

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LIBERTY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Mitcham

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102656

Headteacher: Mr C King

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Brackstone  
21872

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> December 2002

Inspection number: 246225

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Western Road Mitcham Surrey
Postcode:	CR4 3EB
Telephone number:	020 8646 5290
Fax number:	020 8646 4215
E-mail address:	libertymiddleschool@merton.gov.uk
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Hedden
Date of previous inspection:	27 <sup>th</sup> January 1997 (Middle deemed primary)

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? How high are standards? a) the school's results and pupils' achievements
15181	Mrs M Hackney	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
5535	Mr R Helliwell	Team inspector	Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	
30669	Mrs M Sandercock	Team inspector	English Art and design Music	
3574	Mrs K Singh	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education English as an additional language	
8560	Mrs M Lynch	Team inspector	French	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill St  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Liberty is a newly formed primary school which is still in the process of reorganisation: no pupils have attended for more than seven terms and those in Year 3 and Year 4 are in their first term. Year 7 has now been removed and there will be no Year 2 until 2003. By September 2003 the school will have changed from a middle school for pupils between the ages of eight and twelve years at the previous inspection, to a complete primary school for pupils between the ages of three and eleven years. There has been a large turnover of staff due to reorganisation but the senior management have remained in place. This consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. It is a large school with 388 pupils on roll. There are slightly more boys than girls. As a result of the reorganisation, the school is top heavy, with 150 Year 6 pupils. There is a 60 place nursery. The school has a wide cultural mix which includes pupils of white UK heritage, black African and Caribbean, Asian Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese. There are also a small number of families who are seeking refuge from various countries. Approximately 19 per cent of pupils use English as an additional language, which is well above the national average. Apart from English, the main languages spoken are Bengali, Cantonese, Urdu and Spanish. Forty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is higher than average. Twenty seven per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is above average. Ten pupils have moderate learning difficulties and three have hearing impairment. Two per cent of pupils have statements for special educational needs. The school maintains a record of gifted and talented pupils. Children start nursery at the start of the term after their third birthday. They spend up to five terms there before transferring to one of the reception classes in September or January after their fifth birthday. Currently there are 43 part-time children in the nursery and 33 full-time children in the two reception classes. Attainment on entry is well below that expected.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Liberty is a good school. All children make good progress in relation to their prior attainment because the quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Attitudes are positive and all pupils are encouraged to become part of a whole school community. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future and makes good use of his staff. The change from a middle to a primary school has been challenging because not all of the senior management understand the specific needs of younger pupils. However, the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- In relation to their prior attainment, all pupils make good progress and are fully involved in the life of the school.
- Standards in art and design and physical education are above expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good.
- The headteacher is very deeply committed to the school; he leads by example and is very well respected within the community.
- Children in the nursery and reception are provided with very good quality learning opportunities within a rich and stimulating environment. Curricular provision in Years 3 to 6 is good; pupils benefit well from a wide range of activities outside of lessons and a very positive contribution from the local community.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and they enjoy good relationships with the vast majority of adults. Provision for social and moral development is good and pupils respect each other's feelings.
- The school takes great care of its pupils. There are good procedures in place to track the pupils' academic and personal development.

### What could be improved

- Overall attainment at the end of the current Year 6.
- Nursery, reception and Year 1 expertise at senior management level.
- Fulfilling statutory requirements for collective worship.
- Procedures for checking pupils' progress in science, art and design, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education.
- Planned provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

*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 last inspected as a middle school in January 1997 and has made satisfactory progress since then in relation to Years 4, 5 and 6. Assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs have improved and there are now regular procedures in place that track pupil progress through the school. Library provision has improved and pupils now understand how to use it to seek out information. The implementation of the literacy strategy has resulted in improved skills in the teaching of reading; the national numeracy strategy has been responsible for the recent improvement in mathematical standards. The needs of the more able pupils are now carefully catered for. Teachers' subject knowledge in geography, art and design, design technology, information and communication technology, and religious education has also improved. Although statutory requirements are now met in swimming, collective worship remains unsatisfactory. In Years 4, 5 and 6, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection; however, spiritual development remains a weaker element of pupils' personal development.

### STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Because this is a new school, standards of achievement cannot be measured from nursery to Year 6. However, comparisons with different Year 6 groups can be made. Current inspection findings indicate that standards in mathematics are below average. This is similar to the results of the Year 2002 National Curriculum test results that are recorded above. Inspection findings suggest that attainment in English is currently below average, which is a decline since the national test results of 2002 recorded above. This is because this particular Year 6 group have approximately one third of pupils with specific learning difficulties. This has also affected their achievement in history and geography where standards are below national expectations. It has also had a negative impact on standards in religious education, which are below the expected levels of the locally agreed syllabus. Inspection findings suggest that current standards in science are better than those of 2002 and are now average. This is because there has been careful analysis of tests and areas of weakness have been identified. Standards in design and technology, music and information and communication technology are as expected for pupils of this age. However, standards in art and design and physical education are above nationally expected levels.

Standards in Year 1 are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics, science, art and design, information and communication technology, history, geography and physical education. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. No judgements could be made on design and technology and music because there was insufficient evidence available during the inspection.

Whilst there is a wide range of attainment, children are entering the new nursery with overall skills that are well below those expected for this age group. Children are achieving well in the nursery and reception classes but, despite good quality teaching, it is unlikely that they will be ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Consequently, attainment in all areas of learning, except personal, social and emotional education, is below expected levels at the end of reception. This is because a significant number of the children are starting school with speech problems. The school sets realistic targets for further improvement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children in the nursery and reception enjoy all the activities available. Older pupils are enthusiastic about school and show good levels of involvement in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in class sessions is generally good. However, it is frequently unsatisfactory when pupils move around school because not all staff have consistent expectations of behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	No bullying, sexism or racism was observed during the inspection and pupils respect the views and opinions of each other.
Attendance	Parents often take their children out of school during term time for family holidays. This results in unsatisfactory levels of attendance.

## 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 and learning is good throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teacher expectations, planning, management of pupils, effective use of different teaching methods, good questioning and use of all available resources are all of a consistently high standard. This ensures that all the pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties, those for whom English is an additional language and those who are gifted and talented, work at a good pace and learn a great deal. Knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught and the teaching of basic skills are good overall; teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Both the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used sufficiently well. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is good. Effective use is made of day-to-day assessment to provide positive feedback for pupils so that they understand how they can improve. Satisfactory use is made of homework to enable pupils to develop their ideas and increase their knowledge.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Children in the nursery and reception are provided with a very rich and stimulating curriculum. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in Years 3 to 6. There is a wide range of activities outside of lessons available for all pupils. There are also very good links with the community. Curricular provision in Year 1 is satisfactory. The school does not meet requirements for collective worship.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with specific learning difficulties make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Individual education plans are detailed and the targets set are manageable.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good support is provided for all pupils who are at an early stage of language acquisition. They are promptly assessed on arrival into school and receive good quality teaching and support in small groups.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for social and moral development is good; pupils are encouraged to develop into valued members of the school community and know the difference between right and wrong. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall. However, there are insufficient planned opportunities for spiritual and cultural awareness within the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school tracks the academic and personal progress of its pupils well. It has taken account of the recent disability and race equality acts.

The school works well with parents, who feel that staff are always approachable.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is deeply committed to the success of the school and delegates responsibilities well, particularly to curriculum co-ordinators. However, not all senior managers reflect the specialist needs of a primary school and do not have a sufficiently high profile amongst the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive of the school. Under the direction of the headteacher and through their committee structure, they satisfactorily discuss the direction of the school. They are learning to understand the differences between a middle and a primary school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The progress of pupils over time is carefully tracked and checked and used to set future targets.
The strategic use of resources	All available resources are used well. Great care is taken to bid for specific grants and these are used well to improve pupil opportunity. The school provides good value for money.

There is a satisfactory match of teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The accommodation is very good indoors, where there are two halls and specialist teaching areas. Outside there are spacious playing fields and hard surfaced areas and a safe and secure play area for the youngest children.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The quality of teaching.</li><li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li><li>• The way in which the school is led and managed.</li><li>• Their children like going to school.</li><li>• The school helps the children to become mature and responsible.</li><li>• Their children make good progress at school.</li><li>• The school has high expectations.</li><li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with problems.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of homework given.</li><li>• Information on their children's progress.</li></ul>

The inspection team agree fully with all the positive views of the parents. They cannot agree with all the areas parents would like to see improved. Inspectors feel that the amount of homework given is good for this stage of education and reports are detailed for English, mathematics and science. However, they feel that more detail could be provided about other subjects.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. It is not possible to track results and achievement over time in this new school because the pupils who are currently in Year 6 only joined the school in Year 4. However, it is possible to evaluate trends over time in Year 6. Over the past three years the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum tests has fallen below the national average for their age group. No differences were noted between boys and girls. In the standardised tests of 2002, results were average in English but below average in mathematics and science. However, compared to similar schools with approximately the same number of pupils in receipt of free school meals, results in English were well above average and in mathematics and science, they were above average.
2. Inspection findings do not reflect these results. Standards in the current Year 6 group are average in science and this is similar to the last inspection. This is as a result of close analysis of work that has resulted in better teaching and learning in this subject. Standards are below average in English and this is a decline since the results of 2002. Speaking and listening skills are average but standards in reading and writing are below average. This is a decline since the last inspection. Literacy skills are not always used for maximum effect to help with the acquisition of skills in other areas of the curriculum such as art and design, religious education, history and geography. Standards in mathematics are also below average and reflect the 2002 standardised test results. This was a similar picture at the last inspection. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily to promote work in science and design and technology. In the current Year 6 group, about one third of pupils have specific learning difficulties. This has a negative impact on standards in English and mathematics. The school sets targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science and these are appropriately challenging.
3. Standards in information and communication technology match those expected nationally at the end of Year 6 and pupils make good progress. A number of important weaknesses were noted at the time of the last inspection and the school has made good improvements to the quality of provision for information and communication technology; pupils' standards of work reflect the success of these. Standards in physical education are above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. This is as a result of good-quality teaching and the effectiveness of the extra-curricular provision that motivates and encourages interest in the subject. Standards in art and design are also above national expectations in Year 6 and this is because of the dedication and enthusiasm of the subject co-ordinator. Standards in design and technology, music and French are in line with national expectations. However, standards in history and geography are below those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. Standards in religious education fail to meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in the current Year 6. The weaknesses in pupils' writing contributes to the below average standards in these subjects.
4. Whilst there is a wide range of attainment, children enter the nursery with overall skills that are below those expected for this age group. A significant minority have poorly developed speaking and listening skills or are at an early stage of language acquisition. The number of children who require specialist support from outside agencies confirms this. Children achieve well in all areas of learning. By the end of their time in reception, they have successfully achieved the final stage or *stepping stone* of the Foundation Stage curriculum<sup>1</sup> in personal, social and emotional

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<sup>1</sup> This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or *stepping stones*, from which both progress and standards can be measured.

development. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. However, despite this, it is unlikely that all children will have attained the recommended stage or final *stepping stone* in the Foundation Stage curriculum in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

5. Most pupils in the current Year 1 class started Liberty as reception children last year. Inspection findings indicate that the pupils in Year 1 are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment and are attaining the expected levels in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in art and design, information and communication technology, history, geography and physical education meet national expectations for this age group. The expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are also met. This is as a result of good quality teaching and detailed planning for specific age groups. No judgement could be made for design and technology and music because insufficient evidence was available during the inspection.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Good levels of support in class and carefully organised withdrawal groups enable pupils to improve their skills at a good rate so that they meet the targets in their individual education plans. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the school's work, having access to extra-curricular activities and to school visits. Pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented also make good progress because they are provided with stimulating activities and opportunities.
7. On entry to school, pupils have a wide range of attainment and many pupils enter school with little understanding of English. However, by the time they reach Year 6, most pupils acquire fluency in English and attain standards similar to and sometimes better than their monolingual peers. Some pupils also join the school throughout Years 1 to 6, having had no previous schooling in this country and with little or no English. These pupils are well supported and they make good progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. Children in the nursery and reception classes have a very good attitude and they behave well. Through the very good care and support they receive from staff, children settle quickly into classroom routines and are happy and eager to be involved in a wide range of learning activities.
9. Since the last inspection and the reorganisation, most pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, have maintained a good attitude towards school. Most pupils are enthusiastic during lessons and are keen to learn. Pupils of different races and backgrounds work and play happily together and are very respectful of the cultural diversity of the school. The majority of pupils are very friendly, co-operative and polite to adults and many are keen to talk about themselves and their work in school. For example, pupils were excited about the rehearsals for the Christmas production and very keen to talk about their role and performance. During lessons, most pupils concentrate well on tasks and are often able to work well independently. In all classes, pupils work well together in groups and they share resources sensibly and willingly. Most pupils work hard during lessons and respond well to their teachers' high expectations of achievement.
10. Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Parents' views are positive that pupils behave well in school. In classrooms, behaviour is good and often very good, with pupils listening well to their teachers and keen to answer questions and share their own ideas and observations. Pupils are generally well behaved in the playground, and those of different races and cultures are caring and supportive of each other. When pupils are well supervised, the school is a very pleasant and orderly environment. However, the noisy behaviour of some pupils in corridors and on stairways is often over-boisterous and inconsiderate to others. In the dining hall at lunchtime, the behaviour of some pupils deteriorates when supervision is inadequate and this is unsatisfactory. Through the satisfactory programme for personal and social education, pupils know the difference between right and wrong. They take care of the school environment and are careful when handling resources

and equipment. There are very few incidents of bullying and the school is free from sexism. Pupils know that staff are readily available to deal with any problems. There have been no exclusions during the last academic year.

