

INSPECTION REPORT

STANFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Streatham Vale

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102660

Headteacher: Mr Peter Talbot

Reporting inspector: Mrs Clare Lorenz

Dates of inspection: December 2nd -5th 2002

Inspection number: 246266

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 primary
Age range of pupils:	3-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chilmark Road Norbury London
Postcode:	SW16 5HB
Telephone number:	020 8764 3892
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Still
Date of previous inspection:	20 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
9282	Clare Lorenz	Registered inspector		Characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Teaching and learning The curriculum Leadership and management
9561	Husain Akhtar	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' care and welfare Partnership with parents
8316	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Art and Design Design and technology Music	
31838	Martyn Williams	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics English Geography History French Physical education Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stanford is a smaller than average primary school with 170 girls and boys on roll. There are 16 part time children in the nursery. Numbers have dropped considerably since the last inspection when it was a middle school. It will complete the transformation to a primary school in 2003 and at present there are no Year 2 pupils. The ethnic intake has changed in the last few years; nearly half the pupils come from black ethnic backgrounds, one fifth are of Asian origin and one third are white. Forty pupils (23 per cent) have English as an additional language, which is above average, but only two are at an early stage of learning English. The majority of pupils come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Eighteen per cent of pupils, roughly the national average, are entitled to free school meals. A similar percentage of pupils, also the average, have special educational needs; most have learning difficulties. Two of these, a lower proportion than the national average, have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below average and to Year 1 is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound standard of education as the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and good in the nursery, reception and Year 1. The good leadership and management of the school have resulted in an orderly community with very good relationships that ensures a very good ethos for learning. This is leading to rising standards in mathematics and science in particular. Standards in English are also rising, though to a lesser extent as the older pupils do not make as much progress as could be expected. The school, therefore, gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children make a good start in the nursery and reception class, where effective teaching helps them to make good progress.
- By the end of Year 1 pupils attain above-average standards in music, and by the end of both Year 1 and Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design.
- A good range of opportunities for learning and very good extra-curricular activities help pupils to develop very good attitudes to school.
- The headteacher, governing body and key staff work together very well to decide on priorities for improving and developing the school and take very effective action to bring these about.
- The very good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in their very good personal development and very good relationships.
- The school's very good procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour have resulted in improved behaviour, which is now good.
- Parents have very positive views of the school's work.

What could be improved

- The teaching of basic skills in English, and particularly in writing and reading in Years 3-6, where standards are below average.
- The consistency of teachers' marking and their use of the school's good assessment systems in order to be more effective in planning lessons and helping pupils to improve their work.

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 in 1997, when it was a middle school for pupils in Years 4-8. Since then there has been good improvement, particularly in the ethos of the school; the disruptive behaviour has been eliminated and pupils now have very good attitudes to their work. The quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory overall. Standards in mathematics and science have

risen significantly in the last year and are now average by the end of Year 6. Standards in English are below average, as they were at the last inspection, but the school's performance in the 2002 national tests for Year 6 pupils showed an improvement over the previous two years' results. The school met its challenging 2002 targets in science but fell just short in English and mathematics. Other weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been addressed effectively, resulting in very good improvement in quality and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and good improvement in history. In addition, parents are now supportive of the school and the governing body is better trained and more effective.

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	D	E
mathematics	E	E	C	C
science	E	E	C	D

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

In the nursery and reception children achieve well because of the consistently good teaching. By the end of the reception year they are likely to attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development. By the end of Year 1 pupils attain average standards overall and above average standards in art and design, ICT and music. Pupils' achievement is good overall.

The above table shows that pupils' performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6 showed a significant improvement over the last two years, and Stanford was Merton's most improved primary school. The trend in the school's results matched the national trend. The school met its target in science, but just fell short in English and mathematics. Inspection findings reflect the last 2002 test results: Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in mathematics and science but standards in English remain below average. Standards are average in most other subjects but above average in ICT and art and design. Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory overall: it is good in mathematics, ICT, physical education and religious education but unsatisfactory in English. Boys and girls achieve equally, as do those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic and very keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is good in and out of classrooms. Pupils of all ethnic backgrounds get on well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work very well together and listen carefully to each other. They respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility, such as the school council, and show sensitivity and respect for people different from themselves.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average, as is unauthorised absence. Most pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The consistently good teaching in the nursery, reception and Year 1 leads to good learning for these age groups. Although the quality of teaching and learning in many of the lessons for Years 3 to 6 seen in the inspection was good, scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicated that this was not consistently the case and teaching and learning are sometimes unsatisfactory, especially in Years 3 /4 and in writing in Year 6.

The teaching of mathematics is good and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily across the school. Teaching is also good in art and design, ICT, music, physical education and religious education. The teaching of English and literacy skills is good in Year 1, but in Years 3 to 6, although the teaching of English is satisfactory overall, the teaching of literacy skills is unsatisfactory. In particular, the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory; pupils do not do enough writing and grammatical errors in their writing are allowed to go unchecked. This reduces the quality of their learning.

Teachers plan well, use resources and support staff well and manage their pupils well. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils, whatever their gender, special educational needs or background.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. In addition to a good range of learning opportunities there is an effective programme of personal, social and health education that incorporates the effective "You can do it" programme. The choice of extra-curricular activities for older pupils is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Work is planned well to meet individual pupils' needs and they achieve as well as other pupils. Learning support is effective.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Individual education plans are used well in the classroom to meet the needs of pupils, most of whom are not at an early stage of language learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good and provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school looks after its pupils well. It gives good educational and personal support and guidance. It has very effective procedures for maintaining the good behaviour.

Parents are very supportive of the school. The school has satisfactory links with them.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides strong and positive leadership which gives clear educational direction to staff. There is a good, shared commitment to improvement amongst staff and a good capacity to succeed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good overall. The re-vitalized governing body is effective, very supportive and knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It has worked hard and with good success to improve the school. It energetically and successfully develops ideas to support an increase in pupil numbers. There are some minor omissions in reporting statutorily-required areas in its annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There has been very thorough monitoring and evaluation of results, teaching and learning and this has contributed to a rise in standards. The school follows the principles of best value well.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school is effective and efficient at using available resources to improve pupils' achievement.

The school has an appropriate number of well-trained teaching staff. The accommodation is very good. Resources are satisfactory overall, and although the number of books in the library is insufficient the school is currently taking action to improve the quantity and quality.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, make good progress and are expected to work hard. • The teaching is good. • The school is approachable and is well led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would like more information about their children's progress. • Parents would like a more interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views. However, they judged teaching to be satisfactory rather than good in Years 3 – 6. They found that the range of activities outside lessons is very good for older pupils. Inspectors judged that the school provides a satisfactory level of information on pupils' progress, but though end-of-year reports are adequate they do not always make clear how much a pupil has moved forward.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There have been many changes in the school since the last inspection in 1997, when Stanford was a middle school. For example, the school is developing an Early Years unit. In the nursery and reception class, where teaching is good, pupils start from a below average point on entry and reach average standards by the time they enter Year 1. Good teaching ensures that the majority of children achieve well in all areas of learning from a low start. One higher-attaining child, after a few weeks, was able to write clearly. Others take longer to settle in, but owing to the high quality of support they receive, children are soon comfortable with each other and adults and the development of their social skills is very good. Children are likely to have achieved all the goals for learning by the time they enter Year 1 and many will exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development.
2. The most recent test results, as well as inspection findings, indicate that standards are now rising following a decline since the last inspection. The new headteacher, in order to raise standards, has focused his efforts on improving planning, assessment and teaching in literacy and numeracy, both through the national strategies and close analysis of test results. He has introduced extra literacy periods to the curriculum this term to raise standards in writing and spelling and to widen pupils' imaginations and vocabulary. Although a good start has been made, there has, as yet, been insufficient time to judge the impact of these sessions. A scrutiny of pupils' books confirms that extra attention is required in writing and reading to raise standards in English.
3. To improve teachers' expectations the headteacher has also introduced good whole-school assessment systems for English, mathematics and science, which record standards and track pupils' progress. In addition, he closely monitors teachers' planning and assessment records. The good assessment system needs to bed down. Some teachers already use it very well, particularly at the top of the school, but others are still finding their feet. Currently its use is inconsistent across subjects and years and does not always record national levels, thus it is not yet as useful as it could be for tracking all pupils' standards and achievement, nor for predicting their future progress.
4. By the end of Year 1 pupils attain average standards overall and above average standards in art and design, information and communication technology and music. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards and achievement in geography and religious education. Achievement is satisfactory in history but is good in other subjects, where enough evidence was available, because of good quality teaching. About half of the pupils in the class have special educational needs and these pupils make similar progress to others.
5. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are average overall but are below average in English. The effect of the current good teaching in Years 5 and 6, while it has had a good impact on test results in English, mathematics and science, has not yet raised standards overall to more than average. Standards in art and design and information and communication technology are above average. Achievement is satisfactory overall but is good in mathematics, art and design, ICT, music, physical education and religious education.
6. In English, standards in Year 1 in reading, speaking and listening and writing are average and pupils achieve well. In Year 6, teachers' efforts to improve standards in English bore fruit in the 2002 national tests as standards rose from well below to below average. However, only half the national average of pupils passed the national test at the higher Level 5. Pupils' standards in writing and reading in Year 6 are still below average and the majority are not making satisfactory progress overall in English. This holds back their achievements not only in English but also across a wide range of subjects, such as history, which require good writing to achieve good standards.

7. The teaching of basic literacy skills in Years 3 - 6 is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 3 and 4, and this has a negative impact on pupils' standards. As a scrutiny of pupils' work shows, they are not always required to write at length, and mistakes in their punctuation and spelling are not always corrected. Handwriting is sometimes untidy and pupils are not always encouraged to extend their vocabulary. Marking does not always include comments to help pupils improve their work. Pupils listen to the teacher's questions and frame their verbal replies satisfactorily. Many teachers use the questioning of pupils suitably to extend pupils' ability to express themselves. However, pupils' replies show that although their response is usually adequate it can also be prosaic. Many pupils do not have a wide enough vocabulary to write imaginatively or to extend ideas and some teachers do not always help them to do so. The introduction of extra lessons this term devoted to writing and spelling is intended to raise English standards.
8. Year 1 pupils can count and sequence numbers securely up to 10 although a few higher-attaining pupils can add and subtract numbers up to 20. They see how mathematics is used in everyday life. They achieve well because they are taught well. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 are new to the school and their standards vary from well below average to above average. In Year 6 most pupils who have been in the school since Year 4 are now achieving well owing to the good teaching. Most accurately calculate to two decimal places rather than the three decimal places of higher-attaining pupils. Pupils have analysed data such as national test results, and teachers use this activity to underline the use of mathematics in everyday life.
9. Standards in science are average at the end of Years 1 and 6. Year 1 pupils, whose teaching was rigorous and demanding, made good predictions in an investigation about sound, and then accurately deduced what the effect of distance had on the volume of sound. They made good progress. In Year 6, where teaching was also good, pupils' experiments showed that they have a secure understanding of forces such as gravitational and magnetic attraction and they also made good progress. By contrast, in Year 3/4, where it was not possible to see a lesson, teachers' planning and a scrutiny of work show that teachers' expectations are too low for most pupils to achieve well and reach average or better standards.
10. The school has worked hard to improve resources in ICT and teachers' subject knowledge in order to raise standards. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average. Standards are now above average and pupils' achievement is good. Pupils use computers for a range of purposes across subjects; for example, in developing an understanding of parentheses in English grammar, and pupils enjoy both their formal use in lessons to enhance standards and the opportunity to use them in the lunch hour for playing games. The school is well equipped with hardware and the co-ordinator is expanding subject-relevant software to raise standards through the use of ICT across the curriculum.
11. There has also been a good improvement in standards in history; these are now average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. In Year 1, pupils are aware of the differences between past and present when they compare old and new toys. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of historical dates, such as the reign of Queen Victoria, but their evaluation of the reasons for historical events taking place is not as strong.
12. One fifth of all pupils have English as an additional language, though only a few pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The school's analysis of the results of national assessments in English revealed that seven out of ten pupils who have English as an additional language have average standards in reading. The standards of the remaining pupils, some of whom have special needs, are below average. However, only four out of ten had average standards in writing because they lack the range of vocabulary and sentence structure to do well, even though they have sufficient English to cope with most everyday spoken and written demands. The individual education plans, which have been developed to support their learning needs, target areas such as writing and vocabulary. This is in line with the needs of many other pupils in the school and most pupils with English as an additional language are achieving as well as could be expected. The group appears to have no difficulties acquiring mathematical concepts, and in mathematics and science their standards are average. Pupils with special educational needs reach standards commensurate with their attainment levels and achieve satisfactorily. Higher-attaining pupils achieve more in Year 6 in mathematics than in other subjects. This is

because teachers' expectations in the top set are very high. During the inspection no observable difference was noted between the standards or achievement of boys and girls. However, girls did not attain as well as boys in the 2002 national tests. The school has, in the last year, concentrated on raising boys' achievements through focused teaching and support, such as was seen in the Achievement Room. In particular, the school had been concerned to raise the achievement of boys from a black ethnic background, and has done so.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

