

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FARLEY JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109538

Headteacher: Mr R J Woodhead

Reporting inspector: Mr M Johnstone  
No: 21114

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 246919

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Northdrift Way Luton Bedfordshire
Postcode:	LU1 5JF
Telephone number:	01582 725069
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Drew
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Registered inspector	Art and design Physical education Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
09003	Bryan Findley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education English as an additional language	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17857	David Walters	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs	
21450	Daniel Kilborn	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Farley Junior is a community school situated in the western suburbs of Luton. About the same size as other junior schools, it has 234 pupils from 7 to 11 years on roll, with almost equal numbers of boys and girls. The area served by the school has features of acute social deprivation. The school was subject to an arson attack in September 2002 when four classrooms were destroyed. Pupils enter the school with attainment that is well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. One hundred and twenty-five pupils speak English as an additional language, 56 of whom are in the early stages of English language acquisition. The main languages spoken are Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and Turkish. There is one refugee pupil. Forty per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals (well above average). Forty-three per cent of the pupils have special educational needs (well above average) and one pupil has a statement of special educational need. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural needs. There is high pupil mobility. The school has faced severe staffing and recruitment problems. Over the past 2 years, 8 staff have left and 7 have come in. The school has found it difficult to recruit teachers. There is currently one unqualified teacher and one on a temporary contract.

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

The school is providing a satisfactory education in difficult circumstances and has responded adequately to the challenges it faces. Standards are improving for most pupils, although they remain well below the national average in English and mathematics. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, although the frequent staff changes and recruitment problems have led to some inconsistencies in pupils' learning. The headteacher, governors and staff are committed to improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher is respected by parents, staff and governors and has a high profile in the school
- In Year 5, teaching is good and in about a third of lessons, it is very good
- Standards and pupils' achievements in religious education, art and design and design and technology have improved since the last inspection
- There is good provision and additional support for pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress
- Pupils are well cared for and their moral, social and cultural development is good
- Behaviour is good, pupils work hard and there is a very high level of racial harmony

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards and pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science, particularly for the above average pupils
- The effectiveness of systems to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- The unsatisfactory levels of attendance

*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 April 1997. Since that time, there has been satisfactory overall improvement. Recruitment problems and increased proportions of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language have slowed down the rate of improvement in standards over the past two or three years. Standards have risen in line with the national trend until 2002 when there was a dip in pupils' performance in the national tests. There has been reasonable improvement in the quality of teaching with more very good teaching and less that is unsatisfactory. With regard to specific issues raised in the last inspection, there have been some good improvements. Teaching has improved in Years 4 and 5 and is now good in Year 5 particularly. Standards in art and design, design and technology and handwriting have improved and are now similar to those expected by the end of Year 6. There is now a clear understanding of the distinctive needs of pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. School planning has developed well and the capacity for improvement is good.

## STANDARDS

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

\* Indicates that the school's results were in the bottom 5% of schools nationally

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	D	E	E*	E

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

The standards identified in the 2002 national tests do not fairly reflect pupils' achievements. There were higher than average proportions of both pupils with special educational needs and pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition, and seven pupils joined the year group during Years 5 and 6. Results from the 2001 national tests, while well below the national average, indicated that in mathematics and science, standards were high enough to be comparable with those in similar schools. Evidence from the inspection is more in tune with this picture of standards and indicates improvements in Years 3 and 5 particularly. Analysis of the school's good tracking systems indicates that about three-quarters of the pupils who stay for the full four years in the school achieve the national level. This represents reasonable progress. The effects of frequent staff changes in some classes, however, have meant that pupils have not always made the progress of which they are capable. The trend in results has mirrored the national trend up to 2002, when it dipped due to the very few number of pupils attaining the higher level. The school is on course to achieve its higher targets for 2003 and whilst these would still reflect below average standards, they would represent reasonable improvement in the number of pupils reaching the national level.

Evidence from the analysis of pupils' performance in tests generally and in the work seen during the inspection confirms that too few pupils achieve the higher levels of the National Curriculum and this adversely affects results. Much of the work given to them does not extend their learning enough. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. In relation to their very low attainment on entry, most other pupils, including those who have English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. Whilst boys do a little better than girls in mathematics and science tests and girls do a little better in English, when taking all subjects as a whole and the work seen during the inspection into account, there is no significant difference.

In English, pupils' achievements in writing are the main weakness and standards are not high enough in this aspect of their work. In mathematics and science, pupils do not use and apply their knowledge to solve problems. These weaknesses limit pupils' progress and affect the standards they reach.

Pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education exceeds the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Standards in all other subjects are as expected for pupils' age. Regular sessions in the school's computer suite have developed pupils' skills satisfactorily but there are not enough opportunities for them to use these skills in general classroom lessons.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The school has worked effectively on this aspect of pupils' learning and attitudes are good. Pupils work hard and are proud of their efforts.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Mostly good in lessons and around the school. Behaviour in assemblies is very good. Pupils know what is expected of them. The behaviour of a few, mainly boys, causes some disruption in lessons where the teaching is weaker.
Personal development and relationships	Good: Pupils take on responsibility eagerly when acting on the school council and as monitors. There is a very high level of racial harmony.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory: at 90.6 the attendance rate is well below the national average.

The recent appointment of a family worker is a promising initiative and is targeting persistent absentees. A high percentage of the absences relate to a few pupils and holidays abroad taken by pupils from minority ethnic groups.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.*

Teaching is sound and meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching and learning were good or better in just under a half. In these lessons, pupils made good progress. Teaching was unsatisfactory in a small minority of lessons. A higher proportion of good and very good teaching was observed in Years 3 and 5. In Year 5, one third of lessons were very good. This represents reasonable improvement since the last inspection.

Due to the fire in September that destroyed four classrooms and the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6, it is difficult to gauge the quality of pupils' learning in the past academic year. However, work from last year's pupils in Year 3 and 4 and analysis of the older pupils' performance in optional National Curriculum tests reveals some inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning across and within year groups. This is the result of some weaknesses in the teaching by the established staff as well as breaks in the continuity of learning as a result of frequent staff changes. The teaching of English and mathematics are satisfactory overall. Pupils who have special educational needs are well taught and achieve well. Teaching of pupils who have English as an additional language is satisfactory

Key strengths in the teaching across all year groups are expectations of presentation and behaviour, use of resources, brisk pace and good work routines, respect for ethnic diversity and encouragement for all pupils to work together, relationships, planning and the use of specialist teaching. Key weaknesses relate to low expectations of what the above average pupils could achieve, undemanding writing tasks and the provision of work that does not move pupils on to the next stage of learning quickly enough. Teachers are not developing pupils' computer skills enough in general lessons.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory: meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the local agreed syllabus for religious education. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: the school is committed to the ideals of inclusion for all pupils and makes good provision for these pupils. They are fully integrated into the life of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory: Pupils who are at the early stages of English language acquisition do not get their full entitlement to additional support since the school cannot recruit a teacher to support the current teacher who works part-time. Teachers cater for their needs satisfactorily in general lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall: the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good and their spiritual development is satisfactory. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to reflect in ways that are meaningful to them.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Systems to find out how well pupils are doing are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science but underdeveloped in other subjects.

Links with parents are satisfactory overall. Parents' views of the school are favourable. Information about the life of the school is good. The impact of parents' involvement in the life of the school is satisfactory overall and they make a sound contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory: the headteacher is respected and has a high profile in the school. He has coped well with some very difficult staffing issues over the past two years. Key management staff are largely new to their posts and have not yet had time to bring about significant developments. The deputy headteacher is not involved effectively enough in school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory: they are developing their strategic role well from a low base two years ago. The chair and vice chair know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and the governing body is committed to improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a good general view of how well it is doing but systems are not rigorous enough to bring about significant improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Priorities are supported well through the school's good financial management. The governors have sound understanding of best value principles.

There is a reasonable match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum, accommodation is good and learning resources are satisfactory

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school and are making good progress.</li><li>• The teaching is good and their children are expected to work hard.</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li><li>• They would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistency in the setting of homework.</li><li>• More information about how their child is doing.</li><li>• A closer partnership between parents and the school.</li></ul>

The inspectors are in broad agreement with the parents' positive views. There was evidence of homework being set during the inspection but this was inconsistent across classes. The amount and quality of information about how well their children are doing is similar to that found in most schools. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents but there are aspects that could be improved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1 When pupils enter the school in Year 3, attainment is well below the national average. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 standards were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science and well below the standards found in similar schools. In English and science the results were in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. This represents a dip in the standards that have been reflected in national tests over the past three years. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, there were a number of factors that influenced the results of that particular group of pupils. There was a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and a significant minority of pupils had entered the group in the final two years. Most of these were at the early stages of English language acquisition. Of 14 pupils new to the group, only two achieved the national level.

