

INSPECTION REPORT

South Green Junior School

Billericay, Essex

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114946

Headteacher: Miss Janet Mackintosh

Reporting inspector: Alan Andrews
6436

Dates of inspection: 4th – 6th November 2002

Inspection number: 247514

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:	7-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hickstars Lane South Green Billericay Essex
Postcode:	CM12 9RJ
Telephone number:	01277 651826
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jill Rose
Date of previous inspection:	12 th June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6436	Alan Andrews	Registered inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9619	Bob Miller	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10090	Kath Beck	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
7694	Martyn Richards	Team inspector	Science Physical education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	

32162	Adrienne Beavis	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

South Green Junior School is about the same size as most other primary schools. Currently it has 230 girls and boys on roll aged seven to eleven. Most attended the adjacent infant school and come from mixed backgrounds, including local authority accommodation and private housing. Approximately 15 per cent of the children are from outside the school's recognised catchment area, mainly from nearby Laindon, Wickford and north Basildon. Overall, the school has an even number of girls and boys. They are taught in eight single-age classes, two in each year group. Their attainment on entry is generally above average. The percentage of children at the school known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage identified as having special educational needs, including those with statements of special need, is broadly in line with the national average. A small number of children are from ethnic minorities and traveller communities.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

South Green is an effective school trying hard, with increasing success, to overcome its many challenges. A positive climate for learning is created and the headteacher, governors and staff work hard to bring about improvements. Standards are rising, albeit slowly, in English, mathematics and science. The new computer suite is having a positive impact on standards in information and communication technology. Overall, teaching is satisfactory, although some high quality teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. The behaviour of the children is good. Parents are generally satisfied with the school, but there are reservations about leadership and management and the information they receive about their child's progress. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children enjoy school and their behaviour is good.
- There is some high quality teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Children's attainments in history and physical education are good.
- There is good provision for children's social development and for information and communication technology.
- There are good procedures for monitoring attendance and behaviour.
- A good range of extra curricular activities enhances children's learning experiences.

What could be improved

- Mental arithmetic and the use and application of numeracy skills. *
- Writing and general presentation of work. *
- Standards in art and design. *
- The use of assessment to inform teachers' planning. *
- The provision in some lessons for brighter children and those with special educational needs. *
- The provision for multicultural education, especially through the arts curriculum. *

** Identified in the school development plan. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved in a number of respects since the last inspection in June 2000. It is providing a satisfactory standard of education. Lessons are now an appropriate length and this has improved the balance of the curriculum. Leadership and management is satisfactory and teaching is monitored through a systematic programme of lesson observations. Schemes of work have been introduced for all subjects and governors visit the school regularly to see teachers at work. The achievement of children in Years 5 and 6 is now better. The high turnover of staff is being coped with well and teaching in Year 5 has improved significantly. Assessment of children's progress is satisfactory, but the information gained is not always used effectively to inform teachers' planning. In some lessons, teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of brighter children and those with special educational needs. The school has worked hard to raise standards in children's writing, with some success. However, many children still find this area of work difficult and more needs to be done. Children's attitudes to their

learning have improved and the school's behaviour policy is consistently applied. There is still too little provision to help children appreciate the multicultural nature of life in Britain today.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	B	C	E
mathematics	D	D	C	E
science	C	C	C	D

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

The school's 2001 results of national tests at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science were in line with the national average. The percentage of children reaching the higher levels of attainment in the tests in all three subjects was also in line with most schools. When compared to similar schools a different picture emerges. The results were well below the average in English and mathematics and below the average in science. However, during the four year period to 2001, the trend in the percentage of children reaching average levels in the tests was up, although it fluctuated somewhat in English. There have been considerable disruptions because of staff changes in recent years, but the school has worked hard to raise standards. It expects its 2002 results in national tests to be again in line with the national average and predicted this because of the higher than usual number of children with statements of special educational needs.

Lesson observations and scrutiny of children's work shows that standards are rising, albeit slowly. The above average attainment on entry is not sustained in all classes in Years 3 and 4, but the pace of children's achievements quickens considerably in Years 5 and 6. This is due mainly to some high quality teaching that includes new staff. In the current Year 6, attainments in English are satisfactory overall. Speaking and listening skills are above average, reading skills are mostly average, but writing skills are below average and this hinders progress in all subjects. Attainments in mathematics and science are in line with national expectations for the children's age. The school's targets for 2003 are challenging. However, there is the potential for standards in all three subjects in the future to rise at a quicker rate because of the impact of recent staff changes.