13. Pupils' attitudes towards school are very good and behaviour both in and out of the classroom is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection (when there was a different age range of pupils) when pupils' attitudes were largely positive and the behaviour of the majority was satisfactory. The children in the nursery and reception class are happy and confident in school. They work and play enthusiastically and, with encouragement, are confident when talking to each other, to older pupils and to adults. Pupils in all years are very keen to come to school and take great pride in talking about it. They understand the purpose and practice of the "You can do it" programme and openly talk about how it has helped them to work harder and become more confident. Pupils are interested in their lessons and listen well to teachers. They contribute to discussions or questions when asked to do so and most can express themselves satisfactorily. Although some responses show imagination, others, whether verbal or written, are factual rather than imaginative and not all teachers, especially in Year 3 /4, pursue questions sufficiently to increase pupils' expressive skills.
14. The behaviour of all groups of pupils is good and praised by parents, who have seen the transformation of the school from one where poor, disruptive behaviour by a minority of pupils affected the learning of many others. Pupils spoke of the intimidation that they had felt and that the best thing about school now was that behaviour was good and this increased their enjoyment. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour in classrooms or the playground. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are polite and courteous and understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Good behaviour and its effect on others is consistently shown by teachers and discussed in personal, social and health education lessons. This has clearly had a good effect as inspectors twice saw pupils take on the teachers' role and effectively correct minor misbehaviours by their classmates. There have been no exclusions this year.
15. Pupils show very good respect for each other and for the values and beliefs of others, including religious beliefs and practices. Members of the school council showed great consideration for others in the way they spoke understandingly about less than perfect behaviour and attitudes by a very few miscreants, how it was dealt with and the effect it had on others. Pupils in Years 3–6 sat concentrating quietly and enjoying an assembly led by younger pupils, and reception children listened attentively in an assembly where the speaker talked about the various winter religious festivals of light. Pupils respond very well when opportunities are given to them to use their initiative and take personal responsibility. The school council representatives, who are elected by classmates, made good suggestions, which have been carried through, about the use of the playground. Older members also commented on how much behaviour has improved in the last two years. Pupils eagerly explained how they can get house points, for example, for showing personal initiative and effort and, to the amusement of inspectors (but not her teacher) one pupil showed initiative and worked hard and persuasively to persuade inspectors to have her physical education lesson inspected.
16. Relationships are very good and this inspires confidence, enabling pupils of all ages to develop personally very well. The school operates as an open community in which all are valued and all expected to participate. Young children in the nursery and reception class are at ease and co-operative with each other; older pupils similarly. Even in the mixed-year class, where the range of attainment levels and backgrounds is very wide and where the behaviour of a few pupils pushes at the boundaries of acceptability, relationships are secure. Pupils are very courteous and welcoming to visitors and patient and tolerant with each other.
17. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils who have English as an additional language are as good as those of their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to others in

whole-class situations. They contribute in lessons and enjoy being involved in activities with their peers.

18. The level of pupils' attendance is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Attendance has slowly increased over the last few years. In 2001 it was still well below the national average. However, the school size and population have changed and attendance records show that after a considerable focus on attendance, the level has risen to match the national average. Many pupils have received certificates for full attendance and only a very few pupils have regularly low attendance levels. The school has brought these to the attention of the education welfare officer. Most pupils are punctual at the start of the day and only a few parents, in the face of the school's strong discouragement, take holidays during term time. The level of unauthorised absence matches the national level.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in the classroom. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the teaching in one fifth of lessons was unsatisfactory. Teaching is good overall in the nursery and reception class. Teaching and learning are also good in Year 1. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Classroom teaching and learning are good, and occasionally very good, in Years 5 and 6, and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work across Years 3 to 6 showed that over time, teaching and pupils' learning are not as consistently good as those observed during inspection. In particular, the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory and as a result many pupils' standards in writing are below average.
20. The good teaching in the nursery and reception class has a positive impact on children's learning. Children are encouraged to become confident and this helps them to acquire new skills and knowledge quickly. Their personal and social development, as a result of good teaching, is very good in both the nursery and reception. Children are encouraged to talk about what they are learning, which develops their ability to express themselves and reinforces learning. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and children enjoy reading, writing and counting and, from a below-average starting point, they achieve well. Nursery nurses and classroom assistants are used effectively and the management of children is very good. Staff in the nursery and reception class have high expectations and they use their good knowledge of the areas of learning and good assessment information to plan suitably challenging activities.
21. In Year 1 teaching and learning are good in all subjects seen with the exception of history, in which they are satisfactory. No lessons were observed in design technology, geography and religious education in Year 1. However, the teaching and reinforcement of learning in basic skills, such as reading, writing and speaking and listening across the full range of subjects, is satisfactory rather than good.
22. Teaching is good overall in Years 5 and 6. In the mixed class of Year 3 and 4 pupils, teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teacher, who usually has no classroom support (although this was not the case during inspection), faces the widest range of attainment levels and ages in the school. Pupils are all new to the school and range from a very high attaining Year 3 pupil to a lower-attaining group of Year 4 pupils. They are all taught the Year 4 National Curriculum. The majority of pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn satisfactorily in class but their books show that overall standards of English are below average and that teaching has not picked up and corrected errors. Planning for lessons, which is good in Years 5 and 6, is weaker in Years 3 and 4. In Year 5, classroom teaching is usually good and in the three Year 6 classes it is good or better in every subject. Very good teaching, which engaged and stretched pupils, was observed in some Year 6 classes in mathematics and science. This has had a significant impact on standards in these subjects, which rose in one year from well below average to average.
23. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 – 6 in mathematics, art and design, geography, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education. They are satisfactory in science, design and technology, history and overall in English, although the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory. Teachers, as a result of an increased range of software

this year, use information and communication and technology satisfactorily across the curriculum.

24. In Years 3 - 6 the teaching and learning of basic skills is unsatisfactory, as is shown in pupils' books. The school hopes that English standards will rise this term through increased curriculum time and more focused teaching on writing and reading. Until this term this has been left to the special writing and reading periods within the literacy hour. Pupils need teachers' clear guidance in every lesson and every subject on what is an acceptable quantity of written work, how to improve it and the need to do corrections for wrong spelling or grammatical errors. This is sometimes, but not consistently, required, as marking in pupils' books across Years 3 - 6 shows.
25. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well, whatever their attainment levels, special educational needs, or social background. This has a positive impact on learning and interest in their work. In subjects, teachers plan to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Work is appropriately modified to suit the particular needs of each pupil. The special educational needs co-ordinator works with the teachers to prepare pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Support assistants are often involved in planning teaching and learning and this promotes good progress. The majority of support teaching is in class, with groups and individual pupils. Occasionally there is some withdrawal, for brief periods; for instance, when a pupil disturbs the class. Pupils with special educational needs are frequently praised and show good levels of self-esteem. The "You can do it" ethos that pervades teaching and learning throughout the school has a positive impact on all pupils.
26. There are no classroom assistants trained and designated specifically to support pupils who have English as an additional language. There are, however, individual education plans for these pupils that generally identify their needs in terms of language. In almost all cases the action required to fulfil these needs falls within the normal teaching of English as a core subject. Pupils have the same level of support from staff as any other pupil. Teachers offer appropriate work to pupils of different prior attainment, including within the setting arrangements in Year 6, in most subjects. However, at times the higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently.
27. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach the age group in the nursery and reception class and in Year 1. Overall, in Years 3 to 6, and particularly in Years 3 and 4, their knowledge and understanding of their subjects is satisfactory. They have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy but their use of the National Literacy Strategy is not effective, as is shown by the below average standards in writing in Years 3-6. There have been good improvements to teachers' subject knowledge in history, and especially in information and communication technology, as a result of effective training. As a result, standards have risen.
28. Teachers' planning is good overall and their planning of lessons has improved so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn in a lesson. However, teachers' expectations for their pupils vary. Expectations of what pupils can attain are good in Year 1 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6, but too low in Years 3 and 4. Where teaching is most successful teachers adopt a wide range of teaching strategies and methods to stimulate pupils' learning and assess the results. For example, a Year 5 lower set mathematics class used hand-held whiteboards most effectively to quickly write down their answers to mental calculations and show the teacher their results.
29. Teachers manage pupils well and as a result behaviour is good. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and expect to be listened to. Pupils are keen to learn new things because they know that what they learn is valued by teachers and, as a result they have very positive attitudes towards their work. They have the confidence and persistence to "have a go", a point emphasised by teachers through two strands of the "You can do it" programmes. Year 1 pupils practised long and hard to sing and play well at an assembly, during which they showed that they had learnt about musical time-keeping and singing in tune. The rewards, such as house points, that teachers offer in recognition of hard work and good results, are much sought-after and valued.

30. Classroom learning support assistants are effective in their support of teachers and pupils. They cover a range of duties and are well respected by pupils, who enjoy their company. The learning support of pupils with statements of educational need is sensitive and effective, thus helping pupils to become independent and confident and take a full part in class activities. Communication between staff is good, especially in the parallel Year 6 classes where pupils move to different sets for English and mathematics lessons. Staff across the whole school work well as a team.
31. The few very good lessons were exemplified by a top set mathematics lesson in Year 6. The lesson's aim, to classify polygons by the properties of their sides and angles, was clearly explained so that pupils knew what they were expected to learn. The pace was brisk, explanation of tasks clear, questioning good and challenge appropriately high. Pupils' interest was engaged and they worked hard to get their answers correct.
32. The few shortcomings in teaching are related mainly to the inconsistent use of assessment and the lack of development of pupils' good writing skills. On rare occasions the pace of lessons slows, usually through over-extended explanations of what pupils are expected to do. Teachers regularly assess pupils' learning either through marking books or setting homework, or by making records after lessons. With notable exceptions, marking does not usually help pupils to move their learning forward. Nor is it always accurate. Longer-term assessment records show what pupils' standards are in English, mathematics and science but they are not consistently used to set either long or short-term targets which are openly "owned" by pupils. For example, some targets are glued in the front of books, some are in teachers' files. Some are generic and others are well structured and particular to an individual. The current inconsistencies in marking and target-setting do not ensure that all pupils know how to move their learning forward and thereby achieve more.