2 In the 2001 national tests, while standards were well below the national average, in mathematics and science they were comparable with those in similar schools and represented satisfactory achievement. Up to 2002, the trend in the schools' results had mirrored the national trend. Inspection evidence of work pupils were doing during the inspection more closely reflect the results achieved in 2001. While standards remain well below the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science, pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. In English, it is pupils' writing that depresses overall results and in this aspect most pupils underachieve. Over the past three years, too few pupils have achieved the higher level 5 of the National Curriculum in English, mathematics and science, and this has also depressed the overall standards. \* Measured by the average points score, standards have improved in mathematics and science since the last inspection but are not as high in English.

3 There are a number of other factors that have a detrimental effect on standards:

- Over a half of the pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) and about a half of these are at the early stages of English language acquisition
- Four out of ten of the pupils have special educational needs
- The school has had acute staffing and recruitment difficulties. Good staff have moved on to promotion and the school has had great difficulty finding permanent replacements
- A higher than average number of pupils join the school after the normal entry point. The schools' careful tracking of pupils performance in optional National Curriculum tests shows that about three-quarters of the pupils who remain in the school for the full four years achieve at least the national level. This represents reasonable progress and
- Some pupils leave the school after two years to join a local middle school. This gives parents the opportunity to send their children to their choice of secondary school. Most of these pupils are in the above average sets for English and mathematics

4 Analysis of the relative performance of boys and girls over the past three years shows that boys have tended to do a little better than girls in mathematics and science and girls have done better than boys in English. These differences were not significant in the work seen during the inspection.

5 The school is on course to achieve its higher targets for 2003 and whilst these would still reflect well below average standards, they would represent reasonable improvement in the number of pupils reaching the national level. The work of the pupils who are now in Year 5 is more promising and their achievements are good.

6 Over a half of the pupils in the school have EAL. The majority of these pupils enter school with much lower than expected levels of attainment and about a half are not fluent users of English and need additional support to access the curriculum. By the age of eleven, most of the pupils who have EAL are attaining similar levels to their peers and make satisfactory overall progress.

7 Pupils with SEN make good progress towards the targets set for them. Although standards are well below the expectations for their age, their good achievement in lessons enables them to participate in all aspects of the curriculum. All pupils are assessed soon after they enter the school. As a result of this good quality information, accurate and attainable targets are set for individual education plans. Although there is some inconsistency in the use of targets in lesson plans, they have a sufficiently good impact in lessons to enable pupils to succeed. Documented evidence exists that progress is sometimes good enough for pupils to be taken off the register of special needs. A further success story concerns a recent former pupil who received highly effective support and left with the national level of attainment in English, mathematics and science. Teachers have access to helpful support for pupils whose need is behavioural or emotional and this is largely effective. If a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, the school makes full use of special materials and expertise available to them. As a result, the pupil is fully integrated into the life of the school.

8 In English, pupils' achievements are better in speaking and listening and reading than in writing. Writing is the main weakness and standards are not high enough in this aspect of their work. Pupils' handwriting has improved significantly since the last inspection but spelling, grammar and punctuation are well below average. Whilst the range of writing experiences has been improved, much of the written work does not sustain ideas or develop them in interesting ways. In mathematics and science, pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding but do not use and apply their knowledge to solve problems. These weaknesses limit pupils' progress and affect the standards they reach.

9 In information and communications technology (ICT) pupils' skills have improved since the last inspection and regular lessons in the computer suite have raised pupils' basic skills to expected national levels. Pupils do not, however, have enough access to computers in their general lessons in the classrooms. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality and provision for religious education. Although pupils' standards in writing limit their overall attainment level their knowledge and understanding of the subject is now above the expectations of the local agreed syllabus.

10 In art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education, standards are as expected for pupils' ages. Standards and pupils' achievements in art and design and design and technology have improved since the last inspection. Specialist teaching has helped raise standards in aspects of art and design, music, ICT and physical education. In subjects such as history and geography weaknesses in pupils' writing prevent pupils from achieving as well as they could. The absence of a whole school assessment system for subjects outside the core of English, mathematics and science makes it difficult for teachers to build work on the basis of what pupils already know.

*\* Average points score – pupils' levels in National Curriculum tests are converted to points and used to compare a school's performance with schools nationally and with similar schools. The higher the level, the more points are gained.*

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

11 The response of pupils to teaching and other provision made by the school remains good, and for many is very good. Most pupils are well motivated and work with enthusiasm and a desire to achieve. They respond well to opportunities to organise themselves, for example, when dealing with coats and books at the beginning of the day. Pupils are usually purposeful in their activities in class, such as when organising their work for the start of the day and when moving around the school. There are a few boys, in all year groups, who lose concentration too easily and require frequent attention from the teacher. In most lessons, pupils who have SEN show a high degree of independence and concentration in order to produce good work. They know how well they are doing because the teacher keeps them informed by praising them appropriately. They are generally co-operative with support staff and teachers and this enables them to make good gains in learning. Some restlessness does occur from time to time and strategies to deal with this include the successful use of the behavioural support worker. This ensures that the work of other pupils is not unduly disturbed. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire think that their children enjoy their time in school and agree that behaviour is good.

12 Pupils behave well in and around the school because they understand codes of conduct well and are clear about what is expected. There is a team spirit among pupils to co-operate with routines that is reinforced by older pupils, who set a good example to the younger ones. Pupils are polite and courteous. They show respect for property and equipment and can be trusted when given tasks to do in lessons. The school finds little need to apply sanctions of any severity and there were only two temporary exclusions in the past year, which is below rates normally found for this type of school.

13 The quality of relationships between pupils is very good. Boys and girls mix well and there is a very high degree of racial harmony. There are no patterns of aggression or intimidation and few tensions exist between pupils, who tend to be open and accepting of each other and of adults. The relationship between pupils and a small minority of teachers is adversely affected by the occasional use of over-controlling and negative styles when dealing with pupils in the classroom.

14 Pupils develop well during their time in school. They adapt positively to the different stages of their development and willingly take on roles and responsibilities from their earliest days at the school, for example, as classroom helpers and as members of the school council. Pupils elect their own representatives for the school council, house leader and prefect. Responsibilities, such as monitoring the use of corridors and helping during wet play, are carried out diligently and understood by other pupils, so that the commitment to support school life is shared throughout the school.

15 Attendance is well below the national average and has a detrimental effect on pupils' progress and attainment. Rates for overall attendance are consistently well below the national average but unauthorised absence is very low. Overall rates are adversely affected by holidays in term time, especially extended holidays by families visiting the Indian sub-continent. There are also patterns of absence for a few pupils, which raise questions about the priority that some parents are giving to their child's education. The school recognises that further action is needed in this area and there was a very small improvement in the overall rate last year following measures taken by the school.

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

16 Teaching is sound and meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching and learning were good or better in just under a half of the lessons observed. In these lessons, pupils made good progress. Teaching was unsatisfactory in a small minority of lessons. A higher proportion of good and very good teaching was observed in Years 3 and 5, and in Year 5, one third of lessons were very good.

In these lessons, pupils' progress was particularly good. Overall, this represents reasonable improvement since the last inspection when there were more unsatisfactory lessons and fewer that were very good.

17 The fire in September that destroyed four classrooms and the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6, makes it difficult to judge the quality of teaching over the past academic year. Based on the work of pupils in Year 3 and 4, work across all year groups from September of this year and analysis of the older pupils' performance in optional National Curriculum tests, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across and within year groups. Frequent staff changes involving temporary and supply teachers, together with some general weaknesses in the teaching of the established teachers, reveal periods of uneven progress. This has ranged from unsatisfactory to good.

