculum. Specific funding, such as that for special educational needs, minority ethnic pupils and the national funding for ICT, has been used efficiently and resources acquired are used effectively to support teaching and learning.
51. The school successfully applies the principles of best value for money and is regularly involved in consulting and involving all those concerned in decision making about spending, including staff, parents and pupils. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services and resources in order to acquire cost effectiveness and, as a result, money is spent carefully. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are good, enabling the headteacher and governors to closely monitor and evaluate spending decisions, such as the provision of extra teaching support to help raise standards. The most recent financial audit took place four years ago and raised a small number of minor points which have been resolved.
52. Taking into account the below average levels of attainment on entry, the good achievement by pupils in Year 5, the good teaching and learning which take place and the above average standards achieved in English and mathematics in Year 5, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to further improve the good quality of education provided throughout the period of change to a primary school, and maintain standards thereafter, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve the monitoring and observation of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators in order to share good practice and evaluate provision for each new year group. (paragraphs 44, 74, 87, 107, 116, 121, 125)
- (2) Further develop the curriculum provision and assessment procedures in order to:
 - (a) regularly and closely, track individual pupils' progress throughout the school; (paragraphs 35, 36, 81)
 - (b) set challenging targets in the planning for all subjects up to the end of Year 6; (paragraphs 20, 36, 68)
 - (c) review the time allocation within subjects to ensure a better balance. (paragraphs 19, 20, 83, 105, 107)

Minor weaknesses to be addressed:

- (a) extend the number and range of extra-curricular activities; (paragraph 23)
- (b) ensure the governors' annual report contains correct information regarding attendance, admissions and disabled pupils. (paragraph 40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 67 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 33 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 0 | 12 | 35 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 0 | 18 | 52 | 30 | 0 | 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) | 44 | 323 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/A | 35 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 3 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 4 | 47 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 76 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 22 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 21 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data * | 5.4 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

* Current attendance levels are much improved with a rate of 4.6 authorised absence.

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

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2001 | 30 | 27 | 57 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | Reading | Writing | Mathematics | |
|--|----------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 29 | 27 | |
| | Girls | 26 | 26 | |
| | Total | 55 | 53 | |
| Percentage of pupils | School | 96 (97) | 96 (97) | 93 (94) |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| at NC level 2 or above | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |
|------------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 29 | 27 | 30 |
| | Girls | 26 | 23 | 23 |
| | Total | 55 | 50 | 53 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 96 (97) | 88 (90) | 93 (95) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88) | 89 (88) |

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 |

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 175 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|----|---|---|
| Mixed – White and Black African | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 38 | 2 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 33 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table 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) | 15.9 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 20.3 |
| Average class size | 25 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 7 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 184 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1.4 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 31 |
| Total number of education support staff | 3 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 75 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 10 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2001/2002 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 792,090 |
| Total expenditure | 783,046 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,345 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 22,105 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 31,149 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 4 |

| | |
|--|---|
| 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

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 367 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 34 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 82 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 74 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 56 | 41 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 55 | 35 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 68 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 68 | 24 | 6 | 0 | 3 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 68 | 24 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 82 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 62 | 26 | 9 | 3 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 68 | 26 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 68 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 12 | 32 | 18 | 18 | 21 |

[Percentages in each row may not total 100, due to rounding up or down in each section]

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

54. Children start in the nursery classes in the September, January or April, following their third birthday. They attend part-time initially. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but overall is below average for this age. Standards in mathematics are consistently below average. Children progress into the reception classes in the term following their fourth birthday. All children achieve well and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. As a result, by the end of the reception year, a good majority are likely to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning, except in mathematical development where standards are still just below expected levels.
55. The quality of teaching is good, as it was in the previous inspection. During this inspection, teaching was good in every lesson. The classrooms are very welcoming with attractive displays which celebrate the children's work and show them how much their work is valued. Teachers and their teaching assistants work together very well, intervening at opportune moments to pose questions and probe understanding. This allows children to develop skills at their own levels of need. Lessons are well organised and provide children with a very good range of interesting indoor and outdoor activities, which are securely based in structured play. Equipment is particularly well organised so that children are able to choose from a wide range of resources to support their learning. All adults working in the nursery and reception classes know the children well and use this knowledge to plan and deliver lessons successfully. Activities are carefully planned and timed so that the pace of the day is maintained. Support is particularly good for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with particular needs.
56. Assessment procedures begin before children start at the school to enable teachers to be aware of each child's needs as soon as possible. This early evaluation begins with the induction procedures, which are good and include links with pre-school groups and home visits. Parents and children have good opportunities to get to know staff before they start school through visits to the classrooms and a meeting with the headteacher. Once children have commenced school, regular observations are made during lessons and activities to identify exactly what the children have achieved and what they need to learn next. The outdoor area is used regularly for small groups of children to develop their physical and social skills. Good routines and work habits are quickly established so that all children are familiar with classroom rules and procedures and make good progress in developing basic social and academic skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. By the end of reception, most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. Children learn to develop skills of independence through quiet encouragement. Children take care when moving about the classrooms and the school. This is reflected in the confident way in which nursery children find their own space and develop their own ideas in sand play and the use of construction kits. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to play suitable games, encouraging them to take turns and share equipment. Good teaching encourages skills of co-operation which are developed further in reception classes through structured learning

activities. Children develop very good relationships together and learn to communicate with each other in positive ways through speech, song and actions. These qualities are very evident when nursery children sing together about currant buns and their song for the Harvest Festival. In reception classes, children sit quietly and pay full attention to those who are speaking. The good start that nursery children make in their personal, social and emotional development is reflected in the good relationships, attitudes and personal and social development found in the reception classes. Good teaching ensures that adults provide good role models and use positive encouragement, which results in the high self-esteem and confidence that the children develop quickly. All the children's answers and comments are received positively and welcomed by all adults working in the classrooms.