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

33. The quality of curricular and other learning opportunities is good and prepares pupils well for the next stages of learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced and relevant for the needs of most pupils. The statutory curriculum is in place, including provision for religious education and a daily act of collective worship. The school's provision for differing groups of pupils is good and as a result all boys and girls have equal opportunities and full access to the curriculum.
34. Since the last inspection, swimming for pupils in Years 3-6 and all elements of information and communication technology are now taught. The strengths of the curriculum are mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Extra time has recently been devoted to English to raise achievement in reading and writing. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) meets requirements in all areas of learning. Extra-curricular activities, such as the football club, or dance and drama groups, give pupils extra opportunities to develop their physical, creative and imaginative sides.
35. As a result of close monitoring by the headteacher curricular planning now more effectively promotes the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers use nationally-recommended schemes to support planning. Teachers' planning in the long and short term is reasonably detailed, although it mostly lacks reference to National Curriculum levels. Lesson planning mostly indicates what is to be learnt in lessons but the planning for the highest attaining group of pupils is sometimes unclear. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are set for English and mathematics in relation to their prior attainment. Within these sets work is appropriately matched to individual needs, as in Years 1, 3 and 4.
36. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are often taught in specific groups within lessons for English and mathematics. They are set appropriate challenges and enjoy learning. Teaching and support assistants are very effective in helping these pupils to access the curriculum and provide support to individuals and to groups. As a result, there are no barriers to pupils' learning, or any aspect of school life. Apart from their individual education plans there is no adaptation to the curriculum organised for pupils who are at an advanced stage of learning English as an additional language. Only two pupils are at an

early stage of language learning and their needs are met through the normal provision for English as a core subject.

37. Recognition and respect are given to a variety of different cultures, whether in multicultural displays or through the inclusion of all pupils in lessons. For example, pupils who had lived in, or had travelled to India and nearby countries, provided much-valued first-hand information to support a Year 6 geography lesson and extend their classmates' learning. Provision for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics in Year 6 is very good with specific work planned to boost their standards. The one lesson per week of French taught to Year 6 pupils is greatly valued by them. At present, as the school would acknowledge, it is not taught by specialist teachers and is under-resourced.
38. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities for older pupils such as drama and dance sessions, mainly attended by girls, and the football club, mainly attended by boys. However, the Under-11 girls' football team won a cup last year. In addition the before and after-school care provision, mainly used by younger pupils, is warm and welcoming.
39. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is good. It is mainly provided through the weekly lesson that follows the "You can do it" programme. The ideas that underpin this curriculum, such as persistence or confidence, are often mentioned in other lessons and there is a weekly class prize for whoever has best reflected the focus of that week. There are sound policies for teaching about sex and relationships and the consequences of drug abuse.
40. Links with partner institutions and the community contribute well to pupils' learning. For example, parents and toddlers attend the weekly "Little Owls" play sessions at the school. This introduces parents and children to the school. Year 6 pupils visit the secondary school of their choice in the summer term. The school has good and useful curricular links with two beacon schools, one a primary specialist, the other an information and communication technology specialist school. Members of the culturally wide local community visit the school frequently; for example, the Urban Bloodlines group that worked on a range of projects for a week with Year 5 pupils. A stage was offered to the school and constructed by a local branch of a national Do It Yourself store. Plans are afoot for the recently-acquired adjacent field to be transformed into a community wildlife area and the school uses another field for sports.
41. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This shows very good improvement since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and it is good for their spiritual and cultural development. Opportunities for spiritual development are provided through good art and music lessons that both inspire pupils and are led by teachers with high expectations. For example, in their music lesson, Year 1 pupils played a wide range of percussive instruments and sang very well and with good actions and expression. Pupils' sense of awe and wonder is, in part, developed through assemblies and art lessons. However, pupils do not show in their talking and writing that they are, for example, actively using their imaginations and reflecting on what they were doing. Little time was given to a period of reflection during the observed Year 1 assembly attended by the whole school.
42. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. Daily routines are followed well and consistently so that the school is orderly and calm. Pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils help develop class rules and observe them well. They know right from wrong. All members of the school staff provide very good role models in their relationships with each other and with the pupils.
43. Provision for social development is very good. Opportunities to undertake small responsibilities, such as delivering the registers to the office, are undertaken from reception onwards. Pupils are expected to co-operate together in class, and do so. Residential trips and visits outside school provide opportunities for pupils to discover different things about each other and to work together. Pupils are very keen on the democratically-elected school council and the separate house structure and both of these extend their social circle. Pupils work hard to gain house points and take pride in their house if it is the week's winner.

44. The provision for cultural development is good. Understanding of the pupils' own multiculturally-rich, diverse heritage is well provided for through projects such as that undertaken by the Urban Bloodlines group. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own and other cultures through music and art. The study of different religions enhances understanding and the Jewish artefacts on display in the hall were relevant to the assembly in which festivals of light such as Channukah were discussed. The school's policy to encourage an acceptance of "difference" and thereby combat racism has paid dividends. Pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds attend the school and there is a strong promotion of respect and understanding for people from different cultures that is accepted by the pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The school cares for and supports its pupils well. This is an improvement, as at the time of the last inspection this aspect was satisfactory. The headteacher, the designated child protection officer, has good knowledge of child protection issues and keeps other members of staff informed about relevant matters. The school has appropriate links with support agencies. However, there is no formal school policy on child protection. The school is vigilant about health and safety matters and the staff pay good attention to safety. The premises committee and site manager help in regularly assessing health and safety risks. Pupils are guided well on matters relating to their well-being and development through the personal social and health education curriculum and by visiting specialists, such as the school nurse. There are satisfactory arrangements to look after pupils who become unwell.
46. The monitoring and support of pupils' academic performance and personal development is good overall. Pupils' personal development is supported very well and their academic progress satisfactorily. Procedures for supporting and monitoring personal development are very effective. The staff know pupils well and respond quickly to their personal needs. They ensure that new children settle into school quickly. Supervision at break and lunch times is good, as was shown in a 'wet play' lunch session during the inspection week. The school provides a secure and supportive learning environment, hence pupils like coming to the school and are able to learn well. The parents' pre-inspection response to the questionnaire confirmed this. Pupils are well managed in lessons. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, staff have high expectations and, as a result, pupils work well together and promptly follow instructions. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school pays good attention to pupils' needs, including those who have special educational or language needs, through good support. The breakfast club and the 'Wraparound' facility are good provision for pupils who need to arrive before the start of school or stay late after it finishes.
47. The school's procedures for recording and monitoring inappropriate behaviour, not well established at the time of the last inspection, are now firmly in place. Pupils' personal development, including behaviour, is monitored through progress reports, which are regularly checked by the headteacher. The reports, along with individual targets to improve behaviour, help to check any inappropriate behaviour. The school has worked hard and very effectively on promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying. It has used a variety of strategies, including the "You can do it" programme, which promotes behaviour improvement and personal and social development. This initiative has been very successful. The school's policies on bullying and other oppressive behaviour are now well understood and highly regarded by the pupils and the staff. A system of rewards and sanctions, incorporated in the school's behaviour strategies, is consistently applied and works effectively. Pupils know that good behaviour is expected of them and respond positively. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. All this helps pupils to learn in a calm environment. There is good adult supervision and staff provide pupils with good role models for calmness and respect for each other.
48. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. The school provides extra "booster" classes for pupils entering national examinations and supports those with language difficulties through additional language classes. Teachers set targets for each pupil in English and mathematics. They are reviewed every half term but often lack precision. They rarely indicate fully what pupils need to do to improve their work. Individual education plans for those with special education needs and English as an additional language

give satisfactory educational guidance. The school does not have a register or make formal provision for gifted and talented pupils, nonetheless a group of higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 is expected to be entered for Level 6 mathematics in the summer. There is some inconsistency in marking throughout the school so some pupils receive more focused and supportive comments than others.

49. Though systems for assessing pupils' academic standards and progress are good, assessment record-keeping and its use to drive progress forward is inconsistent and therefore unsatisfactory. The current assessment records are a recent development and have only recently been introduced by the headteacher. Teachers are developing detailed records on the progress of each pupil in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In other subjects teachers follow the general outcomes indicated in the nationally-recognised schemes of work they use and relate these twice each year to an appropriate National Curriculum level. Their use is exemplary in Year 5 and in one Year 6 class, thereby enabling teachers to plan well and establish realistically challenging targets for individuals and the class. Whilst some teachers maintain their assessment files conscientiously this is not consistently the case. In consequence a full and comprehensive picture of pupils' rates of learning throughout the school is not assured. In Years 3 and 4 the assessment system is hardly used. In some classes National Curriculum levels are not consistently recorded nor are records of different subjects always kept in the same book. Portfolios of work are currently being compiled in some areas to help ensure that all teachers work to consistent standards.
50. Assessment information that accompanies pupils on entry to the school is used to identify areas for further development. This helps to identify children who have special educational needs, who show signs of being gifted or talented and who have English as an additional language. A file is begun, recording pupils' achievements year by year, which is intended to follow each child through the school. Data from tests is taken to use in teachers' future planning. Test results include assessments of pupils' progress in reading and optional non-statutory tests in English, mathematics and science towards the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. This information enables teachers to set classes according to their prior attainment in English and mathematics in Year 6.
51. The satisfactory procedures for monitoring attendance result in average levels of attendance. Registration requirements are met and absences are appropriately identified. The school works closely with the education welfare officer. Follow-up of absences is satisfactory. All parents, when the attendance level was significantly lower than it currently is, were contacted on the first day of an unexplained absence. Now, because the school has to economise due to its tight budget, parents are only contacted where there is a concern about attendance. The monitoring of punctuality is satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school works hard to involve parents in the life of the school. For example, it provides facilities such as the "Little Owls" parent and toddler group, the after-school club and "Wraparound care," which enables working parents to have their children looked after before and after school. The headteacher is energetically working on reviving the parents' association. The success in reaching out to parents reflects well in their views about the school and what it achieves.
53. Parents that responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe the school is very good. They were not so positive at the time of the last inspection. Parents feel that the school is approachable and works closely with them and that it is well led with good teaching and that it has high expectations of pupils working hard and making good progress. They state that behaviour is good and that their children like school. Parents' confidence in the school is clear and inspection evidence supports their views. A few parents would like to see improvement in the information they receive about the progress their children make and an increase in activities outside lessons.
54. The quality of information that parents receive from the school is satisfactory. Parents receive information from the school such as the prospectus, the governors' annual report and

miscellaneous letters. The prospectus and governors' report are informative but the latter has omissions in the statutorily-required information. Parents have signed home-school agreements.

55. The school provides satisfactory information to parents about their children's progress. The annual written reports tell parents about what their children are doing but do not always tell them about how much progress has been made that year. National Curriculum levels, which would help parents to assess progress, are not included. Parents have opportunities to hear about their children's social and academic progress at the two consultation evenings held each year. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to the regular reviews and contribute to setting their children's targets. All this helps parents to influence and help with their children's learning.
56. The school has satisfactory links with parents. There are frequent after-school meetings to ensure that parents of pupils who have behavioural problems are aware of the progress they have made towards reaching their targets. The school makes every effort to liaise with parents of pupils with special educational needs and it works very closely with local agencies, including educational psychologists, social workers and speech and language therapists, to provide specialist support for them.
57. Parents contribute satisfactorily to their children's learning at school and at home by motivating them, ensuring homework is completed and valuing the education the school offers. The school can rely on parents' co-operation in helping to resolve any concerns it may have about their children. Parents' attendance at consultation and curriculum meetings is good although their day-to-day involvement in the life of the school is low. The school has tried hard but has not yet been successful in reviving the parent-school association.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in the nature, size and management of the school. The school has changed from a middle school to a primary school with a nursery, has had three headteachers and has dramatically shrunk in size. The transition period is not yet complete and at present there are no Year 2 pupils. These will be admitted in September 2003. The current Year 3 and 4 pupils entered the school this year. As casual admissions have not been allowed by the local authority during the period of transition the school has uneconomically small classes that, with normal staffing levels, have resulted in a deficit budget. The deficit is to be reduced over three to four years as numbers in the school grow.
59. The current headteacher had been in post for three weeks prior to inspection but knows the school well as he had been both deputy and acting headteacher prior to this. At present there is an acting deputy headteacher but governors plan to make an appointment now a headteacher is in post. The headteacher worked closely with the previous headteacher as deputy head for four terms and the proof of their good and effective leadership shows in pupils' greatly improved behaviour and the significant rise in standards in 2002. Working with the whole school to consistently apply procedures, they made the school an orderly and inspiring place in which to learn. Exclusions, which were high in 2000-2001, have dropped to nil. Pupils comment positively on how much the behaviour has improved.
60. The introduction in 2001 of the American "You can do it" programme, whereby everyone is helped to take responsibility for his or her own work and behaviour, has had a beneficial effect on pupils' motivation and is the cornerstone of the school's very good ethos. Systems and policies have been put in place and agreed by a re-vitalised and effective governing body. The teaching team, especially in the Early Years unit, Year 1 and at the top of the school in Years 5 and 6, is good. The headteacher and governing body have shown an entrepreneurial spirit and the school has recently started offering popular services to parents, such as the Wraparound care and after-school club, which allow working parents to have their children cared for before and after school. These services are also part of the school's drive to attract pupils and thereby reduce the deficit budget. The leadership now ensures a very clear educational direction for school improvement.

61. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. He provides clear and very positive leadership. He is committed to raising standards further and improving teaching within a well-organised and well-managed school. He is equally concerned about the school's long-term success and, with governors, spearheads a recruitment drive to increase pupil numbers. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the strong emphasis on raising standards and improving pupils' achievements has led to very good improvement in mathematics and science standards in one year. As the headteacher recognizes, despite some encouraging improvement in 2002, there is further work to be done to raise standards, particularly in English. His analysis of what needs to be done to raise standards in writing and reading to widen pupils' vocabulary and stir their imagination has already resulted in changes to the curriculum, such as story-reading and extra writing sessions. It is, however, too early to measure their impact.
62. The governors, headteacher and staff work effectively together for the good of the pupils. They know what has to be done and are fully involved in decision-making and evaluation. The school improvement plan focuses on improving standards and raising pupil numbers. It is a competent document that reflects the school's needs both to market itself to increase the number of pupils to an economic level and to raise standards, but does not indicate likely costs. The plan now concentrates, appropriately, on improving writing and reading standards.
63. The school has been effective in using the budget to raise standards in 2002 and enhance pupils' learning. Good use is made of strategic resources and specific grants are well used to boost achievement and improve the quality of education for all pupils. For example, the special education needs grant is used to fund classroom assistants to support pupils' targeted needs. Ventures, such as the commercially-run care services for pupils with working parents, bring income to the school. They have opened this term but even in a matter of weeks or months they have become commercially viable and are expected to contribute to the school's income. Educational priorities are supported well through efficient financial planning.
64. Financial planning and budgetary controls are good. The school's finance officer manages day-to-day finance efficiently with assistance, when required, from the local authority finance officer. The governors' finance committee is well informed about spending, enabling future planning to be efficient. The current surplus is due to money received when the school was in transition from middle to primary school and will be used to cushion the deficit. New technology is used satisfactorily to manage the budget and monitor attendance. The headteacher is acutely aware of running a deficit budget with high staffing costs and runs a tight ship. He works closely and effectively with the school's finance officer and with finance committee governors and all are aware that until there is a rise in the number of pupils on roll the deficit budget cannot be eliminated.
65. Performance management is in place and has had a positive effect on teaching quality. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching and draws up annual performance targets with teachers. They are a suitable combination of targets relating to the school improvement plan's focus and teachers' personal targets.
66. There is a strong sense of camaraderie and teachers have determination and good commitment to succeed. They have agreed on a whole-school approach to assessment and a tracking system to record pupils' progress in English and mathematics, and this was introduced this term. This is an improvement on the situation at the last inspection. There is a strong and positive working ethos and teachers recognize that in an orderly school their good teaching skills bear good results and therefore staff morale is high. They are as committed to sustaining the "You can do it" programme, which they see as the backbone of success, as the pupils. Its aims are strongly reflected in the life of the school.
67. The contributions made by all groups of pupils, whatever their gender, background or level of attainment, are valued and achievements are recognized. The school council, chaired by the headteacher, and with representatives elected from every class, puts forward good suggestions for improving the life of the school and these are considered and decided upon with the consideration they deserve. Whether through this, or other groupings such as the four houses,

pupils are encouraged by the headteacher and staff to contribute to and take responsibility for their school. This has a significant impact on their very good attitudes towards school.

68. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well with one exception; not all the statutorily required items are included in its annual report to parents. The governing body, re-formed two years ago, has received training and is now very active and effective. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Governors attend meetings regularly and have curriculum monitoring responsibilities which the majority carry out well. For example, the numeracy governor has observed mathematics lessons in Year 6 and reported her findings to the headteacher and the governing body. The Chair of Governors is a regular and popular visitor to the school. She helped to set up the Wraparound care, which started this term, and has had close contact with staff in the Early Years unit. Governors receive briefings from subject leaders and regular reports from the headteacher. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and take a very active role in developing the school.
69. The management of special educational needs and provision for pupils is good. The headteacher retains an overview of special educational needs, together with the designated governor, as the co-ordinator has only very recently taken over the role. She has made good progress towards updating the arrangements to ensure that special educational needs are in line with the new Code of Practice and that all staff are familiar with the requirements. The management of educational inclusion is good and pupils of all backgrounds work together in harmony. The school has a policy and has made provision for the promotion of racial equality. It analysed the results of suspected under-performing boys from a black ethnic background and has incorporated the results of its findings into teachers' planning.
70. The management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall and the majority make sound progress. There are currently no classroom assistants who are trained and specifically deployed to support pupils who have English as an additional language. Only two pupils are at an early stage of learning English, and they receive satisfactory support from teachers in class. In Year 6, in the 2002 national tests, a minority of pupils with English as an additional language did not attain the expected Level 4. Analysis showed that their writing, as was the case with the majority of pupils, was not sufficiently good for them to achieve as well as could be expected. There are no resources specifically designated for these pupils because their needs are met within the normal teaching of English as a core subject. There is no information and communication technology software specifically to support learners of English as an additional language.
71. The headteacher delegates responsibility to most teaching staff satisfactorily. There are representatives from different year groups on the senior management team. The co-ordination of English is shared between the new Year 1 teacher (for Years 1 and the prospective Year 2) and the headteacher (for Years 3-6) at present. Neither, as both acknowledge, are yet fully aware of the needs of the other age group, nonetheless there has been a good analysis of what is needed to raise standards in Years 3 to 6 and strategies implemented throughout the school to improve writing standards. The co-ordination of mathematics and science is good. In information and communication technology effective co-ordination and good teaching have resulted in standards being raised to above average from below average since the last inspection. In history the satisfactory co-ordination and teaching of the subject has resulted in standards rising to average from below average at the last inspection.
72. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and taking effective action is very good. The results of national and other tests are carefully analysed and the information gained is used to modify the curriculum and teachers' lesson planning. For example, the recognition of below-average standards in writing and reading in Years 3 to 6 has resulted in extra writing sessions and time devoted to reading imaginative stories to pupils. Although some targets are set for pupils this is inconsistent and their usefulness varies, and the school is aware that target-setting is an area for development. The headteacher carefully monitors and evaluates teaching and learning through classroom observation and gives feedback to staff. This has resulted in the significant rise in teaching quality since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators inspect teachers' plans but are not yet given time to observe each other teaching. Information from evaluation is used in drawing up the school improvement plan. The headteacher has yet to

undertake his first Joint Annual Review (JAR) of standards, an annual school self-evaluation exercise undertaken jointly with the local authority.

73. The school has an appropriate number of trained staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Training follows both their needs discussed at the annual performance appraisal and the school's priorities. Support staff are well briefed by most teachers, have received special educational needs training and work well in class, especially supporting pupils with special educational needs and in the Early Years unit.
74. The school's accommodation is very good. It is spacious, freshly decorated, cheerful and well kept. There is room for the new Wraparound facility, a "Little Owls" parent and toddler group, after-school club, breakfast club, computer suite and dedicated gymnasium. The school will shortly have the use of two fields behind and adjacent to the school site for games and for a community wildlife area. Resources are adequate overall but the school is aware that there are shortcomings in the library. The choice of fiction for older pupils is limited and the elimination of old and torn books has resulted in an inadequate choice at present. The school is taking action to replenish stock. Resources for mathematics, science and music are good. The number of computers is very good and the co-ordinator is developing the variety of software well.
75. Good systems are in place to ensure that the headteacher and governors are appropriately applying the principles of best value. Analysis of the pilot national 2002 value-added results shows that the majority of pupils, because of the improvement in teaching quality and better behaviour, made satisfactory progress between joining the school and leaving it in Year 6. Comparisons with similar schools are made at local and national level. The school is the most improved school in Merton in 2002. Parents are consulted about issues such as detentions or two-year classes, which relate to school improvement. Parents, pupils and governors are co-opted on to the marketing group that promotes the school in the community. Pupils' views are listened to through the school council. Governors are careful to seek best value when planning changes or appointing staff. Administrative procedures are generally efficient and minimize bureaucracy. The school secretary, finance officer, premises officer and cleaners support the headteacher well. The school is well organised to enable teachers to concentrate their efforts on pupils and continue to raise standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To improve the effectiveness of the school still further the governors, headteacher and staff should continue to:

- (1) Raise standards in English, particularly in writing and reading, in Years 3-6 through better teaching of basic skills by:
 - continuing the increased curriculum time allocated to writing and reading
 - consistently correcting punctuation, spelling and other grammatical errors in written work in all subjects
 - raising expectations of the quantity and quality of written work
 - continuing to inspire and extend pupils' imaginations
 - providing a wider choice of reading books in the library
 - targeting help to the minority of pupils with English as an additional language whose written work needs improvement.

(paragraphs 6, 7, 19, 22, 24, 61, 74, 97, 98, 101-103, 121, 134, 169)

- (2) Ensure that the current good assessment systems are used consistently throughout the school by:
 - continuing the current regular monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher
 - insisting on consistency in its application in every class
 - using assessment records, where this is not currently done, to record the National Curriculum level in English, mathematics and science and then to set individual, closely-defined targets, particularly in English, to make challenging progress.

(paragraphs 23, 32, 48, 49, 66, 104, 105, 108, 112)

In addition to these, the school should consider the following item for inclusion in its action plan:

Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents contains all statutory requirements.