18 The teaching of pupils who have SEN is good with some very good teaching in all year groups. All teachers are involved in setting the targets for pupils' individual education plans and work closely with the co-ordinator. Where pupils make the most progress, they are kept purposefully busy and their tasks are well matched to their needs. On the occasions where there is an extra teacher, this is effective because it allows pupils to discuss their work in small groups. The work of most of the support staff is effective in raising pupils' standards and self esteem. The setting arrangements in English, mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6 has kept the sets for the below average pupils quite small and this has enabled the pupils to receive more focused support.

19 The quality of teaching for pupils who have EAL is satisfactory. Due to problems in recruiting an additional specialist support teacher, the pupils who enter school unable to speak English do not get the maximum attention they need. The support that is available is directed appropriately towards those pupils who have the greatest need. Where appropriate, and where available, bilingual skills are used to assess children's attainment levels when they first enter school. This enables staff to build on what pupils already know and can do with reasonable success. The occasional regular withdrawal of younger pupils from the whole of the literacy lesson limits their access to a rich English curriculum and at these times they are not able to benefit from hearing good models of English from their peers.

20 The teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall. More good teaching was observed in mathematics and science lessons than in English lessons. In English and mathematics, lessons have a clear structure based on the recommendations of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In all three subjects, planning is good and clearly indicates what pupils are expected to learn. In Years 5 and 6, in all three subjects pupils are organised into ability sets and this helps teachers plan work that is better matched to pupils' abilities. In mathematics and science, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge to solve problems.

21 Teaching in all other subjects is mostly satisfactory. Good use of specialist teaching in art and design, physical education, music and ICT has a good impact on pupils' learning. The teachers' good knowledge of the subject and high expectations of what pupils might achieve have a good impact on pupils' progress and attainment in these lessons.

22 Key strengths in teaching and learning across all subjects and year groups are:

- expectations of behaviour that ensure learning takes place in a settled classroom environment
- expectations of presentation and the establishment of a strong work ethic that means that pupils have a pride in what they achieve and work hard
- the sharing with pupils of what they are expected to learn so that they get down quickly to the tasks and can assess how well they have done
- brisk pace throughout lessons that keeps interest and motivation high
- relationships that allow the successful use of humour that makes learning enjoyable and develops self-esteem. In a lesson for pupils in Year 5, for example, the teacher

used different voices and amusing expressions to illustrate various emotions. This developed pupils' confidence well and encouraged them to read a play script effectively

- the use of resources and equipment to help understanding. In a mathematics set for below average pupils, for example, a whiteboard and structural apparatus developed pupils' understanding of fractions well
- respect for ethnic diversity which ensures the views and ideas of all pupils are valued and all pupils work harmoniously together and
- good questioning that makes pupils' think more deeply. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3, for example, the teacher asks 'what do you notice about all the answers to the two and ten times tables?'

23 Key areas for improvement relate to:

- low expectations of what the above average pupils could achieve
- some undue consolidation and repetition of work that prevents pupils moving to the next stage of learning as quickly as they could
- undemanding writing tasks that do not extend pupils' skills enough, for example many worksheets given to the pupils require only simple written responses
- inconsistent teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar, for example, teachers miss opportunities to emphasise these aspects across all subjects and
- the development of pupils' ICT skills in general classroom lessons.

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

24 The school provides an appropriate curriculum for the pupils and meets successfully the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is underpinned by its commitment to providing a very supportive and caring environment for pupils. The strengths outlined in the last inspection have been maintained and there have been some improvements in the provision for SEN pupils and those who have EAL. There is now a clearer definition and understanding of the different needs of the two groups.

25 Policies for all subjects are good and the teachers use nationally and local education authority recommended schemes of work to help them plan lessons. The teachers plan in their year group teams and this provides a secure framework to promote continuity and progression in what pupils learn as they move through the school. The school is implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies with reasonable success.

26 The school commitment to equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The school is committed to the ideals of inclusion for all pupils and makes good provision for pupils with SEN. The new Code of Practice has been implemented quickly and pupils have good individual education plans. There is a good match of work to their needs in pupils' targets. Pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school.

27 The curriculum for pupils with EAL is satisfactory. Priority is given to developing pupils speaking and listening skills and as a result a significant number of pupils often make good progress in becoming confident and competent speakers in English. Withdrawal groups, smaller classes and setting for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science help the staff to meet the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. However, some tasks are not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' stages of learning and assessment opportunities are not clearly identified to help pupils move on to the next stage of learning. More able pupils do not receive sufficient additional support through well-planned extension tasks to help them reach the higher levels. Booster classes and additional literacy sessions provide good support for pupils who learn at a slower rate. All classes are regularly taught key skills in ICT in a recently developed computer suite. However, there is scope for improvement in the use of ICT across the curriculum.

28 Arrangements for pupils' personal, health and sex education are given a high priority and are good. There are agreed policies for health, sex and drugs education and racial equality. Time is made available within lessons to develop these areas in ways which are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils. Pupils take part in a number of festivals, competitions and fund raising initiatives to develop their responsibility to their local community. The strong tradition of dramatic and musical performances noted at the last inspection has been continued despite the staffing recruitment difficulties.

29 There is a good range of extra-curricular and sporting activities in the school, which enriches the statutory curriculum and enhances personal and social skills. Clubs include football, netball, quick cricket, athletics, stamp, chess, dance, drama and art. All are well attended and staff give very generously of their time, at lunchtime and after school, to extend pupils' interests and skills. There are clubs available for all age groups. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to attend a residential visit to Dell Farm.

30 The use of local visitors and well-planned visits extend pupils' knowledge and understanding well. Pupils have opportunities to visit historical and geographical sites, local museums and theatres. Links with the emergency services, health workers and local businesses are effective in developing pupils understanding of citizenship and commerce.

31 The school has good links with other schools and groups. Links with the local infant school enable children's entry into school to be a positive experience. Before pupils transfer to the secondary school information on their progress is exchanged and pupils enjoy time at their new school to familiarise themselves with routines and staff to ensure a happy and secure transfer. The curriculum prepares pupils appropriately for the next stage of their education.

32 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The quality of provision has been maintained successfully since the last inspection

33 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their feelings and emotions in assemblies and personal and social education lessons. In a class assembly attended by parents a genuine sense of occasion was created as pupils from a Year 3 class took the audience through a portrayal of the journey of life. In another assembly a charismatic presentation by the headteacher on selfishness created an excellent atmosphere and sense of awe. Through skilful use of his voice and a period of silence a special moment was created when all the pupils reflected on the message in the story. An assembly on Ramadan when a Muslim pupil was interviewed about fasting gave pupils valuable insight into another religion. A tree of hope display in the main hall gives a strong message to pupils who have made leaves for the tree with words such as respect, hope, happiness, friendship and kindness written on them. There are some opportunities for pupils to gain inspiration from the work of great artists and music but in general lessons, not enough opportunities are taken to build on pupils' spiritual experiences or plan to develop this aspect in lessons.

34 Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and a high priority for the school. Issues of right and wrong are made clear through assemblies and through lessons in religious education and personal, social and health education. In an assembly about the journey through life, for example, prefects spoke about the journey through school life and the important role of rules. Pupils contribute to class rules and the school code of conduct is displayed for all to see. Teachers set a very good example to pupils by treating them with courtesy and thoughtfulness, which creates an atmosphere of fairness in which issues of right and wrong are readily understood. A system of awards and sanctions encourages positive values and gives clear consequences when the school code is broken.



35 The school has created a genuine sense of community, which promotes pupils' social development well. Pupils are given influence in the school through the school council and as prefects in Year 6. A house system encourages pupils to contribute to a team effort through gaining house points for good work and behaviour. Assemblies are made a special occasion for the school family. All staff play a part and pupils are involved through class assemblies, at which parents also attend. The school promotes social harmony well. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and show consideration for each other. The school sets targets for itself about the opportunities pupils are given to be involved together, for example in team games, after-school clubs and school visits. Provision in lessons is also good. In one lesson in personal and social education, Year 4 pupils discussed social issues connected with bullying and racism and in an English lessons for pupils in Year 5, pupils recounted key points from a talk given previously by a visiting speaker on bullying. In the wider community, pupils raise funds for charities and also Year 6 put on an afternoon of food and entertainment for elderly people in the area.