At age eleven, children's attainment in information and communication technology is in line with that of most schools, but use of the new computer suite means that children are now making good progress and standards are rising quickly. In design and technology, geography and music children's attainment at age eleven is in line with that expected nationally, whilst in history and physical education it is good. In religious education, children's attainment meets that expected in the local syllabus. However, in art and design children's attainment at age eleven is below that found in most schools, mainly because there are not enough opportunities for them to use their imagination, to experiment and to develop creatively.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most children enjoy school and show interest in learning.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good. Children are kind and considerate towards one another and there

classrooms	are relatively few incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. When given the opportunity, children undertake responsibility well.
Attendance	Good. Unexplained absences are followed up on a daily basis.

A revised policy for behaviour has been agreed following consultation with parents and children. The introduction of a School Council, as well as Class Councils, provides regular opportunities for children to share ideas about how to improve the school. Lessons start and finish on time. The school promotes good attendance well, but a small number of children are persistently late.

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.

A number of teachers are new to the school, but are settling quickly to their tasks. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, in almost half the lessons seen it was good or better. Some good teaching was seen in all year groups, but the best was in Years 5 and 6 where some was of a high quality. Features of this teaching included very good subject knowledge, high expectations of what the children could achieve and imaginative activities that held their interest. Some unsatisfactory teaching was seen in one Year 3 class. This was because the work was not matched sufficiently well to children's needs and time was lost in managing and controlling the class. Literacy and numeracy lessons are taught satisfactorily overall. In some lessons, brighter children are not challenged and extended enough. In some classes also, the work given to children with special educational needs is not pitched at the right level and they struggle to keep up.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The range of activities provided outside of school time is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Individual education plans are written well. Responsibility for their implementation depends on the class teacher.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All children are fluent English speakers and there is no specific provision for these children.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Arrangements for the promotion of children's personal development are effective. Provision for their spiritual, moral and cultural development is satisfactory, whilst that for their social development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A positive climate for learning is created and children are cared for well.

Parents are satisfied with the school and with its expectation that children will work hard and do their best. They are consulted about developments as part of the school's efforts to build an effective partnership with them. The curriculum gives appropriate emphasis to literacy and numeracy. Children's

learning experiences are enhanced through the use of visitors and visits to places of interest. The school's procedures for assessing children's attainments and the progress they make are satisfactory, but the information gained is not used well enough by all teachers when planning work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The interests of the children are put first and a positive climate for learning is created.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its performance carefully so as to inform decision making.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are directed correctly to the priorities set out in the school development plan.

The school has a satisfactory level of teaching staff, although half of the class teachers are new. Support staff make a significant contribution to the general life of the school as well as to children's progress. Accommodation and learning resources are good and used effectively. The newly formed senior management team is already having a positive impact and has the potential to do more. Some subject co-ordinators provide good leadership in their areas of the curriculum. The budget is managed well. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value effectively. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school and behave well. They are expected to work hard. Parents feel they can approach the school with any problems they may have. They feel that the teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about their child's progress. The leadership and management.

Inspection evidence supports the first three of the parents' positive views. Some high quality teaching was observed, but overall, it was judged it to be satisfactory. Inspectors found that the annual reports to parents provide an accurate picture of each child's progress and include targets for the child to aim for. They judged leadership and management to be satisfactory overall, but that more needs to be done to reassure parents. The school is on course to achieve this.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry of most children is above that typical for their age. The school is coping effectively with a high turnover of staff. New teachers who arrived this term are settling well and quickly beginning to have a positive impact on children's achievements.
2. The previous inspection found significant underachievement amongst older children, due largely to the unsatisfactory level of teaching in Year 5. In both Years 5 and 6, higher and lower attaining children did not learn as well as they should because their needs were not fully met in lessons. By age eleven, children's attainments in English, mathematics and science were judged to be in line with the national averages. Given their above average attainment on entry, key issues in the report included the need to raise standards in writing and to improve the achievement of children in Years 5 and 6.
3. The school's 2001 national test results in English, mathematics and science for children aged eleven were in line with most schools. The percentage of children reaching the higher levels of attainment in the tests in all three subjects was also broadly in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools, the results showed a different picture. In both English and mathematics they were well below the average whilst in science they were below average. However, during the period 1997 to 2001, the trend in the test results in all three subjects was up, although it fluctuated somewhat in English. The school has worked hard to raise standards, but expects its 2002 results in national tests to be again in line with national averages. It was expecting this because of the higher than usual number of children with statements of special educational needs within the year group concerned.
4. Observation of lessons and scrutiny of work shows that standards are rising, albeit slowly. This situation has been achieved in spite of difficulties in appointing permanent staff. Although above average levels of attainment are not sustained consistently in all classes in Years 3 and 4, the pace of learning quickens considerably in Years 5 and 6. This is due mainly to some high quality teaching that should continue to have a significant impact. In the current Year 6, attainments in English are average overall. They are also average in mathematics and science. However, there is the potential for standards to rise at a quicker rate as the impact of recent staff changes takes hold.
5. The school analyses data carefully to find reasons for its results and so improve standards. Children's progress is checked carefully and this has led staff to realise that boys tend to achieve less well than girls, particularly in writing. Action is being taken to rectify this with some success.
6. Children speak clearly and listen attentively to others. They usually enjoy talking to visitors about their work and interests. By age eleven, most are confident speakers and many use a good range of vocabulary to convey meaning. Their speaking and listening skills are generally better than those expected nationally for their age. They contribute to discussions well and are prepared to ask questions of their own.