(paragraph 68)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
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	-	4	36	11	-	-	-
Percentage	-	8	70	22	-	-	-

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 nearly two percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	146
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	31

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	40

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	25	32	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	17	25
	Girls	23	22	30
	Total	42	40	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (61)	69 (55)	95 (77)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	23
	Girls	17	24	27
	Total	32	41	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (59)	71 (59)	88 (67)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	46	1	-
White – Irish	-	-	-
White – any other White background	6	-	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	1	-
Mixed – White and Black African	-	-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	-	-	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	14	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	10	-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	7	-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	34	2	-
Black or Black British – African	24	-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	15	-	-
Chinese	-	-	-
Any other ethnic group	-	-	-
No ethnic group recorded	13	-	-

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-6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR-6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	932 432
Total expenditure	1 014 576
Expenditure per pupil	2 536
Balance brought forward from previous year	192 000
Balance carried forward to next year	109 856

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	-
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	-

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	21	5	-	-
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	-	-	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	38	3	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	42	5	-	3
The teaching is good.	60	38	-	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	29	10	-	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	17	2	-	-
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	28	-	-	3
The school works closely with parents.	51	44	5	-	-
The school is well led and managed.	62	35	2	-	-
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	38	2	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	40	6	2	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

76. In the Foundation Stage, there are 16 part-time nursery and 26 full-time reception children. The school has set up an Early Years unit, through a staggered intake, for both nursery and reception children. Currently, both nursery and reception children are taught in one class by one teacher, with three nursery nurses and one classroom assistant. In January, there will be a new intake of reception children and a new class with a newly-appointed teacher, in order to accommodate the increased numbers. Nursery and reception-age children will continue to be taught together. It is not possible to evaluate progress since the previous inspection, because at that time, Stanford school did not have children in the Foundation Stage.
77. The quality of education provided for all children in the Foundation Stage is good. The children enter the nursery with a wide range of attainment. A small number of children attain above what is usually found but the vast majority have levels of attainment that are below average, including some who have been identified as having special educational needs. There is a significant number of children who have weak language skills. This poses a real challenge to the teacher and support staff, particularly in small group sessions, where they have to use their teaching skills to encourage the children to answer in sentences rather than giving a one-word response. The children achieve well through the effective teaching and support that they receive. As a result, the majority of children are likely meet all the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.
78. In personal, social and emotional development, the children's attainment is above average and most will exceed the goal in this area of their learning. This is achieved through consistently good teaching and the very effective and skilful whole-school approach and philosophy of 'You can do it', which pervades all teaching and learning. Those children with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language make good progress owing to the high quality of support they receive, which enables them to achieve well and play a full part in all the planned activities.
79. Teaching and learning are good. A strong feature is the quality of relationships with all the children. This, coupled with the careful planning of high-quality activities and the highly supportive teaching, contributes considerably to the good achievement by both nursery and reception children. A strong emphasis is placed on the use of praise, children are made to feel valued and they are encouraged to be part of the class. Through this it is apparent that the children develop a real respect and affection for all staff and respond in a positive manner. The appointment of the new reception teacher will lead to further development and already she has been involved in teaching these children. The joint planning which is already in place is being made even more rigorous. The new systems for recording each child's attainment and achievement provide accurate information about how well each child is progressing in each of the areas of learning. This information is invaluable in planning and giving a sharp focus to activities.
80. The leadership and management of the unit are good. The teacher closely guides and liaises with the nursery nurses. Observations of children arriving for the start of each session show how strong the link is with parents. Through her wealth of experience, the reception teacher knows the parents and the carers well, and welcomes them with a friendly word and often a comment or question that makes the parent or carer feel part of the school. This makes the Foundation Stage ideally placed to begin to encourage parent-helpers on a regular basis.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

81. Children's standards in personal, social and emotional development are above average in both the nursery and reception and they achieve very well. The teacher and her staff are all particularly skilful in promoting this area of children's development. The staff fully involve themselves in activities with children in order to help them to learn to form constructive relationships with adults and other children, to be interested in activities and to grow in

confidence. For example, the classroom assistant joined the children who were playing with the construction kit in order to give purpose to the play and to help the children to share and to cooperate.

82. Children were observed confidently leaving their parents or carers, and selecting and carrying out activities which were attractively arranged for them around the room. The reception children dress and undress themselves independently for physical education sessions, and register themselves on arriving in class. In both the nursery and the reception groups, there is a strong emphasis on children being in charge of clearing away their own activities. In the home corner, one boy was patiently putting away dressing-up clothes, before moving to line up for the literacy session. There is a very calm and supportive atmosphere as at all times the members of staff speak in very quiet voices and this, in turn, leads to the children being quieter and well behaved. Nevertheless, this does not rule out the occasional burst of noisy enthusiasm during an activity. All children consider right and wrong, how to make choices and how the choices will affect others. The reception children are able to move into their group activities with a minimum of fuss, share the resources and appreciate the needs of other children. The nursery children were observed politely thanking one girl, who asked each one of them to have a sweet, to celebrate her birthday that day.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

83. Children's standards in communication, language and literacy are average in both the nursery and reception and they achieve well because there is a very strong emphasis on communication, language and literacy; particularly on speaking and listening and on developing a love of books. In order to establish good routines, the staff are rigorous in insisting on silence and attention from children, before giving instructions or starting an activity. The nursery children respond quickly to the teacher's hand-claps and understand that this means that they need to be quiet. Through the creation of a lively language environment and an emphasis on developing appropriate skills, the children achieve well and they show a genuine love of books and stories. By the end of reception the majority of children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals.
84. The staff are very skilful in encouraging children to enter into conversation during activities, thereby enhancing their understanding, speaking skills and vocabulary. For example, the nursery children were observed talking with the adults about the jigsaw pieces and figures on the pictures. Through careful questions, posed by the teacher, the children talked about the Gingerbread Man, and when they realized that it was eaten by the fox, one remembered that the Man 'is only a pretend one'. The children who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also made good progress as the teacher spoke very clearly and repeated phrases, such as 'bunch of grapes', until their meaning was understood. The staff successfully create a climate where the children feel secure in asking questions and obtaining an answer. When one child asked why he had to wear a tie, the teacher answered that 'the tie is part of your uniform and it makes you look smart'
85. The development of reading skills takes place daily in the regular sessions. The nursery children are taught phonics in familiar words and in stories, such as the Gingerbread Man. This is extended further, for reception children, through a simplified literacy hour to build their reading and writing skills. The particular strength is the support given to groups of different attainment levels, to push them as far as they can manage. The children love reading the big book and do so with considerable expression.
86. The development of early writing skills at this stage is good. In the nursery, one high attaining child can write a sentence, such as 'Owls can fly'. Other children compare letters and recognise the same letters in two names. The reception children, while exploring words beginning with h, suggest 'hoop, home, helicopter', as well as more familiar ones such as 'hot, had and house'. Lower-attaining children use the alphabet line to help them with their writing. The teacher assists them by sounding out the letters, if the children get stuck. They are reminded to sit closely to the table and to hold the pencil correctly. These habits, formed early, will help them to write at speed, as they go to the next stage of their learning.

87. Teaching is effective in part due to the very good relationships between the staff and the children and as a result, children achieve well. During group reading sessions, which are organised separately for nursery and for reception children, they were observed thoroughly enjoying the story of the Gingerbread Man. They all tried hard to join in the reading of the story and chanted the chorus with expression and great enthusiasm. The nursery children became more observant when looking at the story's pictures. Reception children knew the sequence of the story.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

88. Children's mathematical understanding is below average when they first come into school. Through clearly-focused teaching, they make good progress in developing their skills, so that by the time they enter Year 1, the majority will attain the required Early Learning Goals in this area of their development. The teacher and support staff provide children with suitable activities to develop their mathematical understanding. These include the use of number games and songs, and taking opportunities during the day to count and to introduce the language of mathematics. The teacher seizes opportunities to reinforce pupils' recognition of numbers. This was seen in a language session for nursery children in which the teacher asked the children to count the number of buttons or steps that the Gingerbread Man had to take to escape being eaten. The children use mathematical language such as big, middle and small. At all times, the staff ensure that children with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language, understand new words. Through this raised awareness, these children achieve well.
89. For nursery children, there is strong emphasis on children knowing their numbers. The children learn to count from zero to five and back to zero. This activity is then consolidated when the children sing a number rhyme, such as Five Speckled Frogs. Variety in activities and visual reinforcement of numbers help the children and teachers keep the pace brisk and pupils' learning enjoyable. For the reception children, the teaching continues to be good, as children build on their previous experiences and continue to achieve well. Mathematical sessions meet the different needs of children. The higher-attaining children show that they are quite confident in counting forward from a given number, for example to thirty. They recognise a variety of coins and add two pence to three pence correctly. Their numerical fluency is reinforced through carefully-planned activities, such as shopping, where children can practise these newly-learned skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. Children who enter the nursery have a below-average understanding of the world in which they live. They begin to broaden their experiences through a series of well-planned and interesting activities and topics. They look at the immediate area in which they live and extend this knowledge by visiting the Dean City Farm, local shops and the nearby newly-developed play area. In addition, visitors are specifically invited to extend children's learning. For example, the local vicar brings in his cat or his dog to talk about caring for his animals. The mayor of Merton, the community policeman and keepers of animals such as pet rats and snakes, all effectively enrich the children's development. In the local play area, the children looked at mini-beasts, such as slugs, and gather leaves as they drop off branches as autumn progresses. They are delighted to observe the sky through the baring branches or to learn about shadows and how these are formed. Such opportunities effectively develop children's spiritual and cultural growth.
91. Planned activities link different areas of children's learning. For example, the children learnt which berries are edible, during the physical activity of walking to the park. The nursery children learnt the names and spelling of fruit and then enjoyed the experience of feeling, smelling and tasting them. Cooking their gingerbread biscuits, children learnt about the ingredients and basic scientific changes that take place when these are baked.
92. Nursery children are taught how to use the computer mouse. Reception children are more confident in using the computer and can move the cursor to find their name or to put jelly babies into the pony's mouth one by one. They extend their understanding of both computers and the Gingerbread Man story by using a program to imitate the Gingerbread Man's journey. The

children explore their senses; for example, by smelling the ground ginger while baking biscuits. They discuss day and night, light and dark. One reception child correctly concluded that the shadow his body made was because he was standing in front of the sun. All the children learn about their own culture and other people's customs, through celebrating, for example, Divali and Christmas.

Physical development

93. The staff manage outdoor areas very well and provide good opportunities to involve children in physical activities. Children climb, slide, jump, and use the wheeled toys, without bumping into one another. In the hall, the reception children use the space well. They understand the need to warm up and to cool down for safe exercise. The children skip backwards and forwards as well as sideways. The teacher seizes the opportunity to draw their attention to their heartbeats. The children notice that fast skipping and jogging has caused their heart to beat at an increased rate.
94. When they enter the nursery, children's physical skills are below those expected of most children of a similar age, particularly in fine movements. Through the good teaching that they receive, they improve their skills through the use of puzzles, pencils, crayons for art and craft activities. Both nursery and reception children develop control over small items such as brushes and scissors. They learn to control a paintbrush and how to apply paint in the correct place. The good quality of resources and the ample space provided result in the children achieving well.

Creative development

95. The provision for creative development is good for both nursery and reception children. The children become confident in using creative materials very quickly. The nursery children use the dressing up clothes to play, for example, Cinderella or to play different roles in the home corner. Wall displays show the wide range of creative experiences they enjoy which include printing, drawing and collage work. For example, in the work on night and day, children captured the night scene well by cutting out houses in black paper and inserting yellow paper to represent windows. Reception children produced effective wax resist pictures and use a variety of resources, such as icing sugar or string, to explore different textures.
96. There are many opportunities for children to use their imaginations and this aspect of their work is particularly well taught by the teacher and her staff. The frequent involvement of the staff results in the children learning to extend their play and become more imaginative. The children achieve well.

ENGLISH

97. Standards are average by the end of Year 1 but below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well in Year 1 but pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6. The current Year 6 standards parallel the results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests and are also similar to standards at the time of the last inspection in 1997. Although standards have not improved when compared with the last inspection, teachers have worked hard over the past two years to raise standards from the well below average position to which they had declined. English results rose 11 per cent in 2002.
98. By the end of Year 6 pupils' speaking and listening skills are now average but their writing and reading remain below average and achievement in English is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers' good questioning has helped pupils to develop their speaking and listening to an average standard, but their failure to insist on consistently high standards in writing or to widen pupils' skills in reading has resulted in below-average standards overall. Current initiatives, such as allocating extra time to improve standards in reading and writing, have not been in place long enough to raise standards. Although an analysis of national test results shows that, contrary to national trends, girls have done less well than boys, current inspection findings show that both boys and girls contribute to lessons to the same extent. All groups of pupils behave well, displaying good levels of interest and enthusiasm for their work thanks to well-managed lessons. In Year 6 pupils are taught in three sets of higher, average and lower-attaining pupils. On the basis of test results, pupils move between the sets.