36 Cultural development is good. The school is effective in developing a very harmonious atmosphere in which the pupils' home languages, backgrounds, cultures and faiths are respected and valued. Labels, notices and welcome signs in the appropriate languages are displayed around the school. Dual language books and books and resources representing pupils' home cultures and history are available in classrooms to develop pupils self esteem. In history, pupils develop an understanding of how other civilisations such as the Ancient Egyptians and Greeks functioned. In a music lessons in Year 6, pupils used the rhythms and patterns in Japanese music to gain some insight into another culture and its music. The use of visiting theatre groups and visits to sites of historical and geographical interest develop further pupils' cultural awareness.

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

37 The school continues to offer good levels of welfare and safety for pupils. Regular health and safety site inspections and effective follow up work is well supported by day-to-day checks by the site manager. Teachers also take good care of safety during lessons, such as seen during swimming and when using equipment in a Year 5 science lesson. There are good facilities and provision for welfare needs. First aid skills are available at all times and proper regard is paid to pupils with special medical needs. Child protection procedures are effective though not all key staff have received appropriate training due to their recent appointments.

38 Good behaviour is promoted well through discipline procedures and positive learning opportunities in lessons and during assemblies. Behaviour is monitored well by class teachers and lunchtime supervisors. An award system is used appropriately to recognise good behaviour, such as the award of house points. Incidents of misbehaviour and improvements in the behaviour of individual pupils are monitored through an incident log and behaviour reports. There is an effective school response to bullying and pupils report that they feel comfortable and secure in school. Measures effectively eliminate any problems of racism; however, the school does have reporting and recording procedures for racial incidents. A behaviour intervention worker provides valuable support for pupils, and, a family worker works with parents where particular support for pupils is needed at home.

39 The school is working hard with some success to improve the rates of attendance. Attendance records are monitored closely. Follow-up enquiries by administration staff and support from the behaviour intervention worker have kept unauthorised absences low and improved punctuality. The recently appointed family worker is taking a primary role in improving attendance through direct liaison with parents.

40 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but there are no whole-school procedures for

assessment that are consistently used in other subjects. This makes it difficult for teachers to build work on the basis of what pupils already know.

41 Information from Key Stage 1 tests is passed to the school and supplemented by school-based tests soon after entry to Year 3. This information is used satisfactorily to identify the learning needs of new entrants. Optional national tests in English, mathematics and science are carried out in Years 3, 4 and 5 and the outcomes contribute to the good tracking of the progress of individual pupils. This helps the school set individual targets for pupils and assess the overall value of the education they receive by the end of Year 6. Good support from the local authority advisor for assessment has led to a recent policy update and the development of a computer based tracking system. While there are some systems in subjects other than English, mathematics and science these are not used consistently in all classes across the school to help plan pupils' future work and ensure work is matched to pupils' abilities.

42 There are good systems for assessing the progress of pupils with SEN. As soon as a problem is identified, an individual programme is written and progress towards the target assessed. If required, new targets are set at review time. The provisions required in statements of SEN are met in full. Links with agencies, such as social services and speech therapists are good. Their expertise is valued and effective.

43 The assessment procedures for pupils with EAL are satisfactory. Language skills are assessed as children enter school and the results of these assessments identify the deployment of support staff in order to improve pupils' fluency in English and raise their attainment across the curriculum. Appropriate records are maintained indicating pupils' progress and performance but these do not relate to their progress towards agreed targets or National Curriculum levels. Teachers do not monitor pupils who are at the early stages of English language acquisition precisely enough in order to identify specific learning difficulties and help them focus more carefully on improving pupils' standards and progress.

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

44 There is a satisfactory partnership with parents, who think highly of the school. Almost all parents consider their child likes school and makes good progress through hard work. The vast majority of those who expressed their view believe that teaching and the behaviour of pupils is good and feel able to approach the school with questions or ideas. The inspection evidence largely confirmed these positive sentiments. Some parents would like to see improvement in homework, information about progress and the working relationship with the school. These minority concerns were found to be largely unjustified. Homework is used satisfactorily to support learning, although there is evidence that there is some inconsistency in the amounts and regularity between classes. Information about progress is satisfactory with some good features. The school is making good efforts to develop a stronger partnership with parents. All these areas are reported on in more detail in the appropriate sections of this report.

45 Information about the life of the school is good, for example, through regular newsletters and termly information about the curriculum. The prospectus and annual report of the governing body contain detail beyond that required to be published. Reports on pupils are satisfactory but targets are often too general and do not make clear enough the area of a subject in need of improvement.

46 The contribution of parents to their children's learning is satisfactory. Many parents support the work of the school well, take a keen interest and are involved in the work their children do, such as the small group who help in the classroom and, more widely, those who help with reading at home. A few parents have low expectations for their children and do not give education enough priority. An example of this is seen in the erratic attendance of some pupils. The recently appointed family worker has made a very good start in encouraging

greater involvement of parents in pupils' learning and is gradually building a programme of activities, although it is too early to demonstrate the results of this work.

47 Most parents are involved in all aspects of the special needs process and reviews. They are active in supporting their children and attend the reviews on their progress. Home visits are arranged for all pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Where possible bilingual support is available to enable parents to access the teaching staff and headteacher.

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

48 The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. In his teaching and commitment to the pupils, the headteacher leads by example. He is respected by parents and governors and has a high profile in the school. He has been successful in developing a broad range of curricular experiences for the pupils. He is clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has identified the right tasks for the future. His vision and hopes have been somewhat frustrated by the acute staffing and recruitment problems over the past two years and more recently by the serious fire that has necessitated restructuring the teaching and organisation in Years 5 and 6. The recruitment problem has also meant that the headteacher has had to teach for long periods and take on responsibility for the co-ordination of some subjects.

49 Since the last inspection, four teachers have moved to deputy headships. These promotions left large gaps in the senior management team which the school has found difficulty filling. The appointment of a numeracy and literacy co-ordinator in the past year has eased the situation somewhat and the innovations they have introduced are beginning to improve key aspects of these subjects. The deputy headteacher has a satisfactory management role and her expertise, for example, in the teaching of music is used well. Her role as a motivator and in the development of teaching and learning in the school is, however, much less effective. Most staff share a common purpose and have taken steps to make their work more effective, for example, they have attended a number of training events to develop their expertise in the teaching of most subjects.

50 The school's aims, which are centred appropriately on the development of good attitudes, responsibility, respect, relationships and the recognition of pupils' achievements are clearly reflected in the work of the school. The aim to provide an education based on high academic standards is not so effectively delivered since standards are not as high as they could be. The school development plan is forward looking and includes appropriate action plans for each subject. It is comprehensive, focused on raising standards and provides a good blueprint for the future. What it lacks is a clear up-front strategy for raising standards that leaves staff who are new to the school in no doubt about what they are expected to do to achieve this.

51 Since the last inspection, standards have not risen enough, particularly in English, and as things begin to settle there is now a need to focus much more rigorously on raising standards, especially for above average pupils. Monitoring systems are good but inconsistency in the way they are operated has meant that they have not been as effective as they should in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher regularly monitors teachers and this process has identified areas for improvement. The follow-up to this has not, however, been rigorous enough to ensure all teachers implement changes consistently. Whilst recognising the difficulties caused by staff changes, key co-ordinators have not had sufficient opportunity to observe teaching in their subject across the school and so do not have a strong overview of what is working well and what is not in their subjects. There is satisfactory analysis of pupils' performance in national and school tests and this has identified areas for development, for example, writing. However, analysis has not resulted in a clear focus on improving the achievements and standards for the above average pupils.

52 The leadership and management of SEN provision is good. A knowledgeable and experienced teacher provides good leadership and works effectively to provide support and advice for other staff. Pupils' progress is well monitored and there is good revision of targets for those pupils who need them. There is a good link between the co-ordinator and governor who has oversight of matters relating to SEN. All funds and resources are used appropriately to provide support staff and teaching materials. The decision to have a special needs co-ordinator who does not have a full class responsibility is effective and an acceptable use of resources. There is a designated member of staff appointed to co-ordinate the provision for pupils who have EAL. However, the limited time available means there are few opportunities for the manager to influence practice in the classroom to improve significantly the teaching and learning.

53 The policy for performance management is clear and well established. There is an appropriate balance of whole school and personal targets. Recent staff absences, changes in staffing and significant recruitment problems have, however, meant that the updating of some personal targets has been delayed as a result of the teaching commitments of the headteacher.