Communication, language and literacy

58. By the end of reception, most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers and teaching assistants successfully encourage children to talk about their personal experiences and they do so, confidently and happily, using appropriate language. Questions are used well to inspire children to talk freely about their work and to comment about stories they have heard. As a result, children develop the use of correct vocabulary. Thinking skills are developed well through carefully considered questions and prompts. The role-play areas, such as the 'house' and outside activities, provide good opportunities for children to talk together in stimulating activities that are carefully planned to promote the use of specific language.
59. Children make good progress in developing their early reading skills and habits due to good teaching of reading, particularly the teaching of phonics (letter sounds). Planning is structured and closely follows the national guidance. This means that children learn new initial and end sounds in a systematic way. Stories are carefully chosen to match children's interests and also to give good opportunities for them to learn about the way stories are structured and to recognise key words by sight. Children quickly develop into confident readers who talk at length about their favourite stories, such as those about animals. Many interesting opportunities are provided for children to learn about the things that interest them, for instance making pictures of their homes with the front door number showing. Children make good progress in developing their writing skills. They make good attempts at spelling the words they do not know using their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds and names to help them. Most write their first names unaided, forming most letters correctly. The good teaching in this aspect of learning in reception builds well on what children know from previous lessons in the nursery. Reception teachers monitor and assess children's progress very carefully and build up books of key words and sounds that can be read at home and reinforced by parents.

Mathematical development

60. A majority of children are likely to attain the early learning goals in mathematical development but a significant minority are still working towards the expected levels. Good teaching ensures that different challenges match children's needs, based firmly on assessments of their previous experiences. Particular emphasis is placed on teaching children to count and recognise numbers. This is done effectively through the use of number lines and number petals, to which children regularly refer, and the provision of different resources to help their learning. Well-structured activities make sure that children get regular opportunities to read, order and count groups of objects accurately up to ten and sometimes beyond.

61. Children correctly name regular shapes such as a circle, square, rectangle and triangle, and develop suitable language for describing the size and position of objects. They also effectively develop their mathematical ideas in outdoor activities when counting the numbers on puzzle pieces. Children's learning is well supported through these well-planned activities that involve interesting tasks and spontaneous play as, for example when using containers to identifying the range of capacity from empty to overflowing. The school's strong, inclusive approach is very evident in all lessons when encouraging children to reach their full potential.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. The majority of children are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Good teaching, through carefully planned themes and activities, helps children to learn about the world in which they live. For example, while finding out about homes and families, nursery children looked closely at house bricks, feeling the rough texture on them and taking rubbings of them. Reception children's knowledge about themselves, their families and homes is effectively reinforced through the development of speaking and listening skills when they look at photographs of themselves and discuss similarities and changes that they notice. All children use computers regularly and know that these function by using sound, text and pictures. Nursery children confidently use the mouse control to select and drag facial features to complete a head shape on screen. Reception children select from a range of clothes to 'dress Teddy'. They also develop early skills in using the keyboard letters to type common words and short phrases. Teachers make very good use of a stimulating range of indoor and outdoor activities to help children develop good learning habits in this area of learning.

Physical development

63. By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to attain the early learning goals and a small number to exceed them. Teachers plan well and demonstrate high expectations by encouraging children's independence. Nursery children have a good awareness of space around them when using equipment and they give due consideration to their own and others' safety when moving freely in different ways such as climbing, sliding, crawling and twisting. Reception children also enjoy the use of large wheeled equipment and show good control over them. These activities support their personal and social skills of sharing and taking turns. Teachers sequence tasks well to set different challenges for children and enable them to improve their physical control. Reception children were observed in a dance lesson performing sequences of expressive movement as they responded to drum beats, shakers and different musical tempos.
64. Suitable emphasis is given to developing hand control through early drawing, writing and painting skills. As a result of the suitable opportunities provided for writing and colouring, most nursery children have a firm pencil grip and form many letters correctly. They also show good control when using the computer mouse to carefully create their pictures on screen. Children's manipulative skills develop throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. Reception children build carefully with small and large construction equipment and cut with scissors reasonably accurately.

Creative development

65. Children make good progress in their creative development and most are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In response to the

well-planned and stimulating experiences provided by the teachers, nursery children build on their good understanding of colours and design when painting their cut-out sock shapes. Reception children were observed exploring different colour and texture in a range of materials including hand and finger paintings. As a result of the sensitive prompts and challenges by the teacher and the assistants, children talked enthusiastically about their finished pictures.

66. Children enjoy working with the good range of construction kits to make model toys. Early investigation and exploration skills are taught well through a good range of activities. In one activity, children built 'big fat snakes' from curved interlocking shapes. The children sing regularly and enjoy different aspects of music. They sing together tunefully and add actions to represent the different verses of '*Head, shoulders, knees and toes*'. Good management by teachers involves children totally and creates a happy learning environment where children's contributions are valued.