11. Relationships are good amongst pupils and between staff and pupils. The very positive manner in which pupils of all cultures and backgrounds relate to each other is a strength of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well integrated and pupils know that everyone is valued. The good relationships and the caring and inclusive ethos generated, particularly by the headteacher, make very effective contributions to pupils' progress and achievements.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils in all classes respond well to taking on special responsibilities to help as monitors and messengers and older pupils help to look after children in the nursery and reception classes at lunchtime. Representatives from each class are appointed to the school council and pupils value the opportunity to make suggestions for improvements to the life of the school. Older pupils willingly take responsibility for some aspects of their own learning such as researching additional information at home and in the school library. Pupils respond enthusiastically to opportunities to visit places of educational and cultural interest including residential visits to the Isle of Wight and to Greece in Years 5 and 6. The very good links, which are well established within the local community, enable older pupils to extend their experience through a range of projects to improve the local environment. This makes a very positive contribution to their personal and social development.
13. Attendance remains unsatisfactory, although it has improved slightly this term. The school works very hard to improve the level of attendance that is below the national average. There has also been an improvement in the number of unauthorised absences. A significant number of pupils take holidays during term time and others are away on extended holidays. Although most pupils are punctual in the morning, there are a significant number every day who are late arriving in classrooms. Registration and lessons start on time and staff ensure that there is a well-ordered start to the day. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitude towards school and on their achievements and progress.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

14. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. During the inspection, over three-quarters of the lessons observed were good or better.
15. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school. This is because of the positive impact recent national strategies have had upon these key skills, ensuring pupils progressively acquire new knowledge. Teachers have a good knowledge of the literacy curriculum and plan stimulating activities to inspire pupils. For example, in a good Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher used the story of *'The Three Little Pigs'* to develop the pupils' knowledge of letter sounds. In a very good mathematics lesson, the teacher effectively used a number grid to encourage the pupils to use mathematical language.
16. Throughout the school, effective use is made of the teachers' planning. Learning intentions are clearly identified and shared with the pupils. These intentions are revisited at the end of the sessions and this ensures that the pupils gain an understanding of what they are actually learning. For example, in a very good literacy session in Year 6, the teacher clearly shared the planned learning intention with the pupils and explained what they would have learnt by the end of the lesson. This ensured that the pupils knew exactly what they were doing and they were able to evaluate themselves how well they had done. Teacher expectations are high and pupils are required to work at a brisk pace so that they gain new knowledge and skills. This was evident in a Year 6 numeracy session where the pupils showed very good concentration skills when they were learning about how to read and plot co-ordinates. The pupils were encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary when they discussed and predicted what happened if the co-ordinates were increased.

17. A wide variety of teaching methods is used to very good effect. Whole-class sessions provide effective situations for the teaching of basic skills. Good use of group work is made to increase the understanding of specific pupils and teachers spend individual time with pupils, helping them to develop their ideas. For example, a very good art and design session was observed in a Year 3/4 class where the specialist teacher modelled the use of different paintbrushes to create different textured effects in the style of the artist Paul Klee. This inspired the pupils and enabled them to confidently discuss and apply their own creative skills. This talented teacher provided a very thorough introduction and ensured that the pupils fully understood the concepts through the very effective use of questioning skills. In fact, one of the outstanding features of this school is the way in which questioning skills are used to promote the pupils' learning.
18. Pupils are consistently managed well during lesson times. High standards are insisted upon at all times within the classrooms and this has a very positive impact on their learning. As a result, they always show interest in their work, sustain concentration and apply themselves to all areas of the curriculum. However, the management of pupils is not consistent as they move around the school, during lunchtimes and at the end of assemblies. During these times, teachers do not always manage the pupils well; as a result, poor behaviour or sloppy attitudes are ignored.
19. Throughout the school, time is used well to develop pupils' learning. Lessons move at a good pace and no time is wasted moving from whole-class sessions to group work. This was evident in a good Year 5 physical education lesson where the pupils moved well from the formal skills teaching session to group work. Learning resources are used to best effect. For example, not only is the school library used to develop reading skills, it also encourages personal research skills. The large outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children is used to develop both physical and creative skills. For instance, during the inspection, the children were observed at different times in this area not only playing on tricycles but also learning to throw and catch balls and plan what to take on holiday to a warm country.
20. The overall quality of teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught is good overall, but there are some particular strengths. All staff in the Foundation Stage have a very secure understanding of the needs of this age group, which is clearly evident in the way that they present the learning activities. Activities are very well balanced between formal input from adults and independent learning opportunities. This was evident in the reception classes when time was given to share books, but the teachers kept a careful watch on individual progress through the skilful use of a glove puppet.
21. Overall procedures for assessing the progress made by pupils on a day-to-day basis are very good in the Foundation Stage. Ongoing observations are made of the progress being made by these young children and the information gathered is used when planning future activities. Procedures for day-to-day assessment of pupils are good in Years 1 to 6. All staff regularly praise their pupils for their work and ensure that they know what can be done to improve. Satisfactory use is made of homework in Years 1 to 6 to promote learning. In reception, very good links have been established between home and school to encourage positive reading habits.
22. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils and those for whom English is an additional language is good throughout the school. This enables them to make good gains in learning. The requirements of individual education plans and particular learning needs are built into daily activities. Designated support staff and classroom assistants provide targeted, unobtrusive support to meet individual and group needs. This ensures that all pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school community and that all develop good levels of self-confidence. Teachers are skilled in targeting questions to ensure that all pupils are fully included in whole-class sessions.
23. The specialist staff and most class teachers provide good teaching for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The support teacher withdraws pupils for specific support in the classes in Year 1 and in Years 3 to 6 but works within nursery and reception classes. This meets the needs of the pupils. She employs successful strategies such as the repetition of key vocabulary, modelling of correct answers and giving clues through gestures and facial expressions

to support pupils' learning. Teaching is most successful when there is a strong visual content and objects and pictures are used to support pupils' learning. For example, in the nursery, the teacher used puppets, beds, chairs and bowls to act the story of *'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'*, using the correct vocabulary. This stimulated and inspired the children and they in turn enjoyed acting the story.

24. Most teachers check pupils' understanding of vocabulary before they are asked to start their independent tasks. Teachers question effectively, both to check pupils' understanding and to extend learning. In most classes, teachers identify key vocabulary and use good strategies to check pupils' understanding before deciding which teaching points to reinforce. Good use is made of overhead projectors to display materials that create good visual impact and helps pupils to understand the lesson content. Teachers accept the wide diversity of languages and this helps pupils to become willing participants in lessons. The specialist teacher withdraws pupils from classrooms and works mainly in her own room. Although this meets the needs of the pupils, her expertise is not shared among other pupils or teachers. All staff work hard to make new arrivals feel welcomed to the school. The school staff represents different ethnic minorities and this provides positive role models for pupils.

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

25. The curriculum is suitably broad and relevant and of good quality. The curriculum provided for the Foundation Stage is very well matched to the expectations set out in nationally recommended guidelines. It is very relevant to young children's needs. For example, there are very good quality, dedicated outside areas for the exclusive use of very young children. These opportunities provide for regular outside activities to improve physical development in the ways recommended for young children. Overall, the curriculum for Years 1 and 3 to 6 is of good quality and is based on nationally recommended schemes of work. It is enhanced well by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including popular day visits and well-taught French in Year 6. The extra-curricular club for art provides a good quality opportunity. In addition, pupils in Year 5 are given the chance to make an extended visit to the Isle of Wight, and pupils in Year 6 visit Greece. The curriculum for Year 1 is suitably broad, balanced and relevant. Statutory requirements are met, except for collective worship. The previous inspection team drew the school's attention to its failure to comply with the statutory regulations for collective worship. It now takes place, but still fails to meet consistently the requirements to include prayers and opportunities for reflection.
26. The previous report referred to a curriculum that was broadly satisfactory in Years 4, 5, and 6. The curriculum provided for Years 4, 5 and 6 is now good, reflecting the improvements made with the addition of swimming. Further enhancement has been achieved by the provision of a school council to help in learning about citizenship. Tolerance and respect are strongly promoted across the curriculum, and the specific teaching of health related issues, including drugs and sex education are also considered. A computer suite and classroom computers linked to the Internet have enhanced provision in information and communication technology. This gives more opportunities for pupils to undertake research and assists studies in all subjects.
27. The school uses the national strategy for teaching literacy effectively during English lessons. The literacy hour is well established and provides good opportunities for reading, writing, speaking and listening. The impact of this work on other subjects is satisfactory. However, good opportunities are provided in every subject for pupils to express their views and to listen critically and objectively to others. The national strategy for numeracy is also well established and has a positive effect on pupils' learning in mathematics and in aspects of science.
28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers ensure through good planning that all pupils have equal access to the rich curriculum. Good support is available to help pupils record their work. Specialist advice and teaching help supplement the curriculum for a small minority of pupils. Extension activities are planned within lessons so that more able pupils work at their own level. Pupils who are gifted or talented have the opportunity to enjoy out-of-school activities, such as trips to the theatre.

29. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive a broad and balanced curriculum and most take part in all school activities. The school is successful in providing a curriculum that reflects a positive attitude towards other cultures and languages. There are notices, signs and a few books in other languages to show that the school values other cultures.
30. The school is very inclusive. It aims to cater for all pupils' needs and makes considerable effort to ensure that they all have equal access to the curriculum. It monitors pupils' attendance at extra-curricular clubs to find out if all groups are equally represented and takes trouble to find out why if they are not. Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is scrutinised to see if all groups of pupils are making at least steady progress. Extra help is given if it is found that any are not. The governing body subsidises school outings and offers support to any pupils who cannot afford the expense. For those who suffer physical disability, as occurred last year, the curriculum is modified or arrangements are changed to ensure that equal access is achieved for all lessons and clubs that the school offers. As a result of all this, there is little exclusion and the school enjoys a local reputation for accepting and dealing with pupils under stress.
31. As a middle school, very good links have been developed with the community and this makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school. Pupils in Year 6 have worked with Groundwork Merton on improvements to Tamworth Farm, a community playing field and derelict park and joined a team from the Green Party to help renovate a pond. Pupils have been involved in artwork on the site of Merton Priory and two Year 6 pupils represent the school on Merton Council at the Civic Centre. With the help of a local church, good links have been developed with a school in Uganda and at the time of the reorganisation a consignment of the old Liberty Middle School uniforms was donated to pupils there. Pupils have been involved in tree planting in the local environment and school grounds to create a conservation area. A garden has been created in memory of the pupils who died in Dunblane. The school has good links with a range of professional football and cricket clubs and a strong association with Lavender Community Park, who provide an annual trophy for the best sports person.
32. Links with other schools are satisfactory, with good liaison with the secondary schools to which most pupils transfer. A secondary school project for student work experience is based in the school. At present, the school has no established curricular links with other schools.
33. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and often good. During some lessons, teachers contribute well to pupils' personal development through different subjects. However, planning of lessons often misses opportunities to develop pupils' inner feelings, sense of morality and deeper awareness of the world around them.
34. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school encourages pupils of all cultures to reflect on a set of values, principles and beliefs on which to base their lives. During a Year 3/4 class assembly, pupils reflected on Advent and the time of anticipation before Christmas. This was linked well to Eid and Ramadan and all pupils listened respectfully and contributed their own feelings of anticipation. Throughout the school, pupils' contributions and opinions are valued and this helps to raise their self-esteem and feelings of wellbeing. During a Year 6 art and design lesson pupils created a mountain stream picture and then reflected thoughtfully on their work, using different methods to communicate their ideas and feelings. Pupils in a Year 6 literacy lesson were very calm and well focused on thought-provoking work. Pupils in Year 1 were full of wonder as they watched the screen during an information and communication technology lesson. Although the choice of popular music and themes for assemblies effectively engage pupils' interest and moral development, very little opportunity is provided for spiritual awareness and time for reflection. As at the time of the last inspection, this does not meet the statutory requirements for a daily act of worship.
35. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school promotes a clear moral code of inclusion and respect for the feelings and beliefs of everyone, whatever their culture and background. During lessons, teachers and support assistants have high expectations of good behaviour linked to a consistent approach to behaviour management. Through different subjects

and the caring ethos of the school, pupils are taught how their actions affect the wellbeing of others and the importance of showing care and consideration. For example, the Christmas production is based on the theme of homelessness and relays a very clear moral message about helping those who are less fortunate than themselves. Throughout the curriculum, a range of stories and other activities give pupils the opportunity to explore moral concepts and values such as truth and justice for all. The school's values are strongly reinforced by an extensive range of illustrations, quotations, poems with a moral theme and thought-provoking posters displayed in corridors.