54 Overall, the governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. They are led by a perceptive chair and hard-working vice chair who is a regular visitor and classroom helper. The governors work well with the headteacher and the relationship is based on open exchange of information and views. The governors have sound knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are developing their strategic role satisfactorily from what was a low base. They ask critical questions about pupils' performance in national tests and then focus their attention and monitoring on particular subjects where there is a concern. Governors have a sound working knowledge of best value principles and apply this appropriately when, for example, comparing the school's results with other schools, canvassing the views of parents and seeking tenders for major spending decisions.

55 Staffing levels in the school are satisfactory and there are sufficient teachers to teach the curriculum. There is a weakness of expertise to manage all of the subjects of the curriculum because a number of key teachers have left over the last few years. There are sufficient classroom assistants to support the particular needs of pupils and they are mostly used well and effectively in their role.

56 The school accommodation remains good despite the impact of the damage caused by the recent fire. This has prevented the use of four classrooms. The school has minimised the impact of this by the sensible use of alternative areas, which while not ideal, has meant that lessons have still been taught. Classrooms otherwise provide ample space for a range of activities and the storage of materials and learning resources. Specialist facilities, such as the computer suite and a library are very well furnished and equipped, although the library offers only limited access to classes, because of its use as a teaching area during the present restrictions. Areas are kept clean and well maintained. External areas are good with expansive grassed and hard surfaced areas for play and formal team sports. Funding has now been secured to build two all-weather sports pitches and changing facilities.

57 Resources for learning are satisfactory. The quantity of resources was badly depleted by the fire and is being gradually rebuilt. Despite this, the quality of resources is good and they are well managed in English and ICT, and for pupils with SEN. The quality of equipment in physical education is good and there is improvement in large apparatus. Resources have improved in design and technology since the last inspection.

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

58 In order to improve standards and the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- 1) Raise standards and pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science with particular emphasis on the work of the above average pupils by:
  - a) ensuring that the work provided for the above average pupils in all three subjects builds more effectively on what they already know, understand and can do
  - b) in English, for all pupils, ensuring that spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught systematically throughout the school, more opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their independent writing, engage in discussion and debate and develop greater understanding of what they read
  - c) in mathematics, for all pupils, increasing the depth and coverage of pupils' work in shape, space and measures and handling data and
  - d) in mathematics and science, for all pupils, placing greater emphasis on developing the use and application of pupils' skills in problem solving.  
Paragraphs 8, 27, 61-3, 73-4, 80, 82.
  
- 2) Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness of monitoring by:
  - a) sharpening the focus and increasing the rigour of monitoring
  - b) checking pupils' work more effectively to highlight areas for improvement,
  - c) extending the role of subject co-ordinators to include opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects
  - d) raising the expectations of all teachers with regard to what above average pupils can achieve.
  - e) ensuring that all agreed procedures to develop learning are applied consistently across all classes
  - f) making sure that all teachers new to the school are clear about what they need to do to improve standards.
  - g) maintaining efforts to recruit staff, including the specialist teachers for pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition  
Paragraphs 19, 20, 23, 27, 50-1, 55, 65, 68, 72, 74, 83, 96-7.
  
- 3) \*Continue with efforts to improve the attendance of the small but significant minority of regular absentees and pupils taking extended holidays in term time.  
Paragraphs 15, 39, 46.

**In addition to the key issues above the school should also consider these less significant weaknesses for inclusion in the action plan**

\*Increase the use of computing skills in general classroom lessons to consolidate and extend learning in all subjects (Paragraphs 9, 65, 75, 83, 91, 100)

For pupils who are at the early stages of English language acquisition, monitor and assess more effectively pupils' acquisition of English and review the occasional withdrawal of younger pupils from the whole of the literacy lesson to ensure that they have greater access to the full English curriculum (Paragraphs 19, 43)

\*Develop whole-school assessment systems in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. (Paragraphs 10, 40-1, 87, 97, 99, 102, 115)

Implement a recording procedure to report any racially motivated incidents (Paragraph 38)

**\*Indicates that the school has recognised these issues and has already included them its development plan.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	60
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	0	7	21	28	3	1	0
Percentage	0	11.7	35	46.7	5	1.7	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	234
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	95

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	102

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	125

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.7
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	29	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	17	22
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	29	35	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (46)	56 (58)	65 (81)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	17	14
	Girls	14	18	15
	Total	21	35	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	34 (53)	56 (47)	47 (54)
	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
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
110
0
21
10
0
3
0
0
49
25
0
10
6
2
0
0

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0



No ethnic group recorded
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0
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0
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0
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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: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

#### Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	205

### Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	703,348
Total expenditure	671,700
Expenditure per pupil	2,544
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,034
Balance carried forward to next year	59,768

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### 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	7

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

235

Number of questionnaires returned

83

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	41	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	46	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	45	6	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	49	19	7	5
The teaching is good.	55	35	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	41	17	7	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	34	0	1	7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	35	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	36	39	14	5	6
The school is well led and managed.	54	31	7	1	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	43	7	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	41	12	5	12

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **ENGLISH**

59 Standards are well below the national average overall. They are below average in speaking and listening and reading by the end of Year 6 but are well below average in writing. Very few pupils attain the higher level 5 in national tests and this depresses the overall standards. Standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection. Since then, changes in the school's population have influenced recent results. Pupils arrive at the school with standards that are well below the expectations for seven-year olds. In addition, there is a much higher proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), a higher proportion with special educational needs (SEN) and a higher than average rate of late movement into the school. Good records maintained by the school show pupils who spend the full four years at the school make better progress than those who do not. Pupils who have SEN achieve well and the achievements of pupils who have EAL are satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching, particularly in Year 5, where pupils make good progress.

60 The school has satisfactorily adopted the national strategy for literacy but frequent staffing changes have led to some inconsistencies in the way it is implemented. Work is not always well matched to the different levels of attainment and there is some repetition of work without improvement. Recent systems for monitoring pupils' work and setting individual targets are supported by an improved planning structure. These measures put the school in a good position to improve standards.

61 Standards in speaking and listening are below what is expected by the end of Year 6. Many pupils have very low communication and language skills when they arrive at the school. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to listen and most pupils respond politely. There are not enough planned opportunities to encourage pupils to think about what is being said, engage in discussion or to justify their answer. Inspection evidence shows that when pupils have a good chance to talk about their reading and interests, they speak and listen confidently. They make pertinent contributions as group members, providing information and detail from their experience. Effective work is emerging through lessons involving the writing of play scripts and reading them aloud.

62 By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are below the national average. Very few pupils come into school having achieved the higher reading level for their age. Good features from Year 3 through to Year 6 are pupils' confidence in library skills and the enthusiasm which most show for reading. By the end of Year 4, significantly more pupils have achieved this because of the benefit of having sessions with specialist support staff. This is particularly relevant for the pupils with EAL. They are able to read at a level expected for their age, but are less successful at understanding and interpreting text. This slows their progress towards higher levels of attainment. Above average pupils in Years 5 and 6 are enthusiastic and fluent readers but do not have enough opportunities to extend their reading across a wide range of texts or select phrases in order to illustrate their ideas.

63 Overall standards in writing are well below average by the end of Year 6. However, the school has had marked success in improving pupils' presentation and handwriting. This was reported at the last inspection as a weakness but action taken since then has had a good impact. Pupils' writing is clear, with even and joined letters so that it conforms to what is expected as the national average. The range of written work undertaken by pupils has improved since the previous inspection as a result of the school targeting this aspect of pupils' writing. In Year 5, for example, pupils have responded sensitively to poetry. As a result they have produced thoughtful poems with interesting vocabulary and the conventions of writing in verse. In Year 6, above average pupils are making satisfactory progress writing

biographies and autobiographies. By the end of Year 6, however, pupils' independent written work does not sustain ideas or develop them in interesting ways. There is little evidence of average and above average pupils using grammatically complex sentences in their free writing. Across the ability and age range, there are too many spelling and punctuation errors when pupils write independently.