ENGLISH

67. By the end of Year 2 and by Year 5, attainment in English is above average. This is an improvement on the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection when standards were average. From a below average starting point, pupils show good achievement over time. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have their needs identified early and make good progress during their time in the school as a result of well organised and focused support in small groups where specific language skills are practised and reinforced.
68. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented with well-planned reinforcement of skills through most lessons in other subjects. Teachers plan the three-part lesson structure in detail and plan carefully with their year group colleagues to ensure that what is being taught in classes is the same. Teachers set targets for individual pupils and all of them successfully build upon what the children know, understand and can do. The school will need to continue to plan carefully and set challenging targets that ensure the same rate of progress if Year 6 results are also to be above average.
69. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and to each other. They follow instructions carefully and are enthusiastic to contribute positively and thoughtfully to discussions. They make good use of what they have learned and draw upon their personal experiences when making contributions. They have good attitudes to the subject and are confident in expressing their ideas and suggestions, knowing that they will be sympathetically listened to by adults and peers alike. This, along with the good level of teachers' questioning skills, ensures that pupils' achievement in speaking and listening is good at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Lesson observations confirmed that speaking and listening skills are being developed well in Year 5.
70. Standards in reading are good. Given the pupils' low attainment on entry to the school, they progress well in reading where standards have reached levels above national expectations by the end of Year 4. In Year 1 the range of reading ability is broadly in line with expectations. By Year 2 standards are above expected levels including a greater proportion of higher achievers than average. Children have good attitudes towards reading and are developing a love of books. They enjoy reading and many use the local library and nearly all take their books home on a daily basis. They are all aware of alphabetic ordering and describe how to find sections on particular subjects in an encyclopaedia. They read fluently, accurately and with expression. When reading unfamiliar words, Year 2 pupils use strategies that include sounding out letters and

using pictures to arrive at the correct word. In Year 4, pupils achieve above average levels.

71. By Year 5, children of the lowest ability range are already close to achieving the expected national levels of attainment for their age group with the higher attaining pupils well above expected levels. Given that the inspection took place in the first half of the autumn term, this represents a high level of attainment in reading. All pupils are taught well to use a full range of strategies, for example phonic, graphic and contextual, to help them read and spell accurately. Some very good teaching in the 'reading recovery programme' was observed when pupils were skilfully taught the basic skills of reading and the strategies required were reinforced. This programme, along with good teaching in the guided reading sessions, helps to ensure that above average levels of attainment are maintained. The school plans to use the newly created school library to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn about how a library works, how to find a particular reference book and to develop their research skills.
72. The combination of carefully planned lessons together with well focused literacy sessions and good teaching have had a beneficial effect on pupils' writing. The standards of Year 2 pupils are above the national average. It is a continuance of the improvement seen in recent years. The development of writing skills such as spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting are emphasised throughout the school with the result that, overall, the majority of pupils are achieving levels which are above average. By the end of Year 4, standards continue to be above average.
73. All pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their writing skills year by year. In Year 1, ICT was used effectively to reinforce an earlier literacy lesson. In Year 2 a good lesson was seen where the teacher was challenging the pupils to use a range of connecting words in order to improve their writing by finding good alternatives to the word 'and'. In another lesson, seen in Year 3, the teacher was helping the pupils to write a sequence of clear instructions and drawing attention of the need for precise wording. In Year 4 the pupils were learning how to write play scripts by rewriting part of a known story. In Year 5, pupils were observed learning about how to improve the opening to their stories. Further examples were seen where evidence of writing for different purposes and audiences, drafting and redrafting, personal accounts of events and retelling of stories were all observed. A good example of the quality of writing produced was in Year 5 when a pupil had written a letter describing an accident involving a friend who had fallen out of a tree. It was written in a very vivid and lively style and ended with a carefully worded paragraph in which the writer expressed an opinion about the subsequent punishment. All pupils are successfully taught to write in a legible, joined handwriting style.
74. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan carefully, assess pupils' progress throughout the lesson and work hard to ensure that the task set is appropriate to the current level of the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Most teachers set targets for pupils which are recorded in the front of each workbook. Marking is variable. In the best examples it offers praise and ways to improve and is closely linked to each pupil's targets. The co-ordination of English is good. Two teachers are responsible for the subject – one for infant pupils and the other for the juniors. They are knowledgeable and experienced and provide good support for colleagues by providing training, maintaining the good resource provision, assisting with planning and helping to assess pupils' levels of attainment.