36. Provision for pupils' social development is good. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and kindness to each other. During lessons pupils are given plenty of opportunity to develop socially by working in groups and with partners. For example, during a Year 1 class assembly on the theme of friendship pupils were encouraged to think about differences and tolerance and to say something nice about the person sitting next to them. Pupils benefit from taking part in productions, educational trips and residential visits and this has a very positive effect on their social and personal development. The school's annual talent show gives pupils a valuable opportunity to perform '*professionally*'. However, limited attention is paid to the development of social skills when pupils eat their midday meal together in the dining hall. Boisterous behaviour by some pupils in corridors that goes unchecked limits the expectation of pupils to learn self-discipline and responsibility.
37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Although the broad ethnic diversity of the school is valued, there is limited evidence around the school to show that this has a clear focus of celebration through ethnic music and art. Good provision is made for pupils to learn about British culture and this includes visits to Hampton Court, the Science Museum, the Tower of London and the theatre. Regular visitors into school enrich the curriculum, such as theatre groups, singers, pop groups and the Young Shakespeare Company. Insufficient opportunity is provided during assemblies and within the curriculum for pupils to listen to a range of classical music and to learn about composers.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

38. Good provision is made for the care and welfare of pupils and the school provides a secure and generally well-managed environment in which to learn. Parents are satisfied that their children are well looked after and any problems are sorted out quickly. Since the last inspection and the reorganisation of the school, the staff and particularly the headteacher have continued to pay good attention to the individual pastoral needs of pupils. All staff, many of whom are new to the school, know their pupils well and most are sensitive and committed to their individual, physical and emotional needs. This contributes very positively to pupils' progress and their personal development. The school has written an appropriate Race Equality policy and has ensured that the Disability Act has been implemented. The school provides a very inclusive learning environment for pupils of all abilities, cultures and creeds.
39. There are very good induction procedures, which enable children to settle quickly into class routines. All parents are invited to attend an introductory meeting before admission. Before they start, staff visit the families in their own homes and parents and children are welcome to visit the nursery informally. This establishes good relationships from the outset, which are then maintained on a daily basis through contact with the parents as they drop their children off at school. Pupils in Year 6 receive good support and advice from staff prior to their transfer to secondary schools.
40. The health and safety policy is well implemented. Issues of safety are well monitored and recorded with regular tours of the site and meetings between the deputy headteacher, site manager and governors. An official risk assessment is conducted annually. Pupils are well supervised during lessons and staff ensure that they are aware of their own safety and the safety of others. There is an effective policy in place that ensures that the Internet is used safely. The current arrangements for the supervision and behaviour management of pupils in the dining room at lunchtime are unsatisfactory and limit the opportunity for the development of social skills and responsibility. Supervision in the playground is satisfactory. Regular fire practices ensure that all

concerned know how to evacuate the building in an emergency. The provision for first aid is good, with the names of qualified first aiders displayed in central areas. Parents are contacted when pupils are unwell and accidents are well recorded.

41. Child protection procedures are good and concerns are well monitored and recorded. The assistant headteacher, who is also the special needs co-ordinator, has overall responsibility and attends regular training courses. All staff, including new staff to the school and lunchtime supervisors, are aware of the procedures. All pupils have access to outside support agencies. Good up-to-date personal and medical records are kept for all pupils and these are used well to provide good pastoral care and support. Currently, there is no provision for individual adults to act as '*friends*' to support the learning of those who find relationships in school life difficult. However, there is a regular homework club for those who find independent study difficult at home and a breakfast club for those who need support in making a satisfying start to the day. The inspection team found that nearly all pupils feel at ease in school. Pupils say they attend lessons that are usually calm and orderly and know who to approach if they have any cause for alarm. They are clear that any concerns will be properly and fairly sorted out.
42. Although the levels of attendance are below the national average, the school has very good monitoring procedures and works hard to try to improve. The deputy headteacher works closely with the education welfare officer who supports the school well through regular visits and contact with families. The attendance policy has recently been reviewed to take into account the reorganisation of the school. Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of good attendance, but a significant number of pupils take holidays during term time, including some extended holidays. At the start of the year all parents receive an attendance leaflet reminding them of their responsibilities and the law. The school has a good, established system to reward pupils whose attendance is good. Unauthorised absence is followed up promptly.
43. The procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good and the care and control policy provides clear guidelines for staff on behaviour management. In classrooms, teachers are consistent in following the procedures set out in the policy and manage behaviour well. However, on occasions, not all senior staff realise the importance of discipline to eliminate unruly behaviour and boisterousness in corridors and this is unsatisfactory in a primary school. As a result, some disparity exists between the high expectations of the headteacher towards pupils' care and discipline and the rest of the staff. Good procedures ensure that bullying, racism or harassment of any kind are discouraged and any incidents are dealt with promptly. The school has a very good and positive system of reward and celebration of good work and behaviour, and this contributes well to raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' educational and personal development are good. Although there is no formal system of recording personal development, teachers know their pupils well and continuously monitor their personal achievements effectively on an informal basis.
44. The school has a supportive learning environment and ensures suitable opportunities for all pupils to develop their understanding of English. All pupils, including those who are refugees or asylum seekers, are well integrated in the school life and are well cared for by the school. Mutual respect and tolerance of others' feelings, values and beliefs underpin the good relationships within the school.
45. Procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are of good quality in the core subjects of English and mathematics and satisfactory in science and information and communication technology. However, they are unsatisfactory in all other subjects.
46. The school has found a need to focus on attainment in mathematics and English in order to target individual pupils and groups for further support in these subjects. It had been compared unfavourably with local schools in the past and was challenged to provide better value for money by comparison. Therefore, it has used statements of curricular attainment to split levels into three bands in all core subjects. Then, through using an analysis of the results of tests and teacher assessments, it has established well-judged curricular targets for individual pupils, groups and years. Also, a whole school target has been set which appropriately relates to punctuation in writing. In addition, the teacher who leads on assessment discusses the progress of targeted

groups and pupils each half term and the headteacher keeps a careful watch over a group of pupils who are at the borderline of higher levels than they currently attain. The achievement of pupils has been linked to performance management for teachers.

47. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved its use of targets and assessments for English and mathematics and has been more effective in raising standards in these subjects. There are now regular tests in reading and writing, which were not in use in 1997. The school is in a much stronger position now in watching over pupils' progress in the core subjects.
48. The information gleaned from the optional national tests in English and mathematics, teacher assessments in science and the previous year's tests in Year 5 is used well to check on pupils' individual progress, assign pupils to mathematical sets and to provide extra lessons in English and mathematics. It is used to provide alerts for teachers when planning lessons to modify teaching approaches in order to rectify any weaknesses. In discussions with pupils, the inspection team learned that they knew their targets and the levels they had attained. For example, they could say from memory what their own target was and the level they had attained.
49. Assessment procedures in all other subjects except information and communication technology are unsatisfactory because work is not compared presently with the expected national standards, nor is progress monitored against work samples. Neither subject leaders nor class teachers make regular assessment of pupils' work. For example, there are no regular teacher assessments of samples of pupils' work in the way that the core subjects were reported as being assessed at the previous inspection and the way that in science it still is. Hardly any discussions have been held with pupils from different year groups to ascertain their acquisition and retention of the important skills and information. Consequently, by contrast with the core subjects, the school is in a weak position. This is because it lacks the full range of information to justify or modify its provision, teaching approaches and curricular planning for these subjects. For example, in history and geography it lacks the means to establish how to improve attainment and accelerate achievement.
50. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored. Regular reviews involve the class teacher, specialist teacher or teaching assistant. Reviews are up to date and the provision outlined in the educational statements is in place. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are assessed promptly when they join the school to determine and record their stages of English acquisition. The additional provision is then targeted on those pupils with greatest need and pupils are moved in and out of focus groups depending on their progress and results of ongoing assessments. The school has good procedures to monitor and track these pupils' progress. All assessment data, including results in the National Curriculum tests, is analysed and the information gained is used to improve standards and implement strategies to target any under achievement.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

51. Inspection findings confirm that the school's partnership with parents is good. When consulted prior to the inspection, the vast majority of parents felt that the school works closely with them. They felt that the quality of teaching was good and this enabled their children to make good progress. Most parents felt that the school was well led and managed and all staff had high expectations. They expressed how the school made them feel welcome and parents felt comfortable asking questions and discussing any concerns. For instance, the senior management team are readily available to speak to parents in the playground at the start of the day and are found to be approachable and helpful. Parents are encouraged into school at any time and a few have joined their children during lessons such as information and communication technology. They also consider the range of activities outside of lessons to be good. Many parents provide valuable help with their children's learning at home by listening to reading and assisting with homework topics. The involvement of parents has improved since the school became a primary and this has a very positive effect on pupils' progress and achievements. The inspection team can confirm all of the positive views expressed by the parents.

52. A small number of parents felt that they were unable to provide any additional help with topics at home. They expressed concerns about the amount of homework given. However, the inspection team could not agree with this view. A few parents help regularly in classrooms, particularly in the nursery and reception classes. Many more parents help when pupils go out on trips, including the residential visits. The Liberty Primary School Association is a group of supportive parents who help to organise fund-raising and social events for the school, including the recent, highly-acclaimed Harry Potter evening.
53. The quality of information for parents is generally good. The headteacher regularly sends out attractive and friendly newsletters to parents containing an interesting range of helpful information about organisation, activities and learning opportunities. However, no formal arrangements are made for parents to receive a list of topics to be taught to assist them in supporting their children at home. Appropriate arrangements are made for translations in all community languages when required. Pupils have home/school reading notebooks and homework diaries and parents are encouraged to use these as a communication between home and school. Formal consultation evenings are held twice a year and the school has successfully organised a family literacy project. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement and they receive a leaflet at the start of the year reminding them of the importance of good attendance. A parents' notice board located centrally provides a helpful range of information about events and activities. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed and are invited to attend all assessment and review meetings.
54. Reports to parents are satisfactory and cover all subjects of the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the Foundation Stage. Most parents are satisfied with the amount of information they receive about their children's progress. However, a significant minority feel that the comments made about the progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not sufficiently detailed in the annual report from the school. The inspection team endorses this view. Information about progress and targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science are satisfactory but limited in the other subjects. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents meet the statutory requirements and provide a good amount of helpful information about organisation and the curriculum.
55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly consulted and involved in identifying their needs. They are invited to review meetings and most try to attend. Parents who do not speak English generally bring a bi-lingual speaker with them to translate and interpret. The school does not have any difficulty in reaching its non-English speaking parents. When needed, important information can be translated in home languages, using the translation service.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

56. The headteacher is deeply committed to the success of the school and sets its educational climate. He works very hard to ensure that the aims and values of the school are met. He delegates responsibilities well and the role of the subject co-ordinators is well developed. They are well informed about their subject areas and have a good awareness of pupil achievement. However, not all senior managers reflect the specialist needs of a primary school and do not have a sufficiently high profile amongst the pupils.
57. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>2</sup> are fully met and the school endorses the school's commitment to the full inclusion of all pupils. The co-ordinator for special educational needs effectively monitors the targets on the individual education plans and the overall provision for pupils with special educational needs. The governing body is well informed about the special needs

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

provision in the school. The specialist teacher also effectively monitors the provision made for pupils with English as an additional language.

58. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its statutory requirements through its appropriate range of committee structures. Governors are supportive of the school and have a good awareness of its day-to-day issues. They are satisfactorily involved in shaping the direction of the school through their involvement with the school development plan and discussion over financial issues. A number of governors help in classes on a regular basis.
59. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and this has a positive impact on the achievement of the pupils. Each teacher is regularly observed by the headteacher and the monitoring of literacy and numeracy is carried out by subject co-ordinators. Representatives from the local education authority also make regular visits. The school has used the statutory strategies for performance management to good effect and this has enabled professional development to be successfully formalised throughout the school for all staff. New staff are inducted well into school life by the deputy headteacher and they feel supported in their role. The school is an effective provider of training for new teachers.
60. The financial planning is well linked to the educational priorities that are identified in the school development plan and have been agreed by both staff and governors. This document provides good strategic management for the future. It considers well the appropriate areas for development and fully reflects the aims and values of the school. The vast majority of staff are committed to improvement and have a good capacity to succeed.
61. The resources of the school are used very well. All funds, including specific grants, are carefully matched to the priorities that have been identified in the plan. There are clearly-identified routines, which are well established and enable the headteacher and governors to monitor the deployment of resources and to establish best value-for-money principles when measuring improvements in the quality of teaching, standards achieved by the pupils and purchasing resources. Although documents submitted for the inspection indicate a significant under spend of allocated finances, the budget includes money not, as yet, claimed by contractors who were involved in the refurbishment of the building.
62. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language are good. The co-ordinator and other staff are aware of the needs of all pupils. The co-ordinator attends in-service training regularly and passes on the information to the rest of the staff. The co-ordinator effectively supports teachers in assessing and recording pupils' progress and attainment. However, currently she does not monitor or give demonstration lessons to improve all teachers' expertise in teaching pupils learning English as an additional language. The school spends the money received through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant wisely and to the best advantage of pupils. Currently the equivalent of a 0.4 full time teacher is employed, who effectively co-ordinates the service within the school. She spends approximately half of her time supporting pupils who are in the early stages of fluency in English and other time is spent on supporting pupils who are not achieving as well as they should.
63. The school is satisfactorily staffed with experienced teachers who are suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus and the Foundation Stage. The recent reorganisation to a primary school has resulted in a high turnover of staff and changes in responsibilities. The senior management team consisting of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher/special needs co-ordinator are responsible for the management of the school but have had no previous experience of working in a primary school. This has a negative impact on a number of procedures, such as lunchtimes and assemblies, which are still organised using middle school strategies. All other teachers have responsibility for a class and are primary trained. Teachers and learning support assistants are experienced and well matched to the needs of the pupils. There are currently two temporary teachers and a job share in Year 5. All teachers have additional responsibilities as curriculum co-ordinators and subject specialists. At present the school is without a specialist music teacher. Staff attend regular training courses, which are well matched to their needs and linked to the school development plan. The provision of teaching

assistants to support the work in classrooms is satisfactory. The commitment and efficiency of the administrative staff and caretaker all ensure the effective day-to-day running of the school.