99. In speaking and listening pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Years 1 and 6. Throughout the school pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, especially when working in groups. In Year 1, they understand and respond to a variety of everyday classroom and other familiar instructions, statements and questions. Thanks to the regular focus on “words of the week” pupils learn to express their ideas with increasing detail so that the vast majority uses coherent phrases or short sentences rather than fragments. By Year 6 pupils listen attentively to their classmates so that contributions to discussions are relevant and focused. They speak politely to adults and to each other because of the consistently good examples that adults give to them and because of teachers’ high expectations of courtesy. Pupils are encouraged to speak clearly and there is an increase in the breadth of their vocabulary as they move through the school. This is partly a result of the recently-introduced use of targeted vocabulary, which is planned by teachers.
100. In discussions about books they had read, higher-attaining pupils spoke with assurance and with a very good choice of words: “It’s just a basic plot but the author does something with it that intrigues me”. Average-attaining pupils made relevant comments in largely Standard English although their explanations did not include a wide vocabulary. Lower-attaining pupils show developing confidence, but exhibit a limited choice of words, with comments such as “she doesn’t kind of explain that much about it”. Teachers regularly use good strategies for promoting speaking and listening. They question pupils well, include everyone, and promote discussion and oral summaries in the plenary sessions at the end of the lesson. There was no evidence of any significant use of drama, but at the end of a geography lesson in Year 6 a group of higher-attaining pupils assumed the role of television weather forecasters. They presented their research findings clearly and confidently, varying their expression to engage their audience well.
101. Pupils’ standards in reading and writing are average in Year 1 but below average by Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 achieve well and those in Year 6 achieve unsatisfactorily. In Year 1 all pupils are taught an appropriate variety of reading skills such as letter sounds and the use of pictures and context to help make sense of words. As a result the vast majority recognises familiar words and pronounces them correctly. Higher-attaining pupils readily distinguish the words “of” and “off”. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils read fluently and accurately but the efforts of average-attaining pupils are hesitant and show limited use of expression when reading aloud. Lower-attaining pupils, who make up nearly half the class, use phonics successfully to pronounce longer words like “unexpectedly” but render, for example, “howled” inaccurately as “holed”. They hesitate more than is normally acceptable. Average-attaining pupils make few reasoned suggestions about what may happen next in a story but higher-attaining pupils infer the likely conclusion from their reading. They are beginning to identify themes. Lower-attaining pupils do not refer to the text to support opinions or make even tentative deductions, but comments in discussion demonstrate that they have some understanding of what has been read. The range of books read independently includes such authors as Dick King-Smith, Roald Dahl, and J.K.Rowling although one higher-attaining pupil felt that Rowling’s works were “not sufficiently dramatic”. Higher-attaining pupils competently explained their use of the library but average-attaining pupils were insecure. Lower-attaining pupils had some understanding of alphabetical order but their skills went no further. All pupils have used the Internet effectively to locate information. Parents regularly give good support to their children by hearing reading at home, although this grows less as they get older.
102. In Year 1 most pupils hold their pencils correctly to produce reasonably shaped and positioned letters. They write their own names and copy down the day’s date well. Higher-attaining pupils work showed that they understood punctuation marks, full stops and capital letters and their good quality writing in English was also seen in other subjects. Pupils whose attainment is average wrote simple sentences such as “I am scared” in which the last word was incorrectly, but phonetically spelt. The lower-attaining pupils in the class correctly tackled writing phonetically, using and spelling simple words such as “men” or “hug.” By Year 6 pupils’ writing does not reflect their competence in speaking. They do not write sufficiently at length or use a wide enough range of words and sentences. Spelling and punctuation are often inaccurate. Even higher-attaining pupils do not regularly use fluent and joined handwriting. They are starting to increase the length of their sentences, linking them together but not properly developing their ideas. Their choice of words is frequently unimaginative; for example, “I felt a strange feeling”.

However, they are beginning to use adverbs to good effect: "I was desperately in need of help". Average-attaining pupils are starting to link ideas together but use repetitive and mundane words such as "so...so...so..." to hold their narrative together. Lower-attaining pupils rarely produce accurate work longer than a sentence. Year 5 poems on display show a good response to the recent emphasis on creative writing but the increased focus on writing has not yet had sufficient impact on the work of Year 6.

103. Although in the lessons observed during the week of inspection the quality of teaching and learning was good overall, inspectors judged that teaching and learning in English are only satisfactory. This is because the examination of pupils' work reveals that pupils' skills have not developed in a sufficiently balanced way; the lack of emphasis given to extended and particularly creative writing in Years 3-6 has not resulted in good writing standards. There are examples of good teaching throughout the school. Teachers plan carefully, and identify what the learning for each lesson will be. These aims are explained to pupils in simple language at the start of the lesson. This usually gets the lesson off to a brisk start and helps pupils pay attention to what they are learning. Varied teaching methods are used, including paired or group discussion, which help to involve pupils in their learning. There is effective questioning, often directed at particular pupils to match their level of attainment or to hold their attention, which draws everyone in.
104. The management of pupils is consistently good, enabling lessons to run smoothly. Learning support assistants work satisfactorily alongside teachers so pupils, especially those with special needs, have the benefit of more individual attention to further their learning at the same rate as their classmates. There is no specific support for pupils for whom English is an additional language beyond that which teachers and support assistants give to all children in the class. Nonetheless, through a focus on targets in their individual education plans, they make as good progress as their peers. Lessons generally finish well. Teachers review with the pupils what they have learned by asking key questions or asking pupils to talk about what they have learned. This helps to reinforce the pupils' new knowledge and further their speaking skills. Consequently, they talk about what they have learned and have satisfactory knowledge of their own learning. Marking is regularly done but many teachers are not thorough and do not consistently correct punctuation, spelling or grammatical errors, or encourage a greater quantity as well as use of a wider, more imaginative, vocabulary. Homework is set regularly but the setting of personal targets for pupils frequently lacks precision and rarely gives clear advice about what exactly need to be done to raise standards. Pupils' accuracy does not develop as well as it should because errors are not always corrected.
105. The use of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory in Year 1 but unsatisfactory in Years 3-6 where literacy skills are not sufficiently supported in other subjects because insufficient emphasis is given to the development of writing. There are not enough occasions when pupils write independently and at length. Although key words and correct terminology are regularly introduced, incorrect spellings in more common words are frequently allowed to persist. Pupils use word-processing to help draft and redraft their work, an area which was underdeveloped at the last inspection, and they use software to improve their grasp of correct grammar and use of punctuation. In one lesson, however, its effectiveness was reduced because pupils focused more on the games it entailed. They won the games, but could not confidently explain why their choices were better English than the alternatives. In several lessons computers were available for pupils but remained unused because teachers had not planned to include their use.
106. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is a recently-appointed co-ordinator who is in charge of English co-ordination in Years 1-2. At present the headteacher is co-ordinator for Years 3-6. The school has recognised the need to raise standards in reading and writing and has therefore begun a regular program of extra lessons in each of these skills in addition to the literacy hour. Pupils' reading standards are slowly improving as a result but the development of writing throughout the curriculum is not as systematic as it should be. The newly introduced and good assessment systems have improved since the last inspection but all teachers do not use them equally well. Targets for improvement do not clearly show pupils how they are to improve, so they do not achieve as well as they could. Resources are satisfactory. New reading books have recently been purchased to expand class libraries and support "Storytime" sessions. The school library is, however, small both in terms of space and content. It

lacks an index and catalogue system so it does not help pupils to develop their research skills to the extent that it should. The school is aware of these deficiencies and is purchasing new books to extend and improve the choice of books in the main library.

MATHEMATICS

107. Standards are average in Year 1 and by Year 6; this is a similar picture to the last inspection. Standards fell significantly in the years immediately following the last inspection but as a result of good teaching they rose sharply in the last year and this was reflected in the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002, when standards rose by 14 per cent to the national average from well below average in the previous three years. At the last inspection, teaching was satisfactory, but it is now good because planning and match of task to individual need has improved. Pupils' mental arithmetic and number skills are more secure. Boys and girls of all attainment levels are now achieving well because they are making balanced gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in all strands of the subject. The National Numeracy Strategy is taught well and interpreted effectively to meet pupils' needs. In Year 6 pupils are taught in three sets of higher, average and lower-attaining pupils. On the basis of test results, pupils move between the sets.
108. Assessment and record-keeping procedures are now good in many classes and enable the attainment of each pupil to be tracked so that support or extension work may be appropriately given. This has been effective in raising standards for older pupils in Years 5 and 6 but there is some inconsistency in its application to pupils in Years 3 and 4. There is now good provision for pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language so that they achieve as well as their classmates.
109. In Year 1, higher-attaining pupils solve simple problems by adding and subtracting numbers up to 20, but most pupils count securely only up to ten. They are beginning to do simple money calculations. They recognise common, two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, squares, circles and rectangles, but have not yet worked on three-dimensional shapes. They see how mathematics may be used and applied in everyday life because they have studied a block graph that records what they do in their free time.
110. By the end of Year 6, pupils use a variety of operations to solve problems. Higher-attaining pupils tackle long multiplication and division well. They reduce fractions to their simplest form both with and without calculators, estimating and checking their calculations carefully. Average-attaining pupils are more secure working in hundreds and calculating to two decimal places rather than the thousands and three places of the higher-attaining pupils. Lower-attaining pupils are secure working to one decimal place. They make estimates, but need guidance when checking their reasonableness. In a lesson on the classification of polygons higher-attaining pupils revealed good knowledge of the sums of angles at a point and constructed models accurately, describing these in correct mathematical terms. In a similar lesson average-attaining pupils calculated simpler angles and resolved less complex problems involving quadrilaterals. Lower-attaining pupils produce simple graphs and charts but do not interpret them, although they are beginning to use "mean" and "mode" when describing sets of data. Average-attaining pupils use "mode" and "range", though not as securely as higher-attaining pupils who understand "mean", "mode" and "median". They also explain elements of probability and investigate patterns.
111. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers frequently use realistic problems as settings for teaching a variety of mathematical skills. For example, Year 6 pupils analysed national test result statistics to advance their knowledge of data handling. This helps pupils appreciate the function of mathematics in their everyday lives, which in turn makes them more motivated to learn. As a consequence, pupils display good attitudes to their work and behave well. Teachers' good planning enables pupils to develop their skills uniformly in all strands of the subject. Teachers' plans describe learning objectives for different groups within lessons so the focus of teaching and learning is appropriately refined. Intentions are shared with pupils at the beginning of the session and are reviewed by challenging questions at the end so pupils see where the work is leading and how well they are doing. There were, for example, signs in the books of

some average-attaining pupils who have chosen extra homework sums because they felt confident that their work was improving.

112. Pupils' work is assessed carefully and the results are used to adapt planning for the next stages in learning and ensure that pupils work in the set best suited to their needs. Although there are usually targets for groups within the lessons, teachers do not all set consistently precise targets for individuals, or show clearly what steps pupils must take to improve, so some pupils have the benefit of more effective guidance than others.
113. Pupils with special needs usually work in small groups with a classroom assistant so they have the help they need to consolidate and extend their learning. Pupils for whom English is an additional language do not have particular difficulty because the concepts they are acquiring do not depend essentially on words. The prompts they receive from teachers and support assistants are generally sufficient to secure their understanding, even if they can in turn only explain their learning to others in a mixture of signs and ungrammatical English. There are usually extension tasks available for the highest-attaining pupils so they have something to stimulate them. A small number of higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are currently tackling the well above average Level 6 work.
114. Mathematical skills are satisfactorily supported in various areas across the curriculum. They are generally used well, for example, for data collection and measurements in science experiments and mapping in geography. Pupils make satisfactory use of information technology to support mathematics. Computers, however, are not regularly used to support and enhance teaching and learning during the numeracy hour.
115. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has monitored colleagues' teaching and analysed pupils' performance in detail so that there is a closer match of tasks to need. The introduction of booster classes has helped to raise standards, particularly for those on the borders of average attainment ,and extension work has contributed strongly to the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5.