MATHEMATICS

75. At the time of the previous inspection standards were at expected levels. They have risen steadily since then and are now above expected levels in both Year 2 and Year 5. This is mainly because there have been significant improvements in the way that mathematics is taught. These include the consistent implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy leading to more effective planning by teachers. It has also resulted in motivating tasks in the mental and oral sessions at the start of each lesson. These have had a positive impact, not only on standards of attainment but also on pupils' enthusiasm for mathematics that is evident throughout the school. There are no significant differences in standards attained by boys and girls.
76. Teachers work hard to enable all pupils to achieve their potential. This means that higher attaining pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are well catered for. All groups of pupils, therefore, make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of number, shape, space and measure and handling data as they move through the school. All teachers place great emphasis on developing pupils' mental calculation skills. They encourage them to talk about their strategies and often make effective use of practical aids to stimulate interest and support their learning.
77. Pupils' progress in using and applying their mathematical knowledge is satisfactory. Standards in this aspect of mathematics therefore, are not as high as they could be. Teachers do not systematically plan tasks for pupils to practise their skills in other lessons. Examples were seen in science, design and technology and geography, for instance, but they do not tie in with the progressive development of mathematical skills outlined in the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to carry out open-ended investigations. This has a particular impact on the work of higher attaining pupils. This is becoming increasingly relevant as teachers develop and refine their strategies to extend older pupils' learning. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning in mathematics.
78. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils have a secure knowledge of the place value of each digit in numbers to 99, confidently adding and subtracting to 20 and beyond. They are familiar with the associated symbols and use them correctly to make up number stories. They estimate and measure with reasonable accuracy and recognise the properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils currently in Year 5 achieve well, for example many of them use a variety of strategies to multiply two and three digit numbers including those with decimals.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. It was very good in almost half of the lessons seen. This is reflected in pupils' eagerness to contribute to discussions, good behaviour and enjoyment of their lessons. Teachers' planning is a particular strength. It is based on the consistent and thorough implementation of the numeracy strategy and contributes to the secure knowledge of the subject that is evident in teachers' clear and confident explanations. It is also evident in the use of accurate mathematical vocabulary and all teachers promote this successfully by displaying word lists relevant to current work and referring to them during lessons. Teachers work together closely in each age group to ensure that all pupils enjoy similar experiences while catering successfully for the needs of the different groups within their own classes.
80. In the best lessons, teachers gradually increased the challenge to extend pupils' learning by maintaining a brisk pace and using skilful questioning. In Year 2, the teacher was quick to spot misunderstandings and dealt with them sensitively and effectively to ensure that pupils progressed smoothly from work with two-dimensional to three-dimensional shapes. In Year 5, the teacher combined skilful questioning with careful

checking of pupils' understanding, leading to useful feedback to help pupils improve. Pupils know they are getting better.

81. Teaching is less effective when teachers are too heavily involved in directing pupils' activities. This inhibits pupils' development as independent learners. All teachers successfully use the final part of the lesson, or plenary, to review and consolidate pupils' understanding but they frequently miss the opportunity to use it as an introduction to future learning. Mathematics is led effectively by an experienced and knowledgeable teacher. However there have been few opportunities recently for her to develop her broader management role, for example by direct observation of teaching and learning. Good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are well established. Pupils are tested annually using nationally agreed tests, and half-termly using school-based materials to check their understanding of recently completed work. In order to refine these arrangements the school has identified the need to set individual targets for pupils in order to help them improve and to provide a clear focus for teaching.

SCIENCE

82. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards, which are at expected levels. By Year 5, pupils continue to achieve at satisfactory levels. This is a decline in standards at the end of Year 2, since the previous inspection. This decline occurred during the transitional period and was identified by the school. As a result, a well-qualified teacher with experience of teaching science in Years 3 to 6 was recently appointed. Some good teaching observed in the subject and the appointment of the new co-ordinator leaves the school well placed to improve standards.
83. The school is working hard to develop the required provision for the full primary range. The teaching of scientific enquiry and the study of living things and resulting achievements are a strong part of science. Achievements of pupils in studying areas of physical processes and materials are satisfactory. The subject does not have sufficient curriculum time devoted to it at present to ensure the curriculum entitlement of older pupils can be fully developed. Pupils, however, are at present being offered a balanced science programme of learning and during the time of the inspection, particular emphasis was being placed on scientific enquiry throughout the school.
84. In the aspect of scientific enquiry, pupils were investigating how materials moved through water, how far various cars would move from ramps, the effect of elasticity on projecting weights and there was a very good investigation into the cycle of the moon. These lessons lead to good attitudes of scientific enquiry amongst older pupils. In a very few lessons, however, achievement of pupils was not so well developed because slow pace combined with too much teacher control of the activity, led to a stifling of creativity and imaginative thought. In the good lessons observed pupils were encouraged to think creatively and to explain and establish connections between cause and effects.
85. Throughout the school the breadth of the curriculum is now appropriate. Younger pupils understand characteristics of living things, how they move, feed and grow. Pupils in Year 2 have an adequate understanding of forces of pushing and pulling. Simple circuits had been covered in a study of electricity. It is noticeable, however, that on a few occasions, all pupils had had the same tasks to do with insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. An analysis of the work of last term's Year 4, who were at the time the oldest pupils in the school, reveals a satisfactory breadth of experience for older pupils. Most pupils had understood various forces, electricity, air resistance,

insulation and investigations had been carried out into separating mixtures with pupils including predictions and hypotheses in their work.

86. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is evidence of some good science teaching throughout the school. All teaching seen in science was never less than satisfactory. Features of good lessons, demonstrate that planning is effective in promoting learning. Support staff are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils are aware of their own targets and respond very well to the tasks offered resulting in good learning taking place. In the few lessons, where expectations of pupils were not as demanding, the pace was slow and lessons too long. This detracted from an otherwise good provision in the subject.
87. Pupils are managed effectively, displaying good behaviour and good attitudes towards the subject. ICT is used effectively to support science teaching and learning. Links with other areas of the curriculum include work being done on springs in a science lesson being effectively continued in a later physical education lesson where pupils performed good sequences of movement using their bodies as springs. Work is always marked but comments do not fully assess pupils' achievement nor set targets for future learning. The co-ordinator has worked hard to maintain the school's standards in science. However, the restriction of her management role has resulted in the subject's co-ordination being underdeveloped. Little time has been given to monitoring teaching by the co-ordinator, allowing teachers to observe each other to share good practice or to moderate standards of work. The school is using national subject guidance to support planning and assessment in a satisfactory manner. Formal assessment procedures in the subject, leading to challenging targets being set for future older pupils, are satisfactory but have had insufficient time to have an impact on standards. The co-ordinators have identified the need to improve these areas. The school has resourced the subject in a satisfactory manner and is aware of the need to purchase equipment for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to fully meet their needs over the next two years.