64. The accommodation is very good and well maintained. The school benefits from the facilities of a former secondary school, with a range of additional resources such as dedicated rooms for music, art and design, design and technology and an information and communication technology suite. The library is an attractive base for group work and research. The large hall is used well for assemblies and dining, and the gymnasium provides good facilities for physical education. The creation of the Early Years unit during the reorganisation of the school has provided the youngest children with a separate block with secure play facilities outside classrooms and on the field. The school has paid good attention to the Disability Act and ramps have been installed to provide full access to the ground floor and disabled toilet facilities. Classrooms and the spacious corridors and central areas are attractively decorated with displays of pupils' work, pictures, posters and artefacts, which present an interesting and stimulating environment in which to learn. Outdoor play facilities are very good and include two large football pitches, netball and tennis courts, as well as wide hard surface play space and a quiet area with seats and a fountain.
65. The provision of resources to support teaching and learning is good for the Foundation Stage, French, information and communication technology, and art and design. The school's resources and equipment for teaching physical education are very good. In all other subjects the provision is satisfactory.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

66. In order to improve the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- a) improve overall attainment in Year 6 by:
    - extending the use of literacy skills across the curriculum (paragraph 2);
    - reconsidering when joined-up writing is introduced and developing a handwriting policy that has a style more familiar to the letter shapes they see in books (paragraph 85);
  - b) improve the support of the full senior management team in all aspects of primary school life by:
    - providing specialist training for the senior management in primary education (paragraph 56);
    - ensuring that all senior management have a sufficiently high profile amongst the pupils during break and lunchtimes (paragraph 43);
    - seeking ways to fully involve the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) teams at senior management level (paragraph 63);
  - c) fulfil the statutory requirements for collective worship (paragraph 34);
  - d) develop procedures for checking pupils' progress in science, art and design, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education (paragraphs 49, 103, 114, 128, 132, 147, 151).

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- ensure that provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is planned for within the curriculum (paragraph 34).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	15	40	17	0	0	0
Percentage	4	20	53	23	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)	18	370
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	157

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	105

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	73

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

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	68	80	148

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	43	47	52
	Girls	65	49	67
	Total	108	96	119
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (60)	66 (55)	82 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	44	48	52
	Girls	66	49	67
	Total	110	97	119
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (61)	66 (57)	80 (85)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
220	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
8	0	0
6	0	0
10	0	0
11	0	0
19	0	0
17	0	0
30	0	0
2	0	0
8	0	0
25	0	0
0	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	26.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	212

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	1,612,033
Total expenditure	1,580,510
Expenditure per pupil	2,921
Balance brought forward from previous year	167,729
Balance carried forward to next year	199,252

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	15
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	370
Number of questionnaires returned	166

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	39	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	36	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	37	11	4	2
The teaching is good.	68	30	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	39	8	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	19	2	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	19	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	54	39	2	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	80	17	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	29	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	27	4	1	5

## **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**

67. Currently, there are 43 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis, and 33 children in the two reception classes, all attending full-time. Whilst there is a wide range of attainment, children enter this new nursery with overall skills that are well below those expected for this age group. A significant minority have poorly developed speaking and listening skills or are at an early stage of language acquisition. The number of children who require specialist support from outside agencies confirms this. Children make good progress in all areas as a result of the very rich curriculum provided and the overall good quality of teaching and learning. Children with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language are identified early and receive a good level of support so that they make good progress alongside their peers.
68. The overall quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in the Foundation Stage classes. In particular, it is of very high quality in the nursery. All children in the reception and nursery classes benefit from the spacious and stimulating environment, which is prepared skilfully to promote learning. This includes an outdoor area that has extensive resources. The children's work is respected and displayed very attractively to increase their self-esteem and sense of ownership. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers and support staff work very closely together as a team to plan work and monitor progress. It is evident that all staff involved in the Foundation Stage have a very good knowledge and understanding of this age group. Best use is made of each individual's skills to help children learn. Teaching is very well focused and activities planned with clear objectives. The wide variety of group tasks is very well organised to meet the children's needs.
69. Children achieve well in all areas of learning. By the end of their time in reception they have successfully achieved the final stage or *stepping stone* of the Foundation Stage curriculum in personal, social and emotional development. However, despite the good quality teaching it is unlikely that all children will have attained the recommended stage or final stepping stone in the Foundation Stage curriculum in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

70. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good in both the nursery and reception classes. All children in the nursery leave their carers willingly and settle quickly into the organised school routines. They are encouraged to become independent enough to answer their name when called. Most are confident to select an activity but a few children prefer to stand and watch. The vast majority of children concentrate for short periods of time without adult intervention. They are learning to play alongside each other. For instance, most of the children play together in the outdoor area on the wheeled toys. However, there are still a number of children who play in isolation at the sand and water activities. The children are starting to appreciate the needs of others and respond well to daily procedures, such as snack time. They are approaching the third stage or *stepping stone* and all children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. This progress is maintained in reception and the children learn to operate independently within the environment. For example, they hand out milk to their classmates and know that straws are needed for the cartons. They are able to put on their coat and use painting aprons with minimal adult help. The children clearly understand what is acceptable behaviour and have a good awareness of the consequences of inappropriate actions. They have formed good relationships with the adults around them and are generally happy to share equipment and play in harmony with their classmates. For example, they play alongside each other in '*Liberty Airlines*' and in the '*Rainbow Travel Centre*'. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum they have achieved the final stage or *stepping stone* of the Foundation Stage curriculum.



## Communication, language and literacy

71. Children start nursery with a wide variation of attainment in communication, language and literacy skills; a significant number have speech problems or are at an early stage of language acquisition and find difficulty communicating in a coherent manner. The majority of children are working within the first *stepping stone* of the Foundation Stage and this is below expectations for this age group. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good and all children make good progress in the development of their communication, language and literacy skills. Children with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language are fully included in all activities and are well supported by staff that have a very good understanding of their difficulties and plan together with the class teachers. The children follow specific themes that have been carefully planned to extend their vocabulary. For example, a topic on hot countries was skilfully used to introduce a whole range of activities. These successfully encouraged discussion about holidays in the sun and what should be taken to wear for this type of weather. In the nursery, the children are developing their ability to take turns to talk and are at the early stages of communication. In reception, the children interact appropriately with each other and take part in conversations. They enjoy listening to stories read by their teacher. These story sessions are particularly helpful for children who are using English as an additional language. Speaking skills are developing well and the children enthusiastically extend their vocabulary.
72. Reading skills are also promoted very well through this themed approach and the children start to listen carefully to stories and learn to understand that print in books carries meaning. In reception this good progress is maintained. Above average children have started to interpret stories through pictures in suitable books. One or two children remember words that occur frequently such as *'in'*, *'the'* and *'at'* and can point to the title of a book. However, as yet, children are not aware that authors are people who write books. In the nursery, children are not yet on the first stage or *stepping stone* of this particular area of learning. They have started to draw and paint but are unable to ascribe meaning to the marks that they make. Children in reception are able to link marks on paper with some meaning. On or two above average children have started to use their knowledge of sounds to write simple words and are working at the third stage or *stepping stone*. However, very few attempt writing for lists, stories or instructions. By the time that the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the vast majority of children have not attained the final stage or *stepping stone* in communication, language and literacy. However, good progress has been made as a result of good quality teaching and learning by the teachers and learning support staff, who plan all activities very carefully together. For example, during a story time at the end of the day, one small group of children whose mother tongue was not English was appropriately withdrawn from a story session class. In their specific group they acted out a story and this promoted their language development very well. Very good visual resources are used to motivate and maintain the interest of these children; these include large picture books and cards, which help the children remember letter sounds.

## Mathematical development

73. By the time that the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, they have not all attained the expected final level or *stepping stone* recommended for their age group in all mathematical areas of learning. However, all children make good progress in both nursery and reception and this is because the quality of teaching is very good in this area of learning. Teachers plan interesting and relevant activities that stimulate the children's learning and individuals are given specialist support when required. Children with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well to ensure that they are fully involved in all activities. In the nursery, the children have started to enjoy singing number rhymes and songs and use mathematical language and number in their games. For instance, they show an awareness of size and above average children with appropriately developing speech talk about three different sized bears, one of whom was a baby and the other larger ones were his mummy and daddy. One or two children recognise groups of objects that have the same number in them. Children in the nursery are generally working on the first stage or *stepping stone* of mathematical development. In the reception class, most children recognise number lines; they count up to ten with adult support and happily count with most numbers in the correct order.

Children have started to recognise simple two-dimensional shapes and are able to match similar objects. In reception, above average children are able to count up to 20 and are able to use this ability to join up dots in the correct sequence. Average achievers confidently use numbers up to ten and can count both forwards and backwards. They have begun to represent numbers using fingers and marks on paper. Below average children recognise groups with one, two or three objects. All reception children have started to gain an awareness of positional words such as 'big' and 'little' and find items from positional clues and pictures. However, as yet they are not able to confidently develop ideas to solve problems on an independent basis. They also have great difficulty using the language such as 'more' and 'less' and have little knowledge of the meaning of 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' and 'lighter'.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

74. By the time that the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, they have not fully achieved the expected levels in this area of learning. This is because of their poor levels of speech on entry into school. However, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in both nursery and reception and this has an important impact on the good progress made by all children. The children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are fully included in the activities planned to develop this particular area of learning. In the nursery, the children have started to show a curiosity about the world around them and enjoy exploring objects such as telephones, radios and typewriters. When encouraged by adults they investigate how they can create materials into objects. For instance, when studying their cold lands theme, the children used doilies, cake cases, silver paper and other flimsy, shiny materials to make icicles. They are interested in information and communication technology and will happily sit with an adult at the computer painting simple patterns or working out simple number matching activities. Nursery children are at the very early stages of remembering about things that have happened to them and show some interest in their classroom. This is successfully achieved through the highly stimulating environment that has been created by the experienced staff. In reception, the children continue to develop their curiosity and describe simple features of objects or events. They start to develop an understanding of 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' but have difficulty discussing the difference between the past and the present. For example, they have some understanding of Christmas and one or two have already started to express their feelings about this event but this is only within the first step or *stepping stone* of this area of learning. They have yet to develop an understanding of other cultures and traditions. The children use simple computer programs to dress toys electronically and play mathematical games. However, adult support is frequently needed. They have started to join construction equipment together such as plastic bricks and, when helped by adults, they are able to create a house for 'The Three Bears' using large wooden blocks. They use simple tools and are able to join materials using different techniques. However, their ability to investigate, compare similarities, adapt their building work, and their awareness of the world around them has not developed sufficiently well to ensure that they are confidently ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

### **Physical development**

75. The quality of teaching is very good in the nursery and good in reception within this area of learning. All children, including those with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. However, all the children do not achieve the expected levels of attainment by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum. The children start at nursery a developing ability to move within a space and are able to create a range of movements with their legs and arms. For example, they pedal tricycles, use their feet to move little cars along the playground and are able to walk along pathways. They confidently push small prams around the playground and with adult intervention will balance with a partner on a rocking frame. Adults work hard on a one-to-one basis to develop their hand-eye co-ordination. For instance, the teacher carefully coached individual children to return a ball to their teacher by hitting it with a plastic bat. They were also encouraged to throw a ball into a suitably positioned basketball net, which was planned to develop co-ordination. Although most children can attend to their personal hygiene needs, they are at a very early stage of understanding the

need to eat and sleep. They are working within the first stage or *stepping stone* of the Foundation Stage curriculum. In reception, this good progress is maintained. They are developing their confidence when using a range of small equipment such as plastic people and animals. They use scissors to cut material and mould malleable materials into different shapes and objects. During outdoor play sessions, the children in reception also gain an appropriate understanding of space and are able to run, jump and hop. Most are able to avoid each other as they move around the playground. Although the children move with confidence, they are still developing their imagination skills and safety awareness. During these physical development sessions, the teachers insist on good behaviour and control the children well. This ensures that the children are well focused and make good use of this time to develop their physical skills. However, the children still have little knowledge about looking after themselves by eating healthily and exercising regularly.