64 Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen during the inspection a third were good, just over a half were satisfactory and a small number were unsatisfactory. In all lessons, planning is good and clearly indicates what pupils are expected to learn. This learning objective is shared with the pupils so they are clear about the lesson content. Pupils are organised into ability sets in Years 5 and 6 and this helps teachers plan work that is better matched to pupils' abilities. In the most effective lessons, teachers question pupils well to ensure that they gain a good understanding of the texts that they read. In a lesson for above average pupils in Year 5 the teacher developed pupils' speaking skills well when working with a play script. Good questioning, for example; 'How was that better than the first performance?' encourages pupils to evaluate their work in order to improve it. All lessons have a suitable whole class recap and review session. There is good use of resources such as shared texts, white boards and flip charts to aid understanding. In the most effective lessons, when pupils are working independently, teachers focus support on particular groups to assess and develop their learning. Pupils are set targets for improvement in various aspects of their work, although there are inconsistencies in their effectiveness across the school. In one Year 3 class, writing targets are specific to the individual and pupils know what they have to do to achieve it. Consequently they are well disposed and motivated to achieving higher standards. In other classes, targets are too general and take little regard of individual ability or need. Support staff are generally used well to help pupils learn, although in a few lessons, their role in whole class sessions is unclear.

65 Where the teaching is less effective or unsatisfactory, there are low expectations of what the above average pupils could achieve and unnecessary repetition of work. This has a negative effect on the rate of pupils' progress. The use of worksheets that do not make enough demands on pupils to write at length, also restrict the progress pupils make in their writing. There are inconsistencies in the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Some of this has been the result of staff changes but in a significant minority of lessons, not enough opportunities are taken to develop these aspects in whole class and group work. There is satisfactory teaching of literacy skills across the curriculum, although more could be done to develop extended writing in subjects such as history and religious education. Pupils have opportunities to develop writing and research skills using computers in the computer suite but there are few opportunities for them to do this in the classroom.

66 A new subject co-ordinator has established a framework for marking, the use of assessment data, a handwriting scheme and planning structure. There has been some success with improvements in the standards of handwriting. Other initiatives are too new to have had a significant impact on standards. Resources are good, with the quality of all levels of reading material improving each year. There is a clear commitment to improvement and the school has identified the right areas for development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

67 Between 1997 and 2002 standards have been well below the national average but comparable with those found in similar schools. Inspection evidence supports this view of standards. Standards on the basis of the 2002 SATS are well below the average for all schools and similar schools. This is mainly due to too few pupils achieving the higher levels, pupil mobility and a higher proportion of pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition in that group of pupils. That depressed the overall standards.

68 On the basis of lessons seen and the scrutiny of available work, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and meets the needs of all pupils. However, changes in

staffing and difficulties with recruitment have resulted in a lack of good and very good quality teaching across the school. Monitoring has not focused rigorously on the quality of teaching and learning.

69 Since the appointment of a new co-ordinator at the start of 2002, the school has worked closely with the local education authority to bring about improvements in the teaching and learning. New schemes of work have been developed, new resources have been purchased and lesson plans now clearly focus on recommendations outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy. These are beginning to impact on raising the standard of teaching across the school and during the inspection week seven out of ten lessons seen were good or better. The quality of teaching in Year 5 was particularly good and pupils make rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils of all attainment levels become enthusiastic mathematicians, eager to explore number shape and measures. Higher attaining pupils quickly grasp complex calculations and operate at the expected level for their ages with a significant number understanding work at a very high level.

70 Recent test results and inspection evidence indicate no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with SEN are given good support from class teachers and support staff. This enables them to take full part in mathematics lessons and to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils who have EAL make similar progress to their peers.

71 By Year 6 pupils understand that the position of a number affects its value and are improving their accuracy when using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Above average pupils understand the relationship between percentages, fractions and decimals and can divide whole numbers by 10, 100 and 1000, working answers out to two and three decimal places. Pupils indicate a good knowledge of place value and operate at the expected level for their ages.

72 Pupils benefit from a range of activities and experiences, which support their learning in work involving shape, space and measures. However, much of this work, particularly in Year 3 and 4, is not challenging enough. As they progress through the school, older pupils become increasingly confident and proficient when using a range of measures. They know how to read calibrated scales with reasonable accuracy in work related to temperature. By Year 6, middle and higher attaining pupils are learning to calculate perimeters, areas and volume using simple formulae accurately.

73 Although pupils interpret graphs, charts and diagrams to explain findings and results there are insufficient well planned opportunities for pupils to reach the expected level in this aspect of their work. As with shape and measure these aspects of mathematics are not given the depth of coverage they should be and this limits the standards pupils are able to reach.

74 The planning of work does not always build successfully on pupils' previous learning. Pupils often repeat work and work is not well matched to the different attainment levels. Above average pupils are not suitably challenged and are often working at the same level as pupils who learn at a much lower rate. Pupils present their work in a neat and well-organised way. Most pupils, however, are often reluctant to explain clearly the strategies they use and find it difficult to understand that they need to show how they have arrived at an answer. Across the subject pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge well to solve challenging problems. These weaknesses limit pupils' progress and affect the standards of attainment they reach.

75 Pupils have some opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects, for example, in geography when comparing the population of European cities and in food technology when weighing out ingredients. However, overall this

is not a strong feature of the provision. Although there is increasing use of ICT to help pupils' learning in mathematics this is not a consistent feature of lessons in the classrooms.

76 Pupils' attitudes towards the subject are generally good. Pupils work for extended lengths of time, and respond with a sense of eagerness and interest during such lessons. In Year 5, pupils respond well to firm and authoritative discipline that encourages them to take an interest in taking on challenging tasks with confidence. Such approaches have a very positive effect on the progress and standards pupils achieve. However, pupils in some Year 3 and 4 classes sometimes become distracted due to a lack of appropriate classroom management, insecure subject knowledge and the lack of challenge.

77 The curriculum for mathematics is satisfactory and enables all pupils to have equal access to the subject. The subject is adequately resourced and allocated an appropriate amount of time. The content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

78 Pupils' attainment on entry to the school shows well below average standards in science. Results from the National Curriculum tests show that standards kept pace with the national trend since 1998 except for 2002 where results for this particular group of pupils were well below the national average. Results had improved in 2000 and 2001 to be below the national average but broadly in line with similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Years 5 and 6, while below the national average, make satisfactory and often good progress and are achieving results similar to years 2000 and 2001. The previous inspection evidence indicated that pupils were in line with the national average but the subsequent results of the 1998 National Curriculum test results were below the national average. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL make good progress overall and are well supported in lessons by learning support assistants. Work is adapted to meet their needs when appropriate.

79 On the basis of the lessons observed, pupils in Year 6 use exploration, observation and investigation to acquire scientific knowledge, understanding and skills appropriately. They carry out fair tests competently. They collect evidence in a variety of ways and are beginning to look for patterns in results in order to draw conclusions. The presentation of their work is good and recording of scientific results makes a good impact on their literacy skills. Most pupils are aware of the effects of microbes and relate them to life situations. They predict that when yeast is added to a bread mixture it will make a difference but only the above average are initially aware that the mixture will rise. Pupils with EAL make a good contribution to lessons about bread stating 'when we make a chapatti it doesn't rise'. They share this experience with other pupils well. Good use is made of ICT when pupils study moulds and bacteria under a microscope although opportunities to use computers are limited to the computer suite.

80 Pupils in Year 5 describe differences in solids, liquids and gasses and in work on evaporation accurately predict changes when a kettle is boiled. They use their mathematical knowledge to measure the water loss. Pupils across the school use a wide range of methods, including diagrams to record and present information. For example, pupils in Year 4 use fair test principles to measure the strength of different supermarket carrier bags and make graphs to record their results. Pupils in Year 3 test a variety of objects and carefully record which are magnetic. Many pupils, however, do not recognise or name some of these objects and well below average writing skills slows down the process of recording.

81 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and often good in lessons where the teaching is imaginative and where teachers use resources well. For example, in a Year 6 lesson below average pupils make good progress in their ability to create a series circuit in a topic on electricity and pupils in Year 5 make good gains in their knowledge of evaporation as a result of good subject knowledge and a dynamic teaching style which moves the lesson on

well. Planning across the school is good and covers all areas of the science curriculum. Most teachers use the introduction of the lessons well to ensure pupils know what is expected of them and by questioning pupils at the end of lessons they consolidate learning effectively. There is a well-balanced scheme of work to aid teachers' planning.

82 Scrutiny of pupils' work reveals some breaks in the continuity of learning and insufficient regular emphasis on scientific enquiry, the interpretation of patterns in data and opportunities for the above average pupils to choose their own lines of enquiry and what apparatus they will need. Most teachers have good relationships with their pupils and generate a good climate for learning so that pupils make satisfactory and often good progress in lessons. Teachers have a high expectation of the presentation of work and use scientific methodology and vocabulary consistently well. Homework is used effectively to consolidate and extend work in lessons and encourage pupils to do their own research.