ART AND DESIGN

88. By Year 2 and Year 5 all pupils have enthusiasm for the subject, achieve well and attain standards which are above expected levels. This maintains the positive picture reported at the time of the previous inspection in Year 2. No comparisons can be made with Year 5 as previously the school did not accommodate pupils in this age range. Achievement is good for boys and girls irrespective of their backgrounds and including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Teaching is good.
89. Teachers recognise the value of developing close observational skills and a variety of techniques and teach them from Year 1. As a result, the youngest pupils produce very careful images of caterpillars, using different brush strokes, in their work linked to literacy and the book, '*The Hungry Caterpillar*'. Year 2 pupils extended their observational skills when creating pencil sketches in the style of Quentin Blake. They drew pictures of different characters such as Jack-and-the-Beanstalk, Sleeping Beauty and the Three Little Pigs using a quick sketch style with spaces between lines, in the style of the creator. The teacher involved all pupils effectively in explaining their work and appreciating the efforts of others. Selected pupils were also given opportunities to develop their ideas using a computer art program.
90. In further developing their skills, pupils in Year 3 looked at landscape pictures of a range of famous artists and made view finders to focus on a particular area of a landscape.

They developed their ideas well while investigating how to reproduce selected areas of a picture, using pencils to develop line and tone with shading. They have a good understanding that the process began with initial lines and that there are several stages to follow. As a result of teachers' high expectations and regular encouragement for pupils to review their work, pupils constantly appraise their progress within the task. Year 5 pupils were inspired by the work of John Burningham in his story about Borker the bird. Using crayons, they created different images using lines of different thickness to portray the features of Borker, such as the beak, the webbed feet, head and tail in scenes from the story. Pupils' social skills were developed well as they discussed each other's work in time allocated for this purpose. Other work by these pupils reproduced good quality pastel pictures in the style of Aboriginal artists.

91. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers make good provision for linking art and design with other subjects. For example, pupils extend their speaking and listening skills when they share their ideas about their own work and that of others. Throughout the school they compare the work of various artists from different eras, including contemporary work and use these discussions to inspire their own efforts. Art and design is often incorporated into subjects such as science and religious education, and makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school makes good use of ICT to enhance the subject by providing various software programs that pupils use on computers.
92. Particular strengths include the careful introduction and consolidation of techniques and understanding. These strategies ensure that talented pupils, those with learning or physical difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language are supported well to achieve their full potential in a range of skills. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and uses her considerable enthusiasm and expertise very effectively to support teachers throughout the school. This help contributes positively to their confidence in demonstrating techniques to pupils. The co-ordinator also leads her colleagues effectively in using a modified version of the national guidance. Resources are of good quality and used well in lessons. Consequently, children receive a good range of art experiences and evaluate their work from an early age.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. By the end of Year 2 and in the current Year 5, standards are at expected levels, a similar judgement to that of the previous inspection for Year 2. No comparison is possible for Year 5 as the school did not accommodate this age at that time. All groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. Since the previous inspection, the adoption of national guidelines for the subject has ensured coverage of all aspects of the subject. It also provides opportunities for pupils to work with a wider range of materials and techniques. Opportunities for the design of mechanisms that make use of hydraulics and motors are limited and there is insufficient use of ICT within the subject.
94. In Year 1, pupils use a hole-punch, scissors and split pins to make a human figure with a moving arm and a caterpillar with moving body segments. In Year 2, they design and make wheeled vehicles and finger puppets. Their designs include carefully labelled sketches and lists of the materials to be used. In making their puppets they begin to show an awareness of the purpose of the finished product and take this into account at the design stage. Their written evaluations show that they persevered well to complete the tasks.

95. Older pupils tackle more demanding tasks. They gather information from a range of sources and carefully consider the uses and users of their products. In Year 3, for example, they examine photograph frames, chairs and tables to make their structures stable. When making and evaluating two contrasting sandwiches, they think and comment about appearance, smell, taste and texture. In Year 4, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to try out a variety of ideas using levers, sliders and spirals to make moving pictures. They use their measuring skills when designing a money container and identify the essential features of the finished article. Overall, standards are at expected levels with higher attaining pupils producing work of a good standard. When designing and making a musical instrument, pupils in Year 5 attempt to control pitch and rhythm to create a variety of sounds and effects. Their work shows satisfactory joining, cutting and finishing techniques. Although pupils suggest or incorporate improvements as they work, the formal recording and evaluation of design is not yet firmly established as a regular feature of work in the subject. It is this lack of reflection and refinement within the design process that limits greater understanding by pupils.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A significant strength is that the subject is now planned to be taught consistently across the school, with teachers planning together to ensure that pupils across each year group cover the same areas of learning. The choice of activities successfully motivates pupils and they enjoy the subject, work well together and use equipment safely. Teaching is less effective when lessons are combined with art and design. This limits the amount of attention that the teacher can give to developing the specific skills of design and technology. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She has attended subject training and has some good ideas for developing the subject. However, there are currently no formal procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress or for regularly monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to identify what works well and what needs to be improved.