### **Creative development**

76. By the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the children have not yet attained the expected levels in this area of learning. However, they have made good progress. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and often very good. This enables all children to progress well in relation to their prior attainment. Despite any learning difficulties and language problems, all children are fully included in the sessions. This is ensured because all adults in the Foundation Stage organise a wide range of appropriate activities for the children to choose from. In the nursery, the children have started to recognise and use different colours. They enthusiastically paint pictures of themselves. Below average children create unrecognisable drawings but more capable children include facial features such as a nose, mouth and eyes. However, the pictures do not tend to include other body parts such as legs and arms. In reception their pictures have much more detail, which frequently include hair and body parts. They use a wide variety of different materials to make collages. For example, different types of circles were used to create a shape collage. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy role-play; in the nursery they happily play alongside one another, whilst in reception they co-operatively act out scenes with their friends. For instance they enjoy pretending that they are going on a holiday in their class aeroplane. In the nursery the children respond to dancing and their favourite songs. By reception, they sing a few simple songs but are not able to explore how sounds are made nor imitate and create movements to music.

### **ENGLISH**

77. In Year 1, pupils' work in English is in line with national expectations. All pupils have completed a reasonable quantity and range of work since the beginning of term and have made good progress, although many find the school's chosen style of handwriting difficult to master. Standards in English by the end of Year 6 have improved in line with the national trend in recent years, reaching the national average, and well above the results in similar schools in 2002. However, in the current Year 6, there are not sufficient pupils on course to attain the expected Level 4 for this age group in writing and reading. This reflects the higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. There is no difference between the performance of girls and boys. The very good opportunities provided in all subjects for discussion and reasoned argument lead to average standards in speaking and listening.
78. The school has taken positive steps to address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Reading is now taught daily in accordance with the national strategy for teaching literacy. Teaching is supported by the provision of a well-stocked library for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6. An excellent library assistant has removed outdated material and books in poor condition and has catalogued the books according to the Dewey system, colour coding them for younger readers. The library is now an attractive feature of the school and is used well during lunch breaks and for class lessons to promote literacy skills. Pupils use the interesting range of worksheets provided to improve their library and research skills. The library provision is currently being extended to meet the future needs of the school, with the addition of a second library for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. This is bright and attractively furnished and is almost ready for use.

79. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. Opportunities are made in every subject for pupils to express their views and to listen critically and objectively to others. Teachers' questioning, which shows a high degree of sensitivity to each pupil's needs, ensures that pupils' confidence and skills develop well.
80. In Year 1 some pupils still lack confidence when speaking and have a limited vocabulary. However, opportunities such as telling others about the weekend are preceded by clear reminders about speaking loudly and clearly so that all may hear and understand. For example, a symbolic object is passed from one pupil to the other, giving each an opportunity to speak. This strategy works well. Pupils learn to listen to each other without interrupting and several are becoming confident in extending what they have to say when prompted to do so. The precise questioning is at exactly the right level for each pupil; they are not rushed and so they think carefully about what to say and contribute willingly. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support. Teachers take extra care to ensure these pupils understand and have time to reply.
81. In Years 3, 4 and 5, skilled teaching, again characterised by good questioning, encouragement and courtesy, ensures that pupils are attentive and know their opinions are valued. As a result, they listen well during whole class sessions. Pupils in Year 6 show a similar average level of attainment in speaking and listening. Having listened carefully to explanations or examples of text, they show a reasonable appreciation of content by joining in discussions and answering questions using interesting vocabulary. In one excellent lesson, the discussion in preparation for writing showed acute sensitivity to the beauty of what they had seen when visiting Bay Pond at Godstone. Excellent stimulation by the teacher, who encouraged pupils to close their eyes and to use adjectives, adverbs and similes, produced sentences from average pupils such as, '*The reflection shimmering like the twinkling stars on the silvery water.*' Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. For example, support staff sit with them during whole class sessions and group work, prompting and explaining quietly so that they are able to participate fully in discussions. Again, their opinions are highly valued by teachers, giving a real boost to their confidence. Good opportunities for higher attaining pupils to speak in public are given in the end of term performance and their speaking is expressive and clear.
82. In accordance with national recommendations, reading is now a regular part of each day for all pupils. Teaching in Year 1 is good and pupils' reading improves at a good rate. Many are already achieving above national expectations due to regular, well-focused practice. Although pupils with special educational needs still use pictures and single words, average pupils break down words quickly and read commonly used words like '*we*' and '*they*' and simple sentences such as '*we came to a path*' without hesitation. Good teaching of letter sounds and alphabet names and frequent opportunities to blend sounds together ensure that pupils have good basic skills to support their reading. In class lessons, they read a range of simple texts, joining in repeated phrases like, '*I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down,*' so that they become familiar with the shapes of words and have a good level of satisfaction when reading together. Good management ensures that books for browsing are well selected to reflect pupils' interest levels. Often, book selections have a theme such as cats or witches so that pupils can compare authors and illustrators and express their preferences. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive appropriate support. This was evident in a group-reading lesson, when the teacher sat close to a pupil who had recently arrived from Spain, gave a clear résumé of the story and translated the word '*two*' for clarity.
83. In Year 3 to Year 6, the rate of progress slows. Although reading skills are well taught during whole class sessions in the literacy hour when teachers focus on the content, vocabulary and punctuation in text, individual opportunities to read with an adult and discuss books and authors are not as frequent as they should be. Parents do not often use pupils' home-to-school reading records and teachers miss opportunities to share pupils' targets in these books. Average Year 5 pupils can use an index, contents list and glossary accurately and recognise differences between fiction and non-fiction. However, opportunities to use books for research in subjects such as history and geography are not always fully exploited. Although pupils make steady progress, there are missed opportunities in a range of subjects where pupils could practise and use their reading skills to raise standards. The current group of pupils in Year 6 are below average in

reading. This is partly due to the high number of pupils in the age group with specific learning difficulties but is also due to the fact that opportunities to promote reading are sometimes missed. The tasks, when pupils work together in pairs or groups, are not thought out carefully enough. Inappropriate demands are made on pupils' reading so that they become frustrated and do not learn as much as they could. Very few pupils demonstrate characteristics in their reading that reflect a higher than expected level for this age group. Whilst more capable pupils have a reasonable knowledge of authors and their style and express personal preferences, few can understand the inferences in text or deduce any hidden meanings as yet.

84. In Year 1, writing is in line with national expectations. From writing a simple sentence in September, more capable pupils in Year 1 can sequence the events of a story, retelling it accurately in four or five sentences. Sentences are usually accurately punctuated with full stops and capital letters and these pupils have begun to use question marks. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that pupils try hard in whole-class writing sessions. However, these whole class sessions are sometimes too long. Although group tasks appropriately address pupils' needs, for example, rewriting well-compiled sentences and using good adjectives, there is sometimes too little time for pupils to think through their individual task and complete their own writing. The teaching of spelling is good; good use of key words written on paper fans and whiteboards ensures that pupils respond quickly and teachers can see immediately who knows the letter sounds. This ensures a good grasp of spelling rules and supports writing that is in line with national expectations. Below average pupils, who were only able to make marks and form a few letters correctly in September, can now write some simple words accurately.
85. Handwriting in Year 1 is variable and many pupils suffer from being introduced to joined-up script too early. The school's chosen style means that their teacher's writing and their own efforts at handwriting do not resemble the letter shapes they read in books and in familiar text. This is confusing and results in writing that is often untidy and illegible and the progress of lower attaining and some average pupils in handwriting is unsatisfactory. Those who persevere with unembellished script fare better and make satisfactory progress. A few more capable pupils have already developed a reasonable joined-up script and teachers' expectations of presentation and accuracy are high, so that these pupils too make satisfactory progress. They usually write clearly and form their letters neatly.
86. In Years 3, 4 and 5, teachers ensure that the range of work is appropriate to develop writing skills in all forms such as poetry, book reviews, news reporting and imaginative work. These pupils make good progress in writing and attainment is in line with national expectations in these year groups so that in the future, standards by the end of Year 6 are well placed to reach the national average again. Above average Year 3 pupils use imaginative vocabulary and write sensitively, using question marks and exclamation marks accurately and for emphasis. For example, one pupil writes, *'I gulped with fear, is he going to laugh ... to tell the class I was the boy? Just then, the bell went!'* In Year 4 and Year 5, good questioning and discussion precedes pupils' writing sessions and teachers stimulate interest well, encouraging good use of simile and metaphor so that writing develops well. Higher attaining Year 5 pupils use prefixes and suffixes accurately. When writing poetry, pupils are encouraged to pick out words they feel create mood so that they can use these in their own writing and often, they do. An average pupil in Year 5 writing a haiku says, *'Horrible zooming cars, cars burning up their tyres, police chasing them'*. Sometimes, however, teaching is not consistent in the parallel classes. When teaching is good, there are regular opportunities to write at length and marking is clearly focused on pupils' targets. Writing is used to record lists and information in other subjects, as when an average Year 4 pupil wrote of Tudor times, *'You had to sprinkle marigold over the meat.'* However, some teaching, although satisfactory, misses the opportunity to set challenges for future improvement through marking and gives few opportunities for writing in other subjects. The pupils with special needs invariably receive good support, either from the teacher or from a classroom assistant, so that they write carefully. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are similarly well supported by teachers and classroom assistants. They are expected to discuss their work and ask for help, and the very positive relationships between staff and pupils ensure that they do.

87. Although standards of writing in Year 6 are below average, teachers plan very carefully to provide opportunities for improvement for pupils of all attainment. Occasionally, writing sessions in the literacy hour are cut short by too much initial discussion, but to most pupils this is valuable time in developing speaking and listening skills. Teachers usually compensate by timetabling an extra writing session, which is intense and very clearly focused. Teaching in one such writing session was excellent. Intense short bursts of discussion in a very calm ethos ensured great sensitivity in writing. One lower attaining pupil wrote, '*a little stream was rippling*'. Teacher intervention of extremely high quality ensured that pupils really thought about their writing and wrote extensively and reasonably fluently. The challenge to use similes and an ellipsis led one higher attaining pupil to write, '*The wind whistling in my ears, making them cold ...colder than ice.*' With this extremely good teaching and very positive ethos for writing, higher attaining pupils reach average standards and demonstrate a command of some elements of the higher level 5 in writing.
88. The teachers have a clear understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and have adapted its use well to suit the needs of their pupils. The basic skills are well taught. Teachers know their pupils well and in whole class sessions, question and support at precisely the right level so that pupils are keen to contribute. However, sometimes individual and group tasks are not so precisely aligned to challenge and stimulate each pupil so that some pupils do not concentrate for the whole period. The teachers usually make effective use of resources. For example, the use of individual whiteboards or word fans in Year 1 classes for spelling practice means that all pupils have an opportunity to respond. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology skills to promote literacy. Support staff are used well. They know what the pupils are expected to achieve and discuss with teachers how they can provide the support to help them do so.
89. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator works hard to improve the school's provision for English. Having analysed the results of national tests and the areas of learning that need development, the co-ordinator has ensured that a programme for improvement in writing is in place and has begun to monitor its effects on standards. Some teaching has been monitored and the co-ordinator has an accurate picture of how the school is performing and what steps must be taken to improve standards further. This positive influence has had considerable impact on improving standards and improving teaching since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90. Pupils' overall attainment at the age of 11 is below national expectations. Only about one half of the current Year 6 pupils achieve standards that are as expected. A very small number of more capable pupils attain above this level. This is a similar picture to that of the national test results in 2002 when overall test results were below the national average. However, in comparison to similar schools standards were above average. Standards in Year 3, 4, 5 are improving and are in line with the national expectations. Although standards remain below average, National Curriculum test results in Year 6 for mathematics have improved since the last inspection. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, effective systems for tracking pupils' progress, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and pupils' positive attitudes have all contributed to improving standards. Standards in Year 1 are in line with national expectations.
91. All pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Pupils who have specific learning difficulties are well supported and many have individual and group support within classes and make good progress in relation to their prior attainments. The progress of pupils who learn English as an additional language is good. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
92. In Year 1, the above average ability pupils count, recognise and understand the order of numbers to 100. They confidently count in 10s and use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to five. Most pupils count to 100 and tell the numbers in between, given two numbers to 20. They recognise simple shapes and use coins to add to ten. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support, with staff being aware of numeracy targets and providing work to encourage progress. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support. However, they do not always get one-to-one assistance in their lessons to assist with the comprehension of tasks.