SCIENCE

116. Standards in science are average in Year 1 and in Year 6. Achievement is good in Year 1. Although achievement is good in Years 5 and 6, it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4, so it is judged satisfactory overall by the end of Year 6. Standards in science rose sharply in the 2002 national tests from well below average to average. However, when compared with similar schools, standards are below average. This is due to the lower than average proportion of pupils attaining Level 5, which keeps the overall standard down. Boys and girls attain similar standards. The previous inspection judged standards to be well below average and there has therefore been a significant improvement since then.
117. In Year 1, pupils made predictions and carried out an investigation into the properties of sound. In this experiment pupils categorised results into three groups, sorting data into "won't hear", "easy to hear" and "difficult to hear". The pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, worked hard and systematically to record their results. All made good progress because of the teacher's skilful questioning. For example, she asked pupils to give reasons as to why they could not hear the mobile phone outside, but they could hear it in the classroom. They soon concluded that they could not hear sounds due to distance, when sounds became fainter. The quality of discussion effectively helped pupils to articulate their thinking and understanding.
118. In Year 5, through careful and systematic investigations, pupils showed that they understood that day time is when the earth faces the sun and that night time is when it faces away from it. The teacher made learning very effective by using role-play to physically illustrate how planets move. Through her imaginative lesson she succeeded in deepening pupils' understanding and pupils were clearly able to explain the motion of the earth in relation to the sun. As a result pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, made good progress.

119. In Year 6, the pupils showed that through careful observations and investigations they have a secure understanding of forces, such as gravitational and magnetic attraction. The work is suitably modified for those pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils with English as an additional language have key words carefully explained to them to enable them to make good progress. Throughout the year group pupils use their mathematical skills well to record their findings in different formats, such as line graphs, and to interpret patterns and trends. They use computers to observe patterns and to check the validity of their findings. Pupils understand the need for fair testing and that they need to carry out their experiments several times, before drawing conclusions.
120. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good teaching and learning were evident in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' written work in Years 1, 5 and 6. The good teaching is the main reason why standards rise in these classes. The teachers show secure subject knowledge, use a variety of imaginatively-planned activities and questions effectively, pace their lessons well and have high expectations of the pupils in terms of behaviour and learning. These factors result in pupils' sustained concentration and accurate investigations. Teachers' marking is mainly accurate and helpful. A very good example of challenging teaching was observed in one Year 6 class, where the teacher gave an explanation but also posed a challenging question, which enabled a pupil to clarify his thinking on air resistance in different size of parachutes. Carefully-planned homework consolidates and extends pupils' learning. Pupils use Information and communication technology satisfactorily to analyse data.
121. Although it was not possible to observe science teaching in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class, pupils' science books showed that teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. Analysis of their work and scrutiny of planning indicates that there is insufficient rigour to ensure that pupils make sufficient progress and reach the standards of which they are capable. Expectations are not high enough. Planning for the week's work indicated unchallenging tasks, such as drawing pictures, showing low and high friction, or completing exercises from a book for pupils in both year groups. The standards reached by these pupils are also limited by weak presentation of work and poor writing. Furthermore, marking consists of simple ticks and glaring mistakes are often ignored. As a result, pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4.
122. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator ensures that the science curriculum has good breadth and balance but does not monitor classroom teaching. As with other subjects, the new assessment system has yet to bed down to be a full and consistently used tool for future planning and for setting detailed targets for pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

123. Art and design is taught on a blocked basis, alternating with design and technology. Consequently, it was possible to see only one lesson. Judgements are therefore made on the basis of scrutiny of work, teachers' planning and discussions. Standards in art and design are above average by the end of both Year 1 and Year 6. Pupils throughout the school achieve well. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement as standards have risen. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in art and design.
124. In Year 1, when pupils use crayons and pencils to illustrate their stories they show good control of shading and in drawing shapes. Using an art program on the computer they investigated shape and colour to draw houses. The teacher mounted and displayed the final products attractively for other pupils to see. In Year 5, using their sketchbooks, pupils made careful observations of autumn leaves, which they then used to make repeating patterns, based on the style of William Morris. The attractive, final collage showed good artistic development, as pupils employed a good range of methods in order to produce images and communicate observations and ideas. Year 6 pupils use graphics to describe how to indicate movement. They show good imagination in their art work and explore ideas well. One pupil developed a good model that showed fast leg movement.
125. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The teacher in Year 5 used a print by Cezanne, which inspired pupils as they were taught how to use shadows, colour, form and

space in a still life painting. The development of their understanding of the work of this twentieth-century European impressionist contributed well to their cultural development. In the one lesson observed, the teacher explained the lesson well and used the television screen to demonstrate how to create movement. This helped the pupils to make a prompt start and to achieve a good pace of learning.

126. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is no evidence that information and communication technology is used in art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127. It was not possible, due to timetabling arrangements, to observe any lessons in design and technology. Judgements, therefore, are made on the basis of a scrutiny of pupils' work on display, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and the subject co-ordinator. The subject is taught on a blocked timetable basis, alternating with art and design.
128. In Year 1 there was insufficient evidence to judge standards and pupils' achievement. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average, as they were at the last inspection and all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
129. Teachers often link design and technology to other subjects. This arrangement makes for economy of time and allows pupils to make use of knowledge and skills developed in, for example, science, mathematics and information and communication technology. For example, the Year 1 teacher indicates in her careful planning of a topic on levers that she intends pupils to develop and make simple sliding mechanisms so that they can design and make a car, or an animal, with moving parts.
130. There was insufficient evidence to judge teaching and learning in Years 1 or 3 /4. Teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are satisfactory. A scrutiny of pupils' books showed that pupils in Year 5 look at a variety of musical instruments, evaluating how they work and how they are used. Pupils record their findings in detail. The teacher's planning shows that she intends to extend pupils' learning to enable them to plan, design and make instruments using a range of materials. This systematically builds upon pupils' skills. In Year 6 pupils are designing bags for a specific purpose. They consider their plans, evaluate for suitability and make alterations, as required.
131. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. While the overall standards are average the newly appointed co-ordinator acknowledges that the subject is in need of development. To this end, she has replenished resources and plans to develop the subject, so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of design and technology can be developed progressively. There was no evidence that pupils had used information and communication technology to develop their designs.

GEOGRAPHY

132. There was insufficient evidence to form any judgements about the subject in Year 1 and Years 3 /4, as it is not taught this term and work was not available from previous years to look at to form judgements. However, geography is taught in Year 6. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This represents a satisfactory rise in standards because the last inspection found the attainment of a significant minority of pupils to be below average. The shortcomings previously identified in the curriculum and assessment have been addressed. The school now follows a nationally-recognised scheme of work to ensure that it meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a system of assessment related to the expected outcomes of the scheme of work and National Curriculum levels are assessed twice a year to help measure how well pupils are progressing. As a result there has been good improvement in the subject overall.
133. By Year 6 pupils have made a study of climatic conditions to create a weather map of the British Isles and an outline map of world climates. They are beginning to understand the importance of location, higher-attaining pupils, for example, grasping clearly that proximity to the Equator

contributes to higher temperatures whereas the further towards Polar Regions, the more temperatures fall. Average and lower-attaining pupils in Year 6 need more prompting to arrive at reasoned conclusions, but the support regularly given through questioning by class teachers and classroom assistants, especially for pupils with special educational needs, means that they generally justify their observations satisfactorily. Pupils are starting to describe geographic patterns, for example when comparing and contrasting aspects of Africa and Asia. Whilst they acquire through this some knowledge of physical processes they have not yet turned their attention to human processes, to consider, for example, the effects of people on the environment.

134. Pupils' numeracy skills are supported through measurements of temperature, use of the Beaufort Scale of wind velocity and also as they begin to plot latitude and longitude. Thanks to regular emphasis on key words pupils express themselves correctly, referring for example to Australasia to define that area which contains but is not exclusively Australia. Examples of pupils' work suggest that although diagrams and drawings are completed with satisfactory levels of accuracy, insufficient attention is given to the development of writing. Spellings are frequently inaccurate in the work of higher-attaining pupils, and at times the work of lower-attaining pupils can be followed only with difficulty.
135. Teaching and learning of geographical skills are good in Year 6. This is because of the strong emphasis given to research so that pupils find out information for themselves and learn to draw conclusions from both primary and secondary sources. Pupils make regular use of a very good range of laptop computers to use the Internet to research world weather conditions through a BBC website. Pupils worked hard and behaved responsibly, supporting each other well as they reported their findings orally to the class at the end of a lesson. Teachers make good use of the contributions of pupils who have travelled widely so that all pupils benefit from their first-hand experiences. In consequence pupils' skills build up quickly.
136. Leadership and management of the subject management are satisfactory. In the absence of a permanent subject co-ordinator the acting deputy headteacher has had oversight of the subject since September. Pupils' work has been sampled but there has been no monitoring of classroom teaching to provide a firmer perception of standards throughout the school. Resources are sufficient to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

HISTORY

137. Standards in history are average both in Year 1 and by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 and in Year 6 achieve satisfactorily. This demonstrates good improvement since the last inspection, when standards by the end of Year 6 were below average and a key issue for development. Teaching is now satisfactory, whereas formerly it was unsatisfactory. There is now a coherent system of assessment firmly linked to the National Curriculum.
138. In Year 1 pupils have an awareness of some of the differences between past and present through their comparison of different toys. They use terms "old" and "new," supporting their judgements by illustrating changes in fashion and construction and in recognising signs of wear. They have not yet begun to use information sources to answer simple questions about the past.
139. In a Year 3/4 lesson pupils identified the key features of Tudor houses and furniture and considered how they reflected local conditions and the owner's social status. They referred to a range of reference books and drew furniture in place on a house layout. However, they were not challenged sufficiently, for example, with questions which would have extended their knowledge of and interest in construction techniques.
140. It was not possible to observe lessons in Year 6 because history is not taught in the autumn term. However, from discussions with pupils in Year 6, and from an evaluation of their past work, their standards are average. They have covered aspects of British and world history at a basic level and have selected and linked historical information to produce organised work. They have not taken this further to evaluate sources of information although, with prompts, they showed some appreciation of the differences between primary and secondary information sources without actually using those terms. Higher-attaining pupils use appropriate terms such

as “century,” “era” and “BCE”. They also refer readily and accurately to dates, for example defining the reign of Queen Victoria and even the death of Prince Albert. Higher and average-attaining pupils show good understanding of some of the changes over time, especially during Victoria’s reign, but lower-attaining pupils are less secure. They recalled, for example, that the Ancient Egyptians used papyrus, that the Romans used parchment, and that parchment was frequently used by the Tudors, but they felt that it may also have been regularly used in the early Victorian times. Average-attaining pupils offered reasonable suggestions that Jane Seymour was the favourite wife of Henry VIII because she produced a son, but they could not see the significance of this in terms of succession to the throne. Overall, pupils do not evaluate the reasons for events as well as they recall the events themselves.

141. Discussions showed that pupils had satisfactory attitudes to history but were not especially inspired by their work. In Years 3 and 4 pupils were similarly neither particularly positive nor negative about their lessons, but got on with their work.
142. Teaching and learning are satisfactory so that pupils build up factual knowledge and develop skills of historical investigation and analysis. Teachers use questioning well to make pupils reflect on earlier work and contribute to class discussion but later tasks do not always challenge pupils well enough. In consequence higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, spent much time refining their drawing and labelling of a Tudor house along with the rest of the class, when they could have moved much sooner on to tasks requiring them to provide reasons for the way the house was built. Lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, generally receive specific support from classroom assistants so they learn as well as everyone else.
143. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school now follows a nationally-recognised scheme of work. The acting deputy headteacher has had oversight of the subject since September because there is no permanent co-ordinator. She has monitored samples of pupils’ work but has not systematically observed history lessons to obtain a firmer grasp of standards and ensure consistency. This was a shortcoming identified at the last inspection and has not been properly addressed. There is no evidence that information and communication technology is used in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

144. By the end of both Year 1 and Year 6, standards are above average and all pupils achieve well. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were below average by the end of Year 6. Consequently, the subject featured as a key issue for action. Since then teachers have planned thoroughly and now give equal attention to all strands of the information and communication technology curriculum.
145. The teaching in lessons is good in Years 3-6 and was very good in a Year 1 lesson. The teachers share the aims of the lessons with pupils in a way that enables them to see the link with earlier learning, and learning in other subjects. For example, in the very good lesson in Year 1, the pupils made connections between art and the fantasy scene they were creating. They realised that they can use computers to produce effective illustrations. They were delighted to discover moving figures, particularly when they managed to match sounds to their pictures. The teacher helped the pupils by challenging them with questions such as, ‘Why can’t we print these pictures?’ The pupils soon realised that this was because “things are moving.”
146. Pupils are very keen to use computers. Year 6 pupils have to be timetabled to use them before school, in order to provide equal opportunities for all in the class. In the lessons seen in Years 3-6, pupils persevered and were willing to think through the challenges provided. This enabled them to make good progress. For example, in one Year 6 class the lesson moved at a brisk pace as pairs of pupils, using multi-media presentations, worked out how to enlarge or to put text under illustrations.
147. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in some other subjects, such as mathematics and science. There are displays around the school to indicate that the pupils confidently use information and communication technology to record their work.