83 The enthusiastic coordinator has worked hard to maintain standards in the subject, is aware that there is a need to use ICT more to support work and to observe lessons in order to assess what works well and what does not. There has been good analysis of pupils' results in national and school initiated tests in order to identify weaknesses in knowledge and the curriculum has been updated as a result. Monitoring has not yet been sharp enough, however, to identify and remedy some inconsistencies in teaching and learning within and across year groups.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84 Standards are similar to those expected for pupils' age and have improved since the last inspection. The achievements of all pupils are satisfactory with some good achievement in watercolour painting technique, observational drawing and pattern design, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Improvement has been brought about by;

- focused in-service training that has developed teachers' knowledge and confidence successfully
- better planning based on national guidelines and
- the raising of the profile of the subject across the school.

85 The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The one lesson seen was taken by an artist in residence and was good. His very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject had a positive impact on pupils' progress in the lesson. The above average pupils showed good imagination and produced some interesting designs using black and white shapes. Discussion with pupils indicates that they are proud of their achievements and in the lesson seen they were enthusiastic and keen to improve their work. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and work in pupils' folders and on display around the school indicates that key skills are developed satisfactorily as pupils move from year to year. The ability to draw the human face and body in good proportion in Year 6, for example, shows good development from work in Year 3.

86 All pupils have sketchbooks and these have helped pupils develop sound observational skills in a progressive way across the year groups. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced when gaining inspiration from the work of great artists. There is, for example, some very good pastel work in the style of Picasso and Cézanne. Pupils in Year 6 have produced an attractive co-operative frieze in the style of Breughal. Teachers do not use computers enough to develop learning in the subject.

87 An after-school art club run by an artist in residence and attended by teachers and pupils has helped raise the profile of the subject throughout the school. It has also increased the confidence and expertise of the teachers and inspired them to try out new techniques and experiment with new materials. The artist also takes lessons across the school and these develop pupils' skills and enthusiasm for the subject well. Due to staffing difficulties, the

subject is co-ordinated on a temporary basis by the headteacher. Whilst teachers' planning indicates that work is assessed informally in lessons, there is no whole-school assessment system to track pupils' progress from year to year. This makes it difficult for teachers to build firmly on what pupils already know and can do.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88 Standards are now similar to those expected for pupils ages. Pupils, including those with SEN and those with EAL, make satisfactory progress overall. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below those expected and a key issue for the school to address. Standards of attainment and progress are now more consistent across the school. The improvement is due to the higher profile of design and technology within the school and the importance the school has placed on developing the confidence and expertise of teachers to deliver the subject.

89 Pupils' skills and understanding develop satisfactorily as they move through the school and by Year 6 they use design specification sheets well when making objects such as slippers. Good, well prepared, designs allied to testing of suitable materials for strength, warmth, size, safety and wear enable most pupils to produce carefully made slippers of good quality. Work on fairgrounds links well to work in science and pupils use switches, circuits and motors to make their model rides move appropriately. They measure and cut materials with reasonable accuracy using appropriate joints for model shelters constructed for a variety of climates and conditions. Pupils in Year 5 use their imagination well when successfully producing a range of working musical instruments. Carefully made pop-up cards in Year 4 connect well to literacy story work and working torches of different designs enhance science concepts. Pupils in Year 3 produce attractively decorated photograph frames and stands. Pupils throughout the school select and use a suitable range of tools and materials independently and have a good awareness of health and safety

90 Planning and evaluation sheets are used throughout the school and enable pupils to organise their ideas well and help them consider the whole design process and evaluate their finished work. For example, in Year 5 when pupils design and make biscuits, they weigh and measure different ingredients and consider shape, thickness and appearance. They successfully identify ways to attract a customer when designing packages for their biscuit products.

91 The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do are now more consistent and planning is good. Most teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding and are confident in their explanations to pupils. Well-prepared resources such as the range of resources used in the construction of shelters when assembling a tent are used well in lessons. These careful preparations ensure a high level of interest for pupils and a brisk pace to lessons. Pupils are given opportunities to discuss their ideas and develop their designs in both class and group sessions, although this aspect of learning could be developed more. Teachers do not make enough use of computers to develop work in the subject. Pupils cooperate well with others on tasks and share resources well.

92 The scheme of work provides good guidance and support to teachers and satisfactory resources are available throughout the school. The scheme enables teachers to plan skills progressively from year to year and activities provide appropriate challenge for all year groups. Individual folders of pupils' work are passed on to the next teacher and the hard working and enthusiastic co-ordinator has good plans to continue to improve standards. The recent fire has delayed the setting up and development of the planned classroom exclusively for design and technology.



## **GEOGRAPHY**

93 Standards in geography are as expected for pupils in Year 6. Pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, make satisfactory progress in their general knowledge of the subject as they move through the school. Some pupils are hampered by weaknesses in their writing skills and vocabulary, which restrict their ability to record their work. The standards found at the last inspection have been maintained.

94 When shown pictures of landscapes, Year 6 pupils apply their knowledge successfully to identify features such as mountains, rivers and valleys. They make an acceptable connection between these features and how people who live there earn a living. Using clues such as trees and building styles, more able pupils correctly deduce whether their picture is in Britain or abroad. Pupils in Year 5 have studied the work of rivers and talk confidently about key features of river systems. They have a sound technical vocabulary and use words such as 'tributary', 'mouth' and 'delta' correctly. By demonstrating a satisfactory understanding of four-figure references and a key pupils show they have the mapping skills expected for their age.

95 Although pupils have appropriate knowledge of the subject, the skills to enable them to compare regions or give reasons for settlements, are areas for improvement. So too, pupils have limited knowledge of the moral and social consequences of natural disasters and environmental damage due to human activity. Consequently, geography work lacks the range and depth of knowledge needed to raise standards to the next level.

96 Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Connections with other subjects, such as co-ordinates in mathematics, are well made. Opportunities to practise different forms of writing are not fully exploited and there are limited opportunities for pupils to use their research skills to find information in reference books and on computer websites. Relationships are good, with effective classroom management and control in Years 5 and 6. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but because the new system is not applied consistently, it rarely shows pupils what they have to do to improve their work. The school has adopted nationally recommended guidelines as its scheme of work and this is helping teachers plan experiences that develop key skills more effectively from year to year.

97 Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. There is no whole school system to check how well pupils are doing in the subject and this makes it difficult for teachers to build on what is already known. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to observe teaching across the school and so is not fully aware of what is working well and what is not.

## **HISTORY**

98 The school has maintained satisfactory standards since the last inspection. All pupils make reasonable progress so that by the end of Year 6, their knowledge of people and places they have studied is as expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in lessons where they have additional adult support. This allows them to discuss their work in a small group situation. Pupils who have EAL make satisfactory progress.

99 Through their studies of Romans, Greeks and Egyptians, pupils achieve an acceptably well- developed sense of the past and identify accurately the events and features which make people memorable. Pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of the importance of archaeology as a source of information about the past; for example pupils gained good knowledge of certain characteristics of Ancient Greek life through studying Greek pottery. In Year 3 there is good teaching of the skills for studying history. Pupils have good opportunities to handle pictures and real objects in order to determine what they were used for. Such activities have a good impact on pupils' sense of change over time. In less

effective teaching, in other year groups, there is some repetition of skills at a similar level since undue account has been taken of what pupils already know. This highlights the lack of a whole school system to track pupils' progress in the subject.

100 Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Through brisk recall of previous work, pupils are brought into lessons quickly. Questioning for information is effective, with appropriate vocabulary emerging. Some Year 6 pupils use 'exile', 'execute' and 'monarch' correctly when comparing the powers of Queen Elizabeth I and II. However, in some instances, pupils are not given enough opportunities to justify their answer. Consequently, above average pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. Pupils like history and bring a fund of information into school from places they have visited with their parents or the school. Lessons do not fully exploit this fund of information. The school recognises the need to make greater use of ICT and pupils' research skills as areas for improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

101 By the end of Year 6, attainment in ICT is broadly in line with the nationally expected levels. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection, although for the school to keep pace with the rapidly rising national expectation represents at least satisfactory progress.