93. By the end of Year 6, most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of place value to thousands, using all four rules of number and they check the accuracy of their answers. They collect and record data on bar charts, block graphs and line graphs; for example recording temperatures over a period of time. Pupils estimate length and check the accuracy of their estimations. Above average ability pupils identify common fractions and their equivalent decimals and percentages, using them to solve basic number problems to 1000. They confidently explain their reasoning using correct mathematical language. Pupils read and plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants and are learning to rotate regular shapes. They find areas, perimeters and areas of regular and compound shapes, using a formula to calculate them. One third of pupils in the current Year 6 group have specific learning difficulties many of which are linked with weak reading skills. Consequently, pupils' skills in understanding problems when they are presented in prose, and their ability to understand which operation to use, are not well developed.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and, as a result, pupils achieve well. Teachers identify clear learning intentions and share the purpose of the lesson with their pupils so that they are aware of what they will be learning and what is expected. This develops pupils' interest and an awareness of their learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know the national numeracy strategy well. They manage their pupils, time and resources efficiently. All five classes of Year 6 pupils are taught in ability groups and the work is planned to match their needs. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, pupils could plot the co-ordinates in all four quadrants and were learning where the shape would be after two translations. In another Year 6 lesson, pupils were still learning to use four operations to solve problems to 100. Homework is given regularly and this helps to extend pupils' learning.
95. Most teachers are aware of the need to give extra thinking time to the pupils with specific learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language. They provide encouragement and praise to pupils and this increases their confidence. Teachers encourage the pupils to explain their reasoning and ensure that they extend and refine their answers, both in written form and orally. Most teachers give good attention to developing pupils' ability to talk about their work. The learning support assistants work well with teachers but need more training to enable them to have an even greater impact on pupils' learning, particularly those learning English as an additional language.
96. The pupils in Year 1 have individual targets that are monitored and support their learning. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have class targets that are set half-termly and are monitored to assess progress. Quick oral questions to the whole class at the start of the lessons are effective and give lessons a brisk start. For example, in Year 5, pupils used dance actions to count in fours; this provided enjoyment and challenge whilst also providing important reinforcement of timetables. In most lessons teachers encourage good levels of pupil participation.
97. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils show good levels of respect for one another and their teachers. They co-operate well and are happy to help each other. In lessons seen during the inspection week, little use was made of information and communication technology to support learning. Numeracy skills are used to promote learning in science but there are missed opportunities to develop these skills in subjects such as design and technology and geography. Systems for regularly assessing pupils' attainment and tracking progress throughout the year and as they move up through the school are well established and effective. The analysis of test result data is used effectively to provide support through booster classes. The Year 6 National Curriculum test papers are analysed to find out the areas of mathematics needing development and the information gathered is being used to improve standards further.
98. The co-ordinator is on leave and the subject is satisfactorily led and managed by another teacher until she returns. The acting co-ordinator has had training in the numeracy strategy and is knowledgeable about the improvements made to date and about what still needs to be carried out within the school. The headteacher and the local education authority mathematics consultant have observed some of the teaching and have provided support and training. There is a satisfactory range of learning resources in each classroom, which are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

## SCIENCE

99. Standards are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Year 1 and average at the end of Year 6. Based on their prior attainment, pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and English as an additional language, are making good progress. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, the school's results were below average. In comparison to similar schools, results were above average. Staff analysed the results and identified the areas of particular weakness. These have been well addressed through consistently good and sometimes very good teaching. As a result, standards have improved significantly. At the time of the school's previous inspection, the national test results show that standards at the end of Year 6 were below average. Therefore, standards have also improved since that time.
100. By the end of Year 1, pupils successfully describe and draw objects and events that they observe. They also undertake simple experiments on a number of aspects of their work, for example, when carrying out tasks on waterproof materials. However, a small minority of the pupils have problems finding the appropriate vocabulary to explain their work. Many successfully name the main external features of both the body and a flowering plant and more capable pupils explain the items that are needed to sustain life. Pupils recognise that there is a variety of both plants and animals. Most recognise and name common materials, such as metal, plastic and wood and they successfully describe some of their properties, such as how hard or rough they are. Many pupils also describe how some materials can be best used, such as the best material for making an umbrella. The pupils are confident in explaining that light and sound come from a variety of sources.
101. By the end of Year 6, pupils successfully carry out a range of experiments using suitable equipment, making observations and recording their findings. Pupils in Year 6, for example, readily carry out investigations into materials and light. Pupils in other classes also carry out practical work, such as that on gases in Year 5. Whilst most pupils successfully explain their work, understanding and using the correct scientific language, a small number continue to find this aspect of the work difficult. However, most are now successfully explain the meaning of a fair test. A majority of pupils are confident in explaining many of the life-processes of humans, such as the role of the heart in blood circulation. Most name the various parts of a flower and they confidently explain the food chain. Many pupils successfully name a variety of materials; they readily describe their various properties and they can explain the differences between solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that materials can be made into mixtures and many readily describe how materials can be separated through processes such as sieving and filtration. They are less confident in explaining the processes surrounding dissolving and evaporation. Pupils know that objects have weight because of the gravitational pull of the Earth. They know that light travels in straight lines and most can explain how shadows are formed.
102. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Very good practice was also observed during the inspection. Lessons are suitably planned, with teachers throughout the school now making good use of practical activities. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. This provision is contributing towards the progress the pupils are making. However, teachers do not regularly provide different activities to suit pupils' varying needs. Pupils are usually provided with the same activities, and on occasions, these are too difficult for below average pupils, resulting in incorrect or incomplete work. The teachers are careful to use and emphasise the correct scientific terminology, which is having a beneficial effect on the pupils' overall learning. All teachers have good subject knowledge and they provide clear instructions and helpful demonstrations of the work that is to be undertaken. The pupils show great interest in the subject, displaying consistently good attitudes and much increased confidence in practical work in particular. In such circumstances, all pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Where teaching is very good, subject knowledge is especially secure, expectations are high and pupils are provided with much independence in carrying out their activities and, as a result, pupils make very good progress during that lesson. Teachers throughout the school are enthusiastic and the pupils are enthusiastic also. Pupils work hard, concentrate well and are keen to find answers to the problems set. Just very occasionally, a small number of pupils pay less attention. The

teachers and teaching assistants provide help and well directed support throughout. The pupils' behaviour is usually good and often very good; they work well with other pupils in carrying out activities, they are very aware of safety procedures and most produce their work neatly and carefully. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, with most appropriate comments of support and advice being added to help the pupils develop their work further.

103. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, based on nationally recommended curriculum guidelines and suitable resources are readily provided to support the work. Careful planning ensures that all aspects of work are suitably covered, with the planning for practical activities now being extremely thorough. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic and, although she is only holding the post on a temporary basis, supports her colleagues well whenever necessary. Opportunities are also provided for her to observe the work being undertaken in the classrooms, to see for herself the standards being achieved. Satisfactory arrangements are now made for assessing the pupils' work, with suitable evidence being kept to identify pupils' current attainment and the progress they have made. However, this information is not yet used well enough to provide suitable new work for all pupils. The written work undertaken by the pupils, especially that relating to reporting on practical activities, provides support to the school's initiative in literacy. Counting and measuring activities, in various aspects of the subject, support the school's work in numeracy. Information and communication technology is also used occasionally to enhance the work in science, as, for example, when they create graphs and record data. Pupils find the subject exciting, especially when carrying out experiments and this excitement contributes towards their spiritual development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

104. In Year 1, no art and design lessons were seen but the evidence of work on display and in pupils' art folders indicates that attainment is in line with national expectations and teaching is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of Year 6 were below average, although in Year 4 and Year 5 standards were in line with national expectations. Standards have improved. Standards in Year 6 are now above average. This improvement reflects the high quality teaching and very secure programme for learning, which ensures that work becomes more demanding as pupils move through the school and culminates in specialist art workshops in Year 6. In Years 3, 4 and 5, standards are generally in line with national expectations, although very good teaching in a class with more than one year group, where the teacher has very good knowledge of the subject, lifts the standards of some pupils in Year 4 and of the Year 3 pupils so that they are above national expectations.
105. In Year 1, pupils use a wide range of materials and techniques. When painting their self-portraits, pupils use primary and secondary colours well and paint carefully. They can select and use a range of brushes appropriately for fine and coarser work. The analysis of work indicates a suitable range of activities and satisfactory teaching which promote satisfactory development of skills in using materials such as pastel, felt tip pens, fabric and paint.
106. In Years 3, 4 and 5, the use of sketchbooks to support pupils' development in art and design is satisfactory although it is not consistent. When used well, sketchbooks show evidence of good progress in design. However, opportunities for teachers and pupils to evaluate the designs or comment on the finished piece or to use pupils' writing skills to list materials are seldom used. When designs are good and are compared with examples of finished work, pupils' initial ideas have been carried through to a reasonable standard in the finished pieces. The process of designing is used to particularly good effect in a recent piece of work in Year 3 and Year 4. Pupils have taken the theme of '*journeys*' following discussion of Paul Klee's life and the stimulation for his work. They have planned their own journey, including some observational drawings of buildings along the way and have developed the picture using the colour tones in Klee's work. Good use is made of symbols based on Aboriginal art work. Pupils use two different media, for example powder paint and collage to fulfil the design criteria. In one class, very good teaching characterised by a high level of teacher knowledge and expertise led to a high level of involvement and work from Year 3 pupils that was above national expectations. They used muted tones and angles in their work and imitated Klee's style well.

107. In Year 6, standards are above average and pupils benefit from a workshop approach where teachers specialise in particular areas of the art and design curriculum and teach these very well. Small teaching groups ensure that teachers can advise on techniques and discuss each pupil's work and this has a good effect on the finished pieces. Very good planning ensures that teachers follow a full and detailed programme, and consistently good teaching, with very good teaching in some lessons, ensures that pupils develop their skills logically and build very securely upon what they already know. Pupils are very thoughtful about their tasks and become very involved in their work. They can blend colours to produce many tones and can produce a range of textures by selecting materials appropriately from the wide range available. Their '*action*' pictures show a thoughtful range of images. For example, lightning, hurricanes, waterfalls, rockets and dancers were all used as designs for the final abstract. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Teachers take time to discuss choices and encourage these pupils sensitively, so that they feel competent and successful. A particularly strong characteristic of the teaching is the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and constant high quality interaction with pupils which stimulates discussion and spurs pupils on to achieve like real artists. In a very good lesson the teacher used her own expertise to adapt a technique to suit all the pupils' needs so that they worked at a good pace and did not become bored.
108. More capable pupils in Year 6 have an opportunity to join the art club of excellence and to be treated like mature artists. This is a very good provision for these pupils. They have opportunities to work on specially commissioned works for the school play or a local venue and benefit from a master class approach. When drawing figures, having been taught to think carefully about shape, size and position, the high quality input ensures that each one produces a very good image.
109. Throughout the school, teachers value pupils' work highly and this is reflected in the high quality displays around the school, making the classrooms and some areas of the school bright and attractive. Portfolios of work, the current displays, photographic evidence of the school's '*Gallery Day*' work, pupils' sketch books and lesson observations indicate that art and design makes a significant contribution to the positive ethos of the school. Every pupil is encouraged to be confident and aware of detail, to look at the world carefully and critically and to blend colours and study shape and design to achieve a result as nearly as possible like the original.
110. Teaching and learning in art and design are very well managed. This is due in no small measure to the strong influence of the subject co-ordinator and the very secure plan for learning. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and shares this knowledge and expertise generously, supporting staff well. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, with discussion and sharing very strong features of all lessons. The use of artwork from well-known artists, including some opportunities to study Aboriginal art and opportunities to work in a similar style, ensures that art makes a reasonable contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Based on their prior attainment all pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and English as an additional language, are now making good progress. At the time of the school's previous inspection, standards were reported to be below those expected at the end of Year 6. Standards have clearly improved since that time. During the inspection, no lessons were seen. Judgements are made, therefore, based on a study of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work. To date, no work has been undertaken in this subject in Year 1 and no judgement on standards can be made. However, teachers' planning shows that an appropriate range of work will be covered by the end of the year and so all statutory requirements will be met.
112. By the end of Year 6, pupils readily discuss the items they wish to make and draw up appropriate plans for making those items. In some cases they first closely examine commercially produced items, such as torches and slippers, to help them. On most occasions these plans provide suitable step-by-step details about the way in which the work is to proceed. Having produced their plans, pupils choose from a most suitable range of materials, including wood, food, plastic and felt

and tools, including saws and drills. They successfully measure, cut and shape the materials and join them with items such as glue and split-pins. Pupils provide appropriate finishing techniques, such as painting, where required and when given the opportunity, they carefully evaluate their work, both as they proceed and when they have finished. Younger pupils have, for example, produced models of wheeled vehicles, working torches, purses and 'pop-up' storybooks. Older pupils have made slippers, biscuits, musical instruments, model fairground rides and toys with moving parts. The precision with which they make their items has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

113. No judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning in Year 1. Although no lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6, an examination of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and an examination of some of their finished work show that both teaching and learning are good. Overall, teachers' planning is good and pupils are provided with opportunities to carry out all relevant activities and develop all appropriate skills. On occasions, however, the work in evaluating their finished items is less detailed than the work in planning and making their products. Good opportunities are often provided for pupils to evaluate original examples before they make their own and this helps them to identify the components they need themselves. For example, pupils in Year 6 were able to examine slippers and pupils in Years 3 and 4 studied torches. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and they readily discuss the work that they have produced, how successful it has been and how it could have been improved. The range of activities provided, the instruction received and the enthusiasm displayed clearly help all pupils to make good gains in both their designing and making skills.
114. There is a suitable scheme of work in place, based on nationally recommended guidelines and overall all aspects of work are suitably covered. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed. She has a clear knowledge of the work that is being done in the school by teaching other classes herself. There are currently no assessment procedures in place, with little information being provided to help identify pupils' current attainment or their skill levels. The writing activities undertaken in planning and, to a lesser extent, evaluating work give some support to the school's initiative in literacy. Measuring activities, such as cutting wood accurately, help support the work in numeracy. Little use is presently made of information and communication technology in the subject.