GEOGRAPHY

97. In Year 2 and Year 5 most pupils attain knowledge, skills and understanding in geography that are at expected levels. These standards have been successfully maintained in Year 2 since the previous inspection. An improvement since then is the whole-school plan that allocates topics for study to each age group. These are based on the national guidance for the subject adopted by the school to support teachers' planning. It ensures that pupils cover a balanced geography curriculum and develop subject skills in a structured manner as they move through the school. As a result all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily.
98. From the earliest stages teachers enable pupils to learn about their local area. Pupils draw accurate maps of their routes to school and begin to express their own views, for example by identifying attractive and unattractive features of their school. This is developed well in Year 2 when they use atlases and maps to locate holiday destinations. They are highly motivated by the 'well-travelled Barnaby Bear' who is taken on holiday by teachers and parents. The 'reporting back' about his adventures by Barnaby, develops pupils' understanding of localities different from their own.
99. In Year 3 a valuable residential experience is used well to enhance pupils' learning and to support their personal development. Mapwork skills are effectively extended as part of a study of Ancient Egypt. When expressing their thoughts about the landscape one pupil commented, 'The heat was overwhelming', demonstrating a good understanding

of desert conditions. In Year 4 they learn about life in St Lucia as an example of a less economically developed country. Pupils in the current Year 5 showed good recall of their earlier work and thoroughly enjoyed talking about it and having the opportunity to demonstrate that they have acquired a good bank of geographical vocabulary. They are enthusiastic learners.

100. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the one lesson seen it was good. The teacher placed strong emphasis on the development of geography study skills and, in particular, encouraged the asking of geographical questions. Pupils listened attentively as the teacher shared with them stories of her colleagues' journeys. They took part eagerly in discussing forms of transport and made good use of atlases and their own experiences to estimate travelling times to various holiday locations. The lesson was brought to life by the teacher's imaginative use of Barnaby's recording of his trips to China, France and Scotland. Throughout the school, teachers' good knowledge of the subject is clearly evident in the analysis of pupils' earlier work.
101. The co-ordinator has a keen interest in geography and has clearly identified the steps to be taken in order to improve provision for the subject. These include the introduction of assessment procedures to help teachers plan the next steps in learning in order to move pupils on at the right pace. Opportunities for her to develop her management role more widely have been limited, for example she has not been able to observe teaching and learning. Consequently she has not been able to share with colleagues what works well and what does not. At present she is being shadowed in this role by a more recently appointed colleague as a valuable part of her professional development.

HISTORY

102. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards by the end of Year 2 which are at expected levels, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Standards by the beginning of Year 5 are now above expected levels, however, there were no pupils of this age at that time to make comparisons. Improvements are the result of careful planning for the needs of older pupils as they progress through the school to ensure coverage of the necessary areas of learning for all pupils. However, insufficient time is allocated to the subject over the course of each year to ensure learning in sufficient depth.
103. Due to the school's half-termly planning, there were no lessons in Years 1 and 2. Standards are judged as at expected levels based on a careful study of last term's completed work which revealed pupils had studied Queen Elizabeth's jubilee and compared it with that of Queen Victoria. Pupils had developed in their writing some idea of chronology and had understood about events in the past and changes. They had also compared Victorian classrooms with the present day and also Victorian toys and modern toys. They had knowledge of famous people from the past, for example Florence Nightingale. There was further evidence that pupils had been introduced to artefacts and other sources. Pupils are developing satisfactory knowledge and understanding of events and people, ways of life and a sense of chronology. Pupils have a satisfactory foundation for the further development of the subject as they progress through the school.
104. By Year 5, teachers' planning reveals a careful structure of themes giving good historical experience. Year 3 pupils are studying Ancient Egypt and displays reveal that teachers have planned together to effect similar learning experiences for their pupils. Year 4 pupils study the Tudor period and Year 5 pupils learn about life in Victorian

times. Marking of history work in pupils' books is positive and encourages further learning in many cases.

105. Teaching and learning in history are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 5. All teaching was satisfactory or better with a proportion being very good. Good and very good teaching is characterised by lessons having clear learning objectives, good subject knowledge of teachers, very good support from teaching assistants for lower attaining pupils, enabling them to discuss and listen effectively. This all leads to good learning being achieved by pupils. The development of the subject is hindered by its lack of overall time in the curriculum. There is limited coverage each term but individual lessons are often too long to demand pace which would lead to effective productivity of working in pupils.
106. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards the subject. They listen attentively to teachers, are interested and keen to offer ideas and opinions. In a discussion with older pupils, many of them stated that the subject was in fact one of their favourites. This is a result of the school's very good system of visits to places as varied as Fishbourne, Brighton and Hampton Court and the interesting artefacts borrowed from Merton Heritage. This is effective support for the teaching of the subject leading to more effective learning opportunities for pupils. Similar good support is given by teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language who all make good progress.
107. The co-ordinator has worked effectively to ensure that a systematic coverage of work for the subject has been implemented in the school. Her management role, however, remains restricted. There have been few opportunities to monitor other teachers and share good practice and ideas. As she is a part-time support teacher she has been able to see work throughout the school and has a secure grasp on themes studied. She has identified the need to moderate pupils' work to ensure that when assessment procedures are in place in the subject, teachers are able to make similar judgements. The overall time allocated to the subject is insufficient for older pupils. The subject is resourced in an adequate manner and well supported by visits and artefacts borrowed as already stated. There was little evidence of ICT being used to support the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. By Year 2 and Year 5, achievement is good and most pupils attain above expected levels. This is an improvement from the average levels judged in the previous inspection in Year 2. There were no Year 5 pupils in the school at the time of the previous inspection. Resources have been updated and improved and there are better links with other subjects than at the time of the previous inspection. Other improvements, including better subject knowledge and confidence by teachers have also contributed to the rise in standards.
109. From an early age, pupils are keen to operate computers. They learn to access programs, using the mouse control and keyboard accurately and acquire a range of basic technological skills. In Year 1, teachers link computer use well to other subjects such as English, mathematics and art and design. For example, Year 1 pupils followed their literacy lesson about Eddie the bear by accessing an art program and using the mouse control correctly, drew their own representations of Eddie at the beach. Higher attaining pupils were challenged to add their own simple text. Year 2 pupils developed their skills by creating line and colour patterns in the style of their art work. They knew how to change the thickness of the line control to produce different effects and filled the spaces in the pattern with a range of colours, selecting spray and fill techniques to their