For instance, Year 6 pupils use graphics software to create diagrams to illustrate their scientific investigation to separate salt and sand. In geography, pupils record temperature for their weather topics using graphs.

148. Teachers are careful to ensure that pupils understand and build upon their earlier skills in the subject, by giving support to groups who need it. Particularly good attention is given to pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Staff ensure that these pupils get equal access to computers. The classroom assistants are adept in helping the pupils with their tasks, because they too have had training.
149. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Through systematic professional development, the growth in teachers' expertise has led to good teaching and learning. In addition, the much improved resources and good leadership and management of the subject by the enthusiastic co-ordinator both contribute to the above average standards.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

150. The school enhances the curriculum for pupils in Year 6 through the provision of French for one hour a week. Standards are average, as they were during the last inspection, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in their French lesson are excellent. They demonstrate its valuable contribution towards personal development in terms of self-esteem and confidence.
151. Virtually all pupils listen attentively and successfully identify numbers and ages from tape recordings of authentic French. Higher-attaining pupils can, without support, maintain two or three sentences of conversation to explain who and how old they are, and to question other pupils in turn. Average and lower-attaining pupils need occasional prompts in order to keep up such a dialogue. Pupils write down what they learn to say with similar levels of support. Pupils who have English as an additional language do as well as their classmates because they understand teachers' instructions and everyone is starting from the same point. Pupils with special needs have spoken their names in French for the first time this term and, just like the highest-attaining pupils, take much delight in success. This results in a uniformly enthusiastic and united class, eager and willing to learn.
152. Teaching and learning of French are satisfactory because teachers are enthusiasts. However, they are not French specialists. Their own accents lack authenticity, but good use is made of suitable recordings in order to provide some compensation for this. Both class teachers and support assistants offer frequent praise, which motivates pupils to contribute more. The value placed upon their effort by teachers boosts their confidence so that pupils' gains in personal development far outweigh the relatively basic gains in language skills.
153. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory, as the school acknowledges. In its middle school days it had a specialist French teacher at the school; now it has three enthusiastic but non-specialist class teachers. The subject is under-resourced and planning goes little further than encouragement for pupils to speak French. Nonetheless, this opportunity to study French in Year 6 provides a useful introduction to compulsory language studies in Year 7, is greatly enjoyed by pupils and helps to expand their horizons. Although tapes are used, there is no evidence that computers are used in French lessons.

MUSIC

154. Standards in music are above average in Year 1 and average by Year 6. There was no Year 1 at the previous inspection and standards were average in Year 6. The pupils now in Year 1, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well in music. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3-6.
155. During the inspection Year 1 pupils presented a musical assembly for the rest of the school and in front of their parents. They confidently and musically sang the teddy bear song, enacting the

actions, singing in tune and maintaining the rhythms. The pupils rehearsed and performed together with real enthusiasm and considerable accuracy. They added percussion and melodic instruments to accompany the singing. Their high level of attainment reflects the good teaching they receive.

156. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3-6. In Year 5, the teacher built effectively upon pupils' previous singing ability and ensured that they learnt new skills. With practice, they improved their performance of the carol, 'Hark, the Herald Angels sing' and sang it with clear diction, pitch control and musical expression. The teacher took the opportunity to tell pupils that the carol was composed by Felix Mendelssohn. She very effectively created a climate where pupils, when unsure of meanings, felt comfortable to ask questions. One pupil, for whom English is an additional language, asked for the meaning of the word "Gloria". The teacher explained carefully, inviting others to contribute.
157. In a Year 6 class, the teacher imaginatively presented the pupils with music by Gorecki, to listen to and appraise. She explained to the pupils that he is a contemporary Polish composer. The teacher asked pupils to listen carefully to Gorecki's "Three Pieces in Olden Style". They closed their eyes and listened attentively, suggesting mental images such as 'This music is royal'. The teacher took this opportunity to discuss their images further to deepen their appreciation of the music. This lesson contributed well to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
158. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator for music has good plans to develop the subject further. As a result of the school show in the summer, in which every pupil participated, the co-ordinator feels that there is untapped talent and enthusiasm waiting to be developed. There is a music club, well supported by the pupils, and bookings have taken place for pupils to hear the BBC Concert Orchestra. Visits to school by musical groups, such as a brass ensemble and the Curious Opera Group, have enriched pupils' musical experiences. There is a wide variety of instruments and recorded music from different cultures and traditions that are well used. Electric keyboards are available for pupils' use although they were not seen being used during inspection. Information and communication technology software, such as programs to compose music, is not currently available.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. Standards are average by the end of both Year 1 and Year 6. At the last inspection standards were average by the end of Year 6 and have therefore been sustained. All pupils achieve well because they make good gains in acquiring physical skills and handling sports equipment as they move through the school. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection because swimming is now taught in Years 3-6. Every pupil in Year 4 undertakes a programme of lessons designed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum at the local pool, whereas formerly there was no provision for swimming.
160. Teachers' plans indicate that the full range of activities takes place and the statutory programmes of study are taught. A broad, balanced programme has been adopted that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Extra-curricular activities such as the boys' and girls' football clubs, which meet regularly during the year, also enhance standards. "Outward Bound" activities, although not part of the National Curriculum, are planned as part of a school excursion next summer.
161. Pupils in a Year 1 lesson began to build up the basic skills of linking movements in a sequence. Their progress was good because they recalled simple actions well and increased their control and accuracy. Pupils consolidated their skills as they linked a range of throwing and catching manoeuvres, showing co-ordination and developing control. Accuracy was increased because teachers made comments and suggestions to help pupils see what was working well and what could be improved. Pupils showed an awareness of health and safety by making sure that they dressed correctly in their games clothes. When moving around the hall they began to show and awareness of the space available to them and keep a safe distance between themselves and others. They are beginning to notice the effects on their bodies, such as increasing and decreasing heartbeat rates, as they warm up and cool down.

162. Pupils in Year 3 to 6 develop greater depth in their physical skills. They are aware of the effects of exercise on their body and appreciate the need for warm up and cool down routines. By Year 6 they can sensibly discuss the effects of exercise on their bodies. Their accuracy and control are still developing, together with an understanding of tactics and teamwork in ball games. There is little difference in the performance of different groups of pupils except for a small group of higher-attaining pupils who are members of various sports teams outside school. Some pupils with special needs in academic subjects perform particularly well in physical education. On balance, however, the vast majority of pupils, although they achieve well, do not show consistent precision or control and fluency of movement. They comment, nonetheless, on the work of others, work hard and consider how to improve their performance.
163. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teachers ensure that lessons begin with a suitable warm up. Pupils are often expected to explain what they need to do to ensure their safety. Pupils are appropriately dressed for physical activity and most teachers reinforce this important learning point by dressing suitably themselves. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They use questioning well to make all groups of pupils think hard for themselves about what does or does not work well and why, to help them better discover the solution. Even non-participants become involved in this so that they may apply their learning when they are later fit enough to take part. Pupils with English as an additional language are at no disadvantage because the teacher shows, as well as explains, what she wants. A pupil's comment that a ball was thrown "too up" indicated unambiguously, if not fluently, the error in direction. Some teachers make use of pupils to teach a point, especially when pupils have gained particular expertise as active members of outside clubs. This encourages others in the class to improve their performance and helps them learn well from one another. In all lessons pupils exhibit very good attitudes to their work and behave well.
164. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader has only recently taken on the role. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met thanks to a nationally-recognised scheme of work that provides support to teachers. The subject leader does not monitor lessons in the subject and this is a weakness because the absence of any written or recorded work means that there is no other way to determine whether standards are rising. There are, for example, no records of pupils' standards in swimming prior to the present academic year. Accommodation and resources are good because the school has a gymnasium, changing rooms, and full use of the neighbouring sports fields and facilities. Assessment of the subject was a weakness at the last inspection. Currently assessment is through evaluation of lessons against the expected outcomes defined in the scheme of work, and twice each year these are related to National Curriculum levels. This, plus the introduction of swimming, represents good improvement since the last inspection. There was no evidence that information and communication technology is used in physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

165. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards and achievement in Year 1 as it was not possible to observe any lessons. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and are average by Year 6, which presents a similar picture to the findings of the last inspection. The achievement of all groups of pupils by Year 6 is good because they gain a balanced understanding of both elements of the syllabus, namely learning about and learning from religion, due to the good teaching which gives strong emphasis to the exploration and development of pupils' own values and beliefs.
166. By Year 6 pupils are able to describe some of the main features of Christianity and Judaism. They recount, for example, the stories of Noah and Moses and aspects of the Gospels in their own words. They describe Christian symbolism using a satisfactory range of appropriate terms such as "altar", "font", "cross" and "spirit" and have a rudimentary idea of the concept of the Trinity. They are starting to perceive similarities and links between religions, which helps them to understand and develop their own beliefs. Higher-attaining pupils, although their views did not extend to informed responses about more profound or ultimate questions, wrote pertinently that "what you do when young affects what you are when older" and, pragmatically, "to succeed you need effort not luck". Lower-attaining pupils expressed simpler personal values that tended to

stress kindness to one another rather than a responsibility towards a higher power, but these at least serve to confirm their growing awareness of social, of not spiritual, responsibility.

167. The pupils have very good attitudes to the subject. They listen well to their teachers. They settle quickly to tasks. The vast majority of pupils contribute well to discussions and are willing to express their points of view because teachers value what they have to say and respond sensitively. Behaviour in lessons is good because teachers and pupils relate very well to each other.
168. Teaching and learning are good because pupils' understanding develops in a balanced way. Teachers use questions and illustrations that make pupils think hard, for example, about the impression something creates or the implications of actions. These help pupils see beyond the superficial to approach the spiritual and moral issues at their core. A good lesson on Christian symbolism for example began with the teacher sharing the sentimental value and personal significance of a baby's toy. Pupils saw clearly that the item had little intrinsic worth yet became touched by the emotions evoked. The lesson moved smoothly into a study of some of the furnishings of a Church, which pupils later recalled better because they had a deeper appreciation of the impact of what these represented.
169. There are satisfactory links with literacy because key vocabulary is emphasised, but the volume of work in pupils' exercise books suggests that opportunities to reinforce discussion through written tasks are not regularly taken. This also means that pupils do not build up as useful a record of their studies to support future learning and develop their writing as well as they should.
170. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Planning for religious education is based on nationally-recognised guidelines aligned with the locally agreed syllabus. It has not made use of the syllabus' optional assessment system, which emulates those for National Curriculum subjects to provide a useful framework to support pupils' gains in knowledge. There is now a good range of resources, including artefacts, which contribute to current displays on Hanukkah and Divali. The range has improved since the last inspection. There was no evidence that information and communication technology is used to support learning. The school makes good use of its links with local Christian clergy as well as clergy and members of other faiths to broaden pupils' understanding through visits to the school, although pupils make no visits to places of worship apart from the local church.