## FRENCH

115. French is taught to all Year 6 pupils. Standards of work at three months into the introduction of the subject are satisfactory, with evidence of good standards of work from more capable pupils.
116. One member of staff undertakes the teaching of French for all Year 6 classes and for the after-school autumn term French Club that is provided for more capable pupils. The subject is taught with rigour and passion, with teaching that is at least satisfactory, but is, more often, either very good or excellent.
117. A brisk and effective start to lessons was a feature of all French lessons observed. These lesson openings, conducted solely in French, included questions to the class as a whole and then to many pupils individually chosen by the teacher, with, for example, 'Where is the door?', 'Where is the window?', 'How are you?', 'Stand up!', 'Sit down!', 'Can you show me a pen?', 'Can you show me a pencil?'
118. In one lesson where teaching was excellent, the opening session was exceptionally well managed by the teacher. The pupils had entered and settled quickly, showing positive attitudes to the work ahead. Immediately the teacher's excellent pace drove the introduction and, as a result, pupils were alert, on task, experiencing enjoyment and success. They were eager for new learning. The teacher then used nine weather pictures to model statements to the class that described the weather depicted. Praise was appropriately and swiftly given as pupils correctly repeated and rehearsed the weather statements. As a result, pupils were well motivated and learning at a good pace. The teacher then demonstrated the throwing of a dice twice to determine co-ordinate points for an overhead projected weather chart. She challenged pupils to describe, in French, the

weather picture where the co-ordinates met. Excellent use of timed challenges inspired pupils to work collaboratively and remain on task. As a result, pupils' understanding and knowledge were deepened and very good learning was evident. Pupils were able to describe the weather pictures in correct French – *'It is foggy'*, *'It is hot'*, *'It is cloudy'*, *'It is snowing'*, *'It is raining'*, *'It is sunny'*.

119. In this half hour lesson, the teacher used time exceptionally well. Excellent teaching resulted in all pupils being interested, excited in the tasks, thinking for themselves, learning and sustaining their concentration and application. Throughout this lesson, the teacher assessed learning as she circulated, praised the good work she observed and intervened, when appropriate, to assist pupils' learning. To conclude the lesson, the teacher dressed a pupil in appropriate weather-related clothes and the pupils had pleasure in correctly guessing the weather situation and stating in French – *'It is raining'*.
120. Excellent teaching was also observed throughout the hour of the after-school French club. The purpose of the club is to extend the most capable pupils in their learning and speaking of French. Provision is made for approximately 12 pupils. Five girls and three boys attended the lesson observed. The pupils were motivated on arrival. Whilst listening to a tape of French songs, the pupils had their after-school refreshments and were then ready for the lesson. Excellent teaching set the scene with the teacher using picture cards to consider, in French, various foods, for example, a kilo of tomatoes, a pineapple, a kilo of strawberries, cheese, a melon, fish, an apple, a pear and bread. After the teacher's modelling of the pronunciation of the foods and pupils' repetition of the names, the teacher produced a bag of shopping and questioned pupils in French as to what food they thought might be in the bag. The pupils ably composed exploratory questions to help their hypotheses. Throughout the lesson, excellent instructions were always evident; for example, for all new phrases and statements to be learnt, the teacher always began with *'Listen and repeat'*. This strategy was interjected throughout the lesson as the teacher skilfully enabled pupils to enhance their speaking of the French language. The excellent teaching later challenged pupils with a word search exercise to find the names of 16 fruits. Here pupils were taught to look first at what they knew and recognised. When left with what they did not know they were required to use their research skills with French wordbooks provided. The teacher was interactive and aware of pupils' different preferred learning styles and included one-to-one instruction to individual pupils, as was needed. Pupils learnt to access both sections of the French dictionary – French to English (Part 2) and English to French (Part 1). Pupils were eager to extend their learning as a result of the impact of the teaching. All pupils remained on task whatever the teacher might be doing. From the word books pupils learnt whether a noun in French was masculine or feminine. Appropriate challenges throughout the lesson enabled all pupils to extend their learning.
121. Where teaching was very good pupils' learning was good. Pupils were acquiring the courtesies of the French language as spoken by the French. They readily shook hands with the teacher as she greeted some of them individually and the pupils correctly responded in French with *'I am well thank you'*. The teacher's courtesy to all pupils was a feature of all lessons. Pupils could always respond appropriately to the request to do something or say something '*...one more time*'. They were also able to listen to the teacher's descriptions of weather and to place corresponding weather pictures on the overhead projected map showing Paris, Bordeaux, Nice and Calais. The teacher's ongoing assessment enabled pupils to overcome difficulties and have confidence.
122. One Year 6 class has French timetabled twice on the one day with one lesson at the beginning of the day and the second lesson at the end of the day. Both lessons were observed. The pupils were highly motivated both in the first lesson of the day and in the last lesson of the day. These pupils were eager to contribute and the teacher was able to set an excellent pace. In the second part of the last lesson of the day, almost all pupils immediately organised themselves to the set task and one girl who had chosen to sit alone was invited by a pupil to join a group for the task. Only one group of boys worked with interrupted concentration and, as a result, this group worked at a pace considerably slower than their peers. In this lesson, the teacher's very good subject knowledge, well chosen resources and clear expectations of the task resulted in the majority being highly motivated and maintaining a good pace of learning.

123. In the one lesson where teaching was just satisfactory, the teacher's very well-paced opening to the after-lunch session was interrupted, on a number of occasions, by the poor behaviour of a group of boys. Whilst the teacher spoke appropriately about her expectations and about unacceptable behaviour, the lesson was, to some extent, dominated by the unacceptable behaviour and the teacher was not sufficiently rigorous in the management of this. Thus pupils' concentration, effective learning and maximum use of time were reduced and their overall achievement was just satisfactory.
124. The management of the subject is excellent, with taught provision very well-organised. Pupils quickly move to one French base for lessons so resources are central and display, including notices in French, is used well. Lesson planning follows a nationally recommended scheme of work for modern foreign languages. Whilst commercial resources are used well, the teacher has supplemented these with an excellent range of her own made resources. The co-ordinator's enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject inspire pupils. Currently, there is limited use made of video material and information and communication technology.
125. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows an appropriate use of some recording related to individual pupil ability. However, work is not always dated. The co-ordinator is currently working on a methodology for the recording of pupils' significant achievement at the time it occurs.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

126. Standards are as expected in Year 1 and progress is satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are below those expected at this age group and over time, progress is unsatisfactory for all pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language. However, there has been some improvement since the last inspection when standards in Year 6 were judged to be poor.
127. Pupils in Year 1 know the difference between types of houses and discuss the transport they use to get to school. Year 3 have satisfactorily discussed routes taken between home and school. Pupils in Year 4 have used maps and symbols to discuss the features of different types of towns and villages. In Year 5, pupils study the water cycle and discuss the importance of rainfall. By Year 6, pupils are able to compare the similarities and differences between the village of Godstone and the town of Mitcham. However, knowledge of map reading, directions and the location of the main cities and countries of the world is limited. Written work is less well developed than oral discussions.
128. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the two lessons observed were of satisfactory quality. Strengths in the teaching included well-planned lessons, positive relationships and good behaviour management. Careful questioning ensured that learning was being checked. Pupils were well engaged in the lessons observed and in discussions with pupils, they showed an interest in the subject. A weakness in teaching is that teachers do not provide ways to help the pupils find evidence independently nor do they give them adequate time to develop their geographical skills. For example, in a Year 6 lesson that only lasted 30 minutes the pupils had insufficient time to undertake any investigation tasks using the maps and information about the village of Godstone. Teachers then have to waste time recapping on learning before the pupils can engage in further acquisition of skills at the next part of the lesson. It was also evident from the scrutiny of work that the quality of teaching can be weak at times. For instance, too much reliance is put on the use of worksheets; these are not always completed and marked by the teachers.
129. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. The need to provide a scheme of work and suitable resources for the new primary age range has been recognised and a nationally recommended plan has been adopted. As yet, there are no systems in place to check and monitor teaching and learning. The pupils make good use of the extensive library and their information and communication technology skills promote their learning in this subject. For example, pupils' learning in geography was assisted by producing a package of information, which contained maps, charts, photographs and written accounts about Mitcham and Godstone. Although there are good

opportunities to promote social development through a visit to Greece in Year 6, there are insufficient opportunities planned for developing spiritual and cultural awareness.

## HISTORY

130. Current standards in Year 1 are in line with national expectations and all pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in Year 6 are below national expectations and have declined since the last inspection when they were judged to be as expected. During the lessons observed, progress was at least satisfactory. However, it is evident that over time all pupils in Year 6, including those with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language, have made unsatisfactory progress.
131. In Year 1, pupils are developing a sense of the passage of time and use everyday objects to do this. For example, artefacts such as old household appliances are used to find out information about the past. Throughout the school the pupils tend to have more oral understanding than they are actually able to write about. For example, this was evident in a Year 3/4 class who were studying Tudor times. The pupils dressed up as Tudors and pretended to be property owners from this period in history. They were very involved in their learning because of the interesting way in which the teacher presented the subject. Their verbal responses indicated that they were beginning to understand the idea of using evidence to learn about the past. However, there was no depth of knowledge in the written work produced after the role-play session. Discussions with Year 6 pupils reveal a lack of sufficiently retained knowledge and understanding. They can recall some knowledge about the life of Henry VIII and know some facts about Norman times. However, they are unsure of how to recognise the reliability of historical evidence and lack an understanding of some of the major consequences of the historical events they have studied. For example, the pupils are unable to explain the impact of the Victorian period on our lives today. Scrutiny of work over time indicates that standards vary between classes in the same year. For instance, work is left unfinished. The weak standards in writing have a negative impact on progress.
132. An overall judgement on the quality of teaching throughout the school was not possible because of timetabling arrangements and curriculum planning in Year 6, which did not include the teaching of history this term. However, the teaching observed in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 was at least satisfactory and was frequently good. In these lessons the teachers established good relationships with the pupils. Class management was effective with suitably high expectations of behaviour. Good use was made of praise and, consequently, lessons were calm and orderly. Pupils treated each other with respect and spoke politely when asked. In the best lessons, pupils were engaged through the effective use of artefacts and resources. They were also encouraged to maintain their involvement in the lessons by using whiteboards to respond to questions or discuss historical information in pairs. For example, in a good Year 1 lesson, questions were used well as a guide for all pupils to respond to the interest created by an investigation of artefacts from the past. This meant that all pupils were fully involved in the lesson and made good gains from their learning. Across the school, pupils are often provided with worksheets or tables to record their results. However, these are not supported by clear explanations of how they arrived at their findings. Examination of work over time indicates that some of it is left and unmarked and this is unsatisfactory.
133. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. A nationally recommended scheme of work has been adapted to meet the needs of the new age groups in this reorganised school and the necessary resources have been organised. However, the current organisation of the history curriculum has a negative impact on standards. For example, pupils in Year 6 have not studied history for nearly six months. As a result, their retention of knowledge is weak. In addition to this, lessons tend to be split up during the day and this causes gaps in the pupils' acquisition of historical knowledge and skills. Good use is made of the well-stocked library to seek out historical facts. Their information and communication technology skills are also used satisfactorily to develop their knowledge and understanding. There is a rich programme of day and residential visits which are planned to add interest to the pupils learning. The procedures to monitor and check the teaching and learning are in the early stages of development. There is a lack of planned opportunities to develop the pupils' cultural and spiritual awareness through this subject and this is a weakness.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. Standards by the end of both Year 1 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and English as an additional language, are now making good progress. At the time of the school's previous inspection standards were also reported to be in line with those expected at the end of Year 6. However a number of important weaknesses were also noted, such as in teaching and in the progress made by pupils. These issues have been dealt with well and, therefore, significant improvements have been made since that time.
135. By the end of Year 1, pupils confidently name items of computer equipment such as screen, mouse and keyboard. They successfully use a keyboard to type text including their names and short sentences. For example, pupils confidently produce simple detail about the type of house they live in. They readily place gaps between words using the space bar and most pupils know how to include capital letters and full stops into their writing. Using an appropriate paint package, pupils produce an interesting range of pictures, such as those of houses and themselves. Whilst a number of pupils need help, many confidently and independently access the menu to print or store their finished work. Pupils readily talk about their work in information and communication technology.
136. By the end of Year 6, pupils show sound skills in word processing, being confident in changing the font, colour and the size of their work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have successfully produced writing on, for example, *'The Lonely Monster'*. Older pupils successfully move portions of text from one place to another. Pupils use the mouse accurately to help produce various forms of illustration and they successfully merge this work into their writing. For instance, pupils in Year 5 produced appropriate newspaper reports. They successfully develop their control skills using a screen turtle to produce a range of straight line and turning movements, either following a set course or producing their own patterns. Pupils further develop these skills when using a computer to control wheeled vehicles. Many pupils confidently access the Internet, as well as a range of CD ROMs, to provide a variety of information for subjects such as art and design and geography. For example, pupils in Year 5 produced work about, and in the style of, Matisse and the pupils in Year 6 produced most interesting multi-media presentations when comparing Mitcham with Godstone. Pupils recognise patterns and relationships in, for example, adventure games and they confidently predict the outcome of different decisions. Pupils further improve their modelling skills through successfully producing a range of spreadsheets; for instance, when undertaking work on planning a party or a holiday. Pupils are showing increasing confidence in explaining how to send electronic mail. However, pupils, at present, have limited opportunities to develop their skills in monitoring external events.
137. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In relation to Years 4 to 6, this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers throughout the school are enthusiastic towards information and communication technology and now that resources have improved, in the computer suite in particular, they are able to provide regular opportunities for pupils to use computers. A number of teachers readily admit to some previous lack of confidence in teaching the subject, but through careful preparation of lessons they are now providing pupils with most appropriate learning experiences. They provide clear and careful instructions and demonstrations on how to use various items of hardware, as well as various word processing and art packages and all pupils are now able to make good and much-improved gains in their computer skills. Pupils respond by showing good attitudes to the subject and usually behaving well. They generally listen carefully and settle well to all tasks, with good levels of concentration and developing levels of skill. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and they work well, both alone and with a partner when necessary. Relationships are usually very good and pupils ask adults for help when required. Very occasionally, a small number of pupils show less attention to their teacher and then they are uncertain about what they are required to do. Pupils share computers amicably, and are careful in their use of all forms of equipment. Teachers and teaching assistants provide appropriate help and advice throughout, enabling their pupils to make steady progress.

138. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, based on nationally recommended guidelines, with additional plans having been added about its implementation in the school. The coordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and she has worked hard to enhance the overall provision. However, at present she has limited opportunities to observe lessons being taken in other classes. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and are much-improved since the previous inspection. Suitable information is now being collected to enable staff to identify pupils' current understanding. The work being undertaken in word processing is making a useful contribution towards enhancing pupils' literacy skills. Information and communication technology is having some effect on the development of numeracy skills through the collection of data and its presentation. It is also contributing to a number of other subjects, such as geography and history and is further enhancing pupils' knowledge and understanding in those subjects. However, little use is being made of the subject in design and technology and religious education. This is partly because the school is experiencing problems with all its class-based computers, which limits their current use in everyday lessons. Many pupils find the use of computers exciting and the excitement generated, such as when producing various images on the screen, helps enhance pupils' spiritual development. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular activities for pupils through the popular computer club.

## MUSIC

139. It was not possible to observe either music teaching or singing in Year 1 during the time of the inspection so a judgement about what they can do or the teaching for these pupils cannot be made. However, it is clear from the quality of singing in assemblies, lesson observations, discussions with pupils in Year 6 and the dress rehearsal performance of the end of term concert that standards are average in Year 6. This means that the standards in Years 4 to 6 have been maintained since the last inspection. The school no longer employs a music specialist and the teaching is no longer consistently good. Most teachers have a lack of subject knowledge. However, the teaching of music is satisfactory overall through Year 3 to Year 6, with good teaching in Year 3 and Year 4, reflecting the high level of interest and enthusiasm of both pupils and teachers. All teaching is well organised and pupils are well managed.
140. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 can sing tunefully using a scale of five notes and are learning to accompany their singing on pitched instruments. They show an appropriate understanding of rhythm. Good teaching characterised by high expectations ensures that all concentrate and join in, singing *'Swing Low Sweet Chariot'* melodiously. They experiment using a five note scale on pitched instruments and good teaching ensures that they listen to each other and work well together in their composing tasks. These pupils behave well, sharing beaters and cooperating pleasantly in trying to refine their work. The teaching is well planned with appropriate challenges for each group of pupils.
141. Year 5 pupils clap and click rhythms accurately and their unaccompanied singing of *'Down by the Riverside'* is satisfactory. Teaching is also satisfactory and follows a clear plan so that time is used appropriately during the lesson for listening, rhythmic work and singing, with time to evaluate the performance. During assembly, pupils from Year 5 and Year 6 sing satisfactorily and mainly with enthusiasm. However, some of the songs provided are too low for these young voices and, as a result, the pitch is inappropriate for the performance. Pupils in Year 6 sing satisfactorily and compose, appraise and perform with enthusiasm at a level appropriate for their age. However, knowledge of composers is currently an area of weakness in pupils' music knowledge. This is an area that has not yet been dealt with in the recently introduced music curriculum for Year 6 pupils, who say they have no memory of listening to the works of famous composers in the past. Year 6 pupils can keep a steady rhythm very well whilst enjoying a chant in rap style using one, two and three beat notes. Notation has been appropriately introduced to support the recording of their pieces and all use this with reasonable accuracy. Satisfactory teaching ensures that pupils listen to each other's music, evaluate what they hear and refine their work.
142. Appropriate use is made of music tapes from a somewhat restricted range but more use could be made of listening sessions, both in music lessons and in assemblies, to introduce pupils to the styles of composers and music from a wider range of cultural traditions. Good opportunities are

provided for more capable pupils to extend their music by singing solo in the end-of-term performance or by learning the guitar. The teaching for these pupils and for the volunteer choir composed of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 is good. A visiting guitar specialist provides excellent learning opportunities.

143. Satisfactory use is made of visiting musicians to enhance the music curriculum, such as a number of pop groups and an African music group. However, the range is fairly limited. Although the supply of pitched and un-pitched instruments is adequate, there is a dearth of instruments from around the world, and the overall range of instruments requires repair and expansion.
144. The co-ordinator for music has no specialist knowledge of the subject, but is very keen to develop the school's approach. By introducing a sound programme for learning, which builds on pupils' previous learning and becomes more demanding as pupils move through the school, and by inviting visiting specialists to work alongside teachers, she is providing good leadership for the subject. Teachers recognise the need to improve their own knowledge and skills and are committed to a training programme. Discussions with staff indicate that standards in the subject are well placed to improve as teachers benefit from their training and share newly found expertise.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

145. Standards by the end of Year 1 are broadly in line with those expected and by the end of Year 6 they are higher than expected. Based on their prior attainment, all pupils, including those with specific learning difficulties and English as an additional language, are making good progress in Year 1 and very good progress by the end of Year 6. Standards are similar to those reported by the end of Year 6 at the time of the school's previous inspection. At that time, statutory requirements for swimming were not met but this has now been rectified.
146. By the end of Year 1, pupils move confidently around the hall, showing clear awareness of space and other pupils. In their gymnastic movements, pupils show suitable skill in rolling, jumping and balancing. They successfully balance on various '*points*' and '*patches*' and they show appropriate stillness in these balances. Pupils readily imitate a variety of movements of animals, in particular, carefully copying the movements of frogs and snakes. Pupils show satisfactory control when using bats and rackets to hit a ball. They understand the need to warm up for, and recover from, exercise. By the end of Year 6, in games, pupils successfully develop their throwing and catching skills, as well as their ability to move with the ball and they show good levels of performance, in catching in particular. Pupils further cultivate their skills when taking part in small-sided team games, such as football and basketball. In developing their skills in these games, pupils are beginning to show an awareness of tactics and of fair play. Pupils in Year 5 readily develop their dance skills, successfully carrying out dances from the English folk tradition. They move rhythmically to the music and confidently master the dance steps and routines required. Pupils perform a variety of gymnastic movements, showing skill and poise of a higher standard than normally seen from pupils of this age. They successfully work with other pupils to develop an appropriate sequence using both the floor and apparatus. Pupils recognise some of the effects that exercise has on their bodies. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attend swimming lessons and all successfully develop their confidence in the water. By the time they complete these sessions, at least 80 per cent of the pupils swim 25 metres unaided. Year 5 pupils develop their outdoor skills during a visit to the Isle of Wight.
147. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Year 1. It is very good in Years 3 to 6 and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers provide good planning, clear instructions and enthusiasm, together with a very good and varied range of resources, allowing all pupils to make good gains in their physical skills. All members of staff change appropriately for lessons and they join in and demonstrate for pupils, which helps them identify areas where they might improve themselves. They have good subject knowledge and have most suitable expectations of the pupils' performance. Where the teaching overall is very good, in Years 3 to 6, teaching is very confident and careful coaching is provided. In addition to this, pupils are challenged to improve their work. Where expectations are high, pupils make very good gains in their skills. In all lessons, pupils join in appropriately and enjoy themselves. They make a good and sometimes very good physical and creative effort and take pleasure in the quality of their

performance. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with teachers generally showing very good control and management skills. Teachers usually take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice and opportunities are normally provided for the pupils to discuss the quality of the work seen to identify good features. Teachers and teaching assistants provide help and support to pupils in all aspects of their work and, in particular, they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show very good attitudes, behave very well, work well alone and with a partner or group and carry equipment carefully and safely.

148. The school has a suitable scheme of work, based largely on the government's curriculum guidelines and all appropriate aspects of work are well covered. The accommodation and resources to support this work are very good and this is contributing to the standards being achieved. The coordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and, by monitoring lesson plans, is fully aware of the work being tackled. He also has the opportunity to observe lessons taking place, to see for himself the standards being achieved. He also takes lessons in other classes. Assessment procedures are presently informal. Little information is being recorded about individual pupils to identify either their current attainment or the progress they are making. Activities involving counting and measuring, in various aspects of physical education, give appropriate support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The advice provided to pupils about the importance of honesty and fair play in their sporting activities successfully supports their moral development. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular sporting activities and the school has a number of successful sports teams. These activities suitably enhance pupils' social development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

149. Standards in Years 6 are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' ability to recall what they have learnt is unsatisfactory and they have few opportunities to express their ideas in writing. During the inspection, no written work from Years 3, 4,5 and 6 was available to scrutinise and it was clearly evident that progress over time is unsatisfactory for pupils in these year groups. The school has not been able to maintain the satisfactory standards in Year 6 as judged at the time of the previous inspection. The standards attained by Year 1 pupils are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils in this year group, including those with specific learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, are fully included in all lessons and progress in this year group is satisfactory.
150. Year 1 pupils' knowledge of Christianity and other world religions is satisfactory. Pupils understand the basic principles of Hinduism and learn about festivals such as Christmas and Diwali. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were being taught about the festival of Christmas and some of the traditions surrounding it. Effective questioning drew on pupils' understanding of festivals, such as birthdays and Christmas, in their own lives. Their books indicate that they know that they belong to a family in school and are part of the larger community.
151. By Year 6, pupils have some knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of Buddhism, a religion not required for study in the locally agreed syllabus, but which was being taught in the current term. They have learnt about the Christian marriage rites and have had an opportunity to act out a marriage ceremony. This has enabled pupils to deepen their understanding of the significance of marriage vows. Year 5 pupils are taught rituals, activities and practices of Islam. In an observed lesson, they were being introduced to the Five Pillars of Islam. Pupils who belonged to the faith were consulted on pronunciation of the words and were very ably involved in explanations by the teacher. This helped to develop teachers' and pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.
152. The overall quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in the lessons observed was satisfactory in the lessons observed. In a good lesson in Year 5 class the teacher used questions skilfully to assess pupils' understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam and realised that pupils needed more explanations to understand that the Five Pillars are not physical columns holding Islam but are actually spiritual requirements. The teacher took good account of pupils' personal experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of that faith. In Year 6 classes, teachers invited the

local vicar to talk about the Christian marriage ceremony. He effectively explained the significance of the marriage for believers and used objects such as a ring, marriage certificate and marriage triangle to explain the significance of the rituals associated with the ceremony. However, pupils had little opportunity to express their own views and ideas that they had learn from the lesson. The quality of learning in this subject is weaker than the teaching. In most lessons seen, pupils are well behaved, keen to learn, and they concentrate well. However, some lose concentration when expected to sit listening to teachers for long periods of time. There are insufficient opportunities for personal research and as a consequence the pupils do not learn through thoughtful reading. In addition to this, the school has not introduced regular checks on pupils' progress and this means that their skills and knowledge are not developed or recorded systematically.

153. Pupils visit a local church and visitors come to school to talk about Christianity. However, there are no visits to places of worship of other religions to extend pupils' learning and understanding. The use of visitors from different backgrounds is not well developed and pupils miss out on opportunities to listen to different experiences of what it is like for a believer. The school community is rich, with a wide variety of faiths being represented, but the school is not using its pupils and their families as a first hand resource.
154. This term the school is raising the profile of religious education and planning for each year group is developing. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is aware of the need for professional training to develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of the world religions that require teaching. The school's resources are insufficient to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. For instance, there are very few artefacts or research materials which could be used to develop the pupils' understanding of faith, traditions and customs. The subject does not promote independent learning through the use of the library to develop literacy skills and information and communication technology programs.