own preferences. In the full range of their work, they also create simple text developing keyboard skills in links with literacy and science when describing the properties of different rocks and planets. Some also typed out their scripts for a class assembly. Year 2 pupils also create sequences of instructions to control and move a floor model and a screen turtle along particular routes in links with measurement in mathematics. These experiences inspire them and introduce them to the full range of technological skills, enabling them to achieve above expected levels.

110. In Years 3 to 5, pupils build on their enthusiasm for the subject and make good gains in their learning and effectively use different forms of technology in well planned links with other subjects. They are aware of the importance of technology in their lives when searching for information about particular topics and widening their experiences. Year 3 pupils extend their knowledge and skills by resizing graphics and combining these with text. They select font size, style and colour to highlight key text. Good provision by teachers in Year 4 enables pupils to use different controls to repeat patterns and design colourful wallpaper patterns. Year 5 pupils learn how to use spreadsheets. Having entered data into various cells, they were challenged by the teacher to retrieve saved work in order to make amendments and additions to the data already entered. This they did well. Higher attaining pupils were suitably challenged and those with learning difficulties were supported well to achieve their full potential. By Year 5, standards are above those normally seen.
111. The good curriculum provision enables pupils to work together in finding things out, developing ideas and making things happen. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning due to specific support from teachers and classroom assistants. They use technology to aid their own programmes for development and most attain expected levels. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress and attain expected and above expected levels.
112. The quality of teaching is good and has improved since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory. Strengths are in the teaching and reinforcement of skills taking place in a well-planned session each week in the computer suite. Good opportunities are provided during other lessons to enable pupils to put their ideas into practice. Teachers and teaching assistants have a good knowledge of computing and make good links with most other subjects. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils of all capabilities, reinforcing the school's strong, inclusive approach. Pupils work successfully in mixed ability pairs and this collaboration successfully promotes their social and personal development. Teachers successfully promote pupils' very good attitudes to the subject and, as a result, they enjoy using computers and other technological equipment. All pupils are highly motivated by developments in the subject and discuss their work enthusiastically. The good financial investment in resources has had a positive impact on pupils' learning, which has benefited considerably from the greater opportunities to work regularly on computers. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and manages developments in the subject well. Good staff development has taken place in the subject. As a result, all teachers have greater confidence and expertise and use the resources to good effect.

MUSIC

113. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, pupils attain the standards expected for their ages and enjoy their music. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection for pupils in Year 2. The school follows the national guidance for music in its coverage of work. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lesson plans identify and

provide adequately for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language, using the additional support staff. There are no arrangements for the co-ordinator to observe lessons in order to monitor the teaching of the subject throughout the school. Plans to improve provision for music in the school include the successful introduction of a school choir and the provision for some pupils to learn to play the piano. These are popular initiatives that have widened the opportunities for pupils to participate in musical events.

114. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing in tune, from memory, and clap or play untuned percussion instruments in time. In one good lesson seen in Year 2, the pupils successfully sang songs, unaccompanied and tunefully, whilst clapping rhythms, which the teacher conducted at a variety of speeds. The children thoroughly enjoyed this lesson. It helped them to develop their music skills and demonstrated their ability to listen carefully and improve their own performance. For example, when the class were asked to clap with their singing of '*Head, shoulders, knees and toes*' at a deliberately very slow pace, one pupil recognised that she was singing too quickly and stopped. She listened very carefully to her classmates and successfully joined in with the second verse at the correct pace and rhythm.
115. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 build successfully upon their knowledge, vocabulary and appreciation of music and enthusiastically recall lessons they have enjoyed in the past which include designing and making tuned and untuned instruments, studies of classical composers, listening to traditional music from other countries and the ways in which they notated some of the music they had composed. In one very good Year 5 lesson the pupils learnt about how percussion instruments can produce a wide variety of sounds. In response to the very good teaching strategies used by the teacher, they experimented in groups and produced a variety of sounds. By the end of the lesson, they demonstrated the ways in which they had learnt to change pitch, texture and duration on their chosen instrument. One example of very good learning was observed when one pupil, concentrating very hard, struggled to find ways to produce 'open and closed' sounds on his instrument – a 'rainmaker'. His eventual successful achievement was appropriately highlighted by the teacher and applauded by the rest of the class following his demonstration.
116. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching in a small number of lessons. However, there is no monitoring of teaching for the subject. Consequently, there is no clear overview of what works well and what does not or ways of identifying areas in which teachers feel less confident. The main strengths include the important skill of managing the pupils to promote good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils are asked challenging questions, encouraged to listen to, and learn from, each other as well as from the teacher's explanations. The recently appointed co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and already providing satisfactory support for colleagues with the introduction of a new system for monitoring and recording pupils' progress and clear guidance on curriculum. With the support of the headteacher, who has appointed an additional part-time specialist teacher for music to join the school later in the term, she plans to raise the status of music throughout the school by providing training for colleagues, introducing recorder playing for the pupils and developing the use of a newly created music room which contains adequate resources which are used effectively to support the pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. The school has made good progress in physical education since the previous inspection and standards in the subject are now above expected levels throughout the

school. The activities offered to pupils show a good range including games skills, dance and gymnastics and activities are taught well. Levels of skill demonstrated in body awareness and skills needed for team games are above average.