102 Pupils enter the school with below average attainment and require considerable initial support in Year 3 to save, open and print their work. As a result of the good facilities in the computer suite and the invaluable support and expertise of the suite based technician, they make good progress in their confidence and ability. This progress is at least satisfactory as they move through the school but in a few classes progress is less good owing to lack of expertise by the teacher. At the time of the inspection, it was only possible to see teaching in the computer suite as the few class-based computers had been lost in the recent fire. Generally, however, the lack of sufficient class based computers limits the opportunities for pupils to revisit and improve their work or to use computers in other subjects on a regular basis. There were a few instances of this seen in the computer suite and in the scrutiny of work, for example, in science, geography and music. The school has well-advanced plans for purchasing a mobile system of lap top computers for use in classrooms and this allied to the newly arrived interactive whiteboards and projectors should provide better opportunities for pupils to develop their skills.

103 Pupils in Year 6 draft their work directly onto the screen and understand how to control how their work looks. They change the type and size of the font and amend and develop their screen images. Pupils in Year 5 download information for their topic on 'Ancient Egypt' from CD-ROMs and effectively access controlled Internet sites for further data. They design effective adverts and posters for their biscuit products from design and technology lessons; this gives support to work in literacy as they make up slogans and phrases. The pace of work for many pupils, however, is slowed by their below average language skills. Pupils enlarge, colour and print their finished advert demonstrating confident keyboard skills. When pupils in Year 4 amend a story text changing gender, most load the programme unaided. Poor spelling skills means continual support is required from the class teacher and technician. When creating a musical sequence pupils select instruments for composition and accurately use the mouse to scroll, select functions, choose icons, log on and save their work.

104 In the lessons seen the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and most demonstrate sound knowledge. They are very well supported by the technician who makes a significant impact upon learning by preparing programmes and by teaching pupils during the sessions. He has prepared good support documents for pupils and staff and has carefully catalogued available resources. These assist teachers well in their subject planning. In the most effective

lessons, there is good planning, secure subject knowledge and the evidence of a strong link to previous learning.

105 Pupils have good attitudes to their work on computers and cooperate well in pairs to achieve a given task. They listen well in lessons in the computer suite and treat resources with consideration and care.

106 Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator has received appropriate training and is very enthusiastic about the subject. She is aware of the need to improve staff expertise in order to raise standards further but progress has been slowed owing to considerable recent staff changes. The introduction of assessment grids for pupils to evaluate their own work is having a good impact on progress and each pupil's personal portfolio helps teachers to match work to pupils' needs.

## **MUSIC**

107 Standards in music have been maintained since the previous inspection and pupils attain the expected standards for their age throughout the school. Most pupils enjoy music and they have good attitudes in lessons and large group singing activities. Standards in singing are good and pupils are confident when singing and performing. Most pupils make at least satisfactory progress in musical appreciation and older pupils identify different instruments accurately in music played to them.

108 By Year 6, pupils have acquired a repertoire of songs, singing in tune with appropriate control. Pupils describe what they hear using terms such as pitch, dynamics and speed accurately. They identify how musical elements and resources are used to communicate mood or effect and use their imagination well when creating their own street cry, set to a melody using the pentatonic scale. Pupils in Year 5 have a good recall of technical vocabulary such as reductive and ostinato from previous lessons. They are attentive listeners and play a series of different chords and a good range of musical instruments. They recognise and explore relationships between sounds to create particular effects and seek to improve their compositions. Pupils in Year 4 know a range of simple warm up songs which start lessons well. When singing 'Hot potato' they vary their pitch and sing enthusiastically. They repeat patterns on a glockenspiel and follow instructions carefully. Working with a partner they devise their own clapping and action games and perform them to the rest of the class. They sing in tune, follow a melody well and demonstrate good imagination in their clapping rhythms.

109 The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was mostly good. One teacher who has very good subject knowledge and very good personal singing and musical abilities takes many of the lessons. This has a good impact on pupils' progress. Teachers use praise well to encourage pupils and have high expectations of behaviour which is good when lessons are well paced, well planned and involve pupils actively in the sessions.

110 Leadership and management are sound. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that the scheme of work gives good support and encouragement to non-specialist teachers. Resources are good and the organisation of visiting musicians for woodwind and stringed instruments makes a good impact upon the progress of high attaining pupils. All pupils, including those with SEN and those who have EAL have equal access to these additional musical activities. One group of pupils is taken lessons on the sitar. This contributes well to pupils' awareness of music from other cultures.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111 Standards are broadly similar to those reported in the last inspection and are similar to those expected for pupils' age. Only games, gymnastics and swimming were observed during this inspection. In the last inspection, good work was reported in dance but this

aspect was not in focus during this inspection. The swimming lesson for Years 5 and 6 was the first for pupils this term. All pupils, irrespective of whether they could swim or not, were confident and comfortable in the water. Appropriate safety aspects were stressed by teachers and staff based at the baths. Most of the group could swim at least 12 metres using a stroke of their choice. Records indicate that the majority of pupils last year were able to swim the expected 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

112 The achievements of all pupils, including those who have SEN and EAL are satisfactory overall with good achievement in the ball skills necessary for football and netball. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching in Year 5 and in other year groups when a coach and teacher with good subject knowledge takes lessons. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to improve. The subject develops their social skills well by providing opportunities for competition and co-operation in groups to achieve a common aim.

113 In a good lesson for pupils in Year 5, they show a secure and well-held balance in an arch shape and good 'coiled spring' jumps. New learning took place as pupils were introduced to the correct technique for performing a forward roll. Pupils were proud when they succeeded and shared their appreciation of the work of others by spontaneous applause. There was good emphasis on the quality of performance and pupils were encouraged to evaluate their performance and learn from each other. Other teachers do not explore this element of learning in the subject so well.

114 In most lessons, the focus of the teaching was on the skills needed to play football, basketball and netball. In these lessons teaching varied from very good to unsatisfactory but was mostly satisfactory. In a very good lesson to teach the ball control and techniques necessary for basketball the very good subject knowledge and expertise of the teacher impacted well on pupils' achievements. Skills were developed progressively and there were high expectations of what the pupils could achieve. This impact of knowledge and expertise was also evident in a lesson on football skills taken by a player from a local professional club. In an unsatisfactory lesson, there was little direct teaching of skills, lesson objectives were not developed and the pace of activity was too slow.

115 Teachers' planning emphasises all aspects of the subject appropriately and is securely based on national and local authority guidance. There is currently no permanent co-ordinator for the subject, which is being overseen by the headteacher. There has been some good in-service training for the teachers on the use of the good large gymnastics equipment recently installed. There are no whole-school assessment systems to track pupils' achievements and this makes it difficult to ensure that key skills are developed progressively from one year to the next.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116 Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality and provision for religious education. Although pupils standards in writing limit their overall attainment level their knowledge and understanding of the subject is now above the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Most pupils, including those with SEN and those who have EAL, make good progress and achieve well.

117 Throughout the school pupils understanding of other religions and faiths is now developed well. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity are studied. Pupils learn about the customs, symbols, festivals, holy books and buildings of major religions. This helps pupils to develop a tolerance and deeper understanding of the many ways people express their religion and communicate with their God. The study of important festivals, such as Ramadan, Eid, Divali and Christmas, all play an important part in helping pupils to develop their understanding of the different traditions and religions.

118 Teaching overall is good and results in pupils showing interest and enthusiasm for their work in religious education. Discussions and reflections on religious issues make a very important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Effective teaching encourages pupils to consider the effect that religion can have on people's lives as they study the Ten Commandments, the pillars of Islam and link these with the need for their own rules in school. A deeper understanding of prayer and its significance are taught adding to pupils understanding of religion. This was used particularly well to help pupils cope with their anger, shock and sadness when vandals burnt down part of their school. The reading and writing of prayers and poems provided pupils with an outlet for their feelings and helped them come to terms with tragedy and develop an understanding that a person's faith can effect the way they act and feel.

119 Discussions with pupils in Year 6 indicate that the above average pupils now make very good progress in exploring similarities and differences in some of the major religions and the effect people's beliefs can have on their lives. Sensitive and thoughtful teaching has enabled Muslim and Christian pupils to share opinions and ideas about the role of religion in major world events, such as the Anglo Catholic conflict in Ireland and the Al Qaeda bombings in America. Pupils' comments indicated a considerable respect for each other's religions and an ability to separate personal beliefs from those of extremists.