118. By Year 2, pupils experience bouncing and catching with good control and co-ordination. They undertake balance and shape work including sequencing and the quality of body shapes are very good for pupils of this age. Older pupils in Years 3 to 5 experience games skills, invasion games in small teams, similar gymnastics experiences and dance. In many lessons pupil attainment is good, demonstrating good earlier learning and progression in the subject.
119. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school with some lessons observed being very good and none less than satisfactory. A feature of good teaching was the good subject knowledge of teachers with emphasis on the development of skills. Good resources are used well and the very good management of pupils is a feature of these lessons. Where teaching was very good the teacher made good use of demonstrations and pupils were given the opportunity to evaluate each other's work. This resulted in very good learning opportunities for all. Another feature of very good teaching was the day-to-day assessment of pupils' abilities and setting of appropriate tasks. Assessments are not systematically recorded but the informal assessment techniques, which some teachers have, are effective learning aids for their pupils. All pupils are supported well in all lessons and good strategies enable them to reach their full potential.
120. In lessons where the quality of teaching was satisfactory, the pace of the lesson and overall participation of pupils were at lower levels than in many lessons seen. In one lesson, the quality of movement seen was very good as pupils themselves had previously attained high standards. These good standards were achieved despite the fact that the teacher had selected activities less challenging for these pupils. Pupils challenged themselves appropriately and this very good response from pupils was reflected in all indoor physical education activities and many of the games lessons out of doors. In one physical education lesson outside the skill levels demonstrated by pupils was good despite the very uneven surface on which they had to work. Overall, teachers manage pupils well and good standards are achieved and good progress is made in this very inclusive subject.
121. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is very aware of the needs of the subject and has ensured the school's coverage of work meets requirements. The subject has an appropriate amount of time on the timetable. The shadow co-ordinator is talented in demonstrating the skills of the subject and has a similar commitment to its development. The management role of the co-ordinator remains underdeveloped with little opportunity given to monitor the subject's development in other lessons. Staff share problems but there are no effective observations of each other to ensure sharing good practice. Some assessment has commenced in the subject, the outcomes of which were evident in some lessons. Continuation of this will further develop pupils' learning opportunities. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for older pupils in the school to have swimming lessons added to provision soon and arrangements have been made for such provision from spring 2003.
122. Resources in the subject are good overall. The hall is a good size with fixed and unfixed apparatus of good quality to teach educational gymnastics. Resources for outdoor games skills are of good quality and quantity and include skittles, quoits, ropes, hoops, footballs, hockey sticks, bats, rugby balls and bands. These are tidily stored and easily accessible. The surfaces on which some pupils have to work are of variable quality.

The hard play area with the running track marked is a good area in which to work. The school has limited grassy areas on which to work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123. By the end of Year 2 and Year 5, standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a similar judgement to that made in the previous inspection for pupils in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning. Teachers plan, provide for and value all pupils and their contributions equally as individuals. Procedures to monitor the pupils' learning are in place.
124. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of festivals celebrated by different religions and know some of their special stories. In a lesson observed in Year 2 the children were enthusiastic to learn more about Christian traditions. The teacher used a good range of artefacts, which included a Bible, a Christening shawl, a chalice and several pictures. With careful questioning and explanation the teacher helped the children to develop their knowledge, understanding and vocabulary. All pupils were encouraged to contribute and to compare their own experiences, which they did with confidence.
125. By Year 5, pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding of a range of religious beliefs and meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus through a variety of activities. In one lesson seen in Year 3 the pupils developed their understanding of celebrating Harvest Festival well. The teacher effectively linked the lesson with earlier science work by exploring the conditions needed for growth of plants to raise questions about who they would thank for those things and how they might do it. In Year 4 pupils were learning about Baptism and in Year 5, pupils were observed comparing traditional religious activities in Muslim, Hindu and Christian homes.
126. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In all lessons seen the pupils were expected to write about what they had been taught which, as well as effectively consolidating their understanding, provided opportunities for them to discuss and reflect upon what they had learned. The portfolios of children's work have been introduced to ensure that work is monitored on a regular basis. Together with the lesson assessment sheet, teachers plan to use opportunities to measure the progress of pupils in religious education and adjust their planning accordingly. The subject currently lacks the benefit of the monitoring of teaching. This is an area for future development in order to ensure a consistent approach across the whole age-range of the school, including the future Year 6 pupils. In addition there are plans to identify good practice that can be shared and areas of weakness for future training provision, in order to enable all pupils to achieve well.
127. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides satisfactory support for the subject and her colleagues. She advises on planning each half-term, has established attractive and interesting displays around the school, identified priorities for improvement later in the school year, and purchased new resources. Resources and artefacts are used effectively to support learning and arrangements are made for the pupils to visit the local church. Other similar opportunities are currently being investigated.