7. Children enjoy stories and most read regularly at home as well as at school. By age eleven, their reading skills are mainly in line with those expected for their age. Many read fluently and with growing confidence. Brighter children sometimes read aloud with considerable expression. Most children have a favourite author, but the reading programmes for the more able readers do not do enough to widen their experience and knowledge of literature.
8. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to improve standards in writing, particularly amongst the boys. There have been improvements, but many children still have considerable difficulty with this area of their work and it hinders their progress in all subjects. Teachers ensure that they write for a range of purposes and have opportunities to plan their work. This leads to improvement, but by age eleven children's writing skills are generally below average. Presentation of work is often untidy. Teachers give appropriate attention to spelling and grammatical structure, yet children make too many simple errors.
9. In both mathematics and science, children's attainment at age eleven is in line with the national average. However, their mental arithmetic skills are unsatisfactory and more needs to be done to improve their use and application of numeracy skills. The science programme has been refined and improved. This is beneficial and helping to raise standards. Children enjoy the practical activities and know that it is important to make sure that experiments are fair and reliable. They particularly like finding out whether their predictions about what might happen in an experiment are confirmed by the results.
10. At age eleven, children's attainment in information and communication technology is in line with that expected nationally. However, the availability of the new computer suite means that children are now making good progress and standards are rising quickly. Considerable enthusiasm is shown for the subject and children are becoming increasingly confident in their use of the equipment.
11. In design and technology, geography and music, children's attainment at age eleven is in line with that expected nationally. Music in the school benefits from a thriving choir, an instrumental group and a recorder group. In addition, some children receive lessons in guitar and keyboard from a visiting specialist. In history and physical education, children's attainment at age eleven is above that expected for their age. Activities in these subjects often capture children's interest and they make good progress in their learning. In religious education, children's attainment meets those expected in the local syllabus. However, in art and design, children's attainment at age eleven is below that found in most schools. This is mainly because there are not enough opportunities for them to use their own imagination, to experiment and to develop creatively.
12. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to ensure that the needs of brighter children are fully met. The progress of such children is tracked carefully, but the work set in some classes does not challenge and extend them enough. When this happens, their progress is slower than it should be. Likewise, the work undertaken by children with special educational needs is not always at the right level for them. As a result, they struggle to keep up.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Children's attitudes to their learning are satisfactory. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when they were found to be unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. The majority of children, including those with special educational needs, enjoy coming to school. Most show interest and pleasure in learning throughout the range of school activities.
14. Behaviour has improved since the last inspection. This is again particularly so in Years 5 and 6 and is linked in part to the higher quality of teaching and classroom management of the children. No bullying, racism or other oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. There are relatively few incidents of inappropriate behaviour reported. Most parents agree that behaviour is good at the school. Almost all children are polite and friendly and follow instructions carefully. They move around the school in a generally orderly manner and show respect for their own property and that of others.
15. Playtimes and lunchtimes are pleasant, social occasions, where children socialise and play games together. The older children look after the younger ones and are given other suitable opportunities to show initiative and develop personal responsibility. These include undertaking tasks, such as helping clear away after lunch, although Year 6 girls mainly perform these. Monitor duties in class, such as delivering registers to the office, are more equally divided between boys and girls. The opportunities for children's personal development have improved since the previous inspection with the introduction of a School Council as well as Class Councils. These forums give children regular opportunities to share ideas with staff in an effort to make continuous improvements in and around the school. An example is the re-organisation of playground activities in order that football does not dominate the whole area.
16. Relationships are sound among the children and staff and with each other. Most children are kind and considerate towards one another and show respect for teachers and visitors alike. In Years 5 and 6 most children are attentive and concentrate well. In Years 3 and 4, this is not always the case. This is due, in the main, to the quality of the teaching. In Years 5 and 6, children contribute their ideas in class discussions and work together well in small groups. They listen carefully whilst their classmates are talking and are prepared to share ideas and resources.
17. The attendance rate at the school is approximately 96 per cent and an improvement on the previous year. This is good and well above the current national average. However, around 7 per cent of children are persistently late for school. Punctuality has been identified as an area for improvement in the current school development plan. Lessons start and finish on time.
18. Children show respect and care for each other in lessons and in the playground. They are alert to each other's feelings and have a sound understanding of what is right or wrong to do or say. They say sorry when in the wrong and are courteous to visitors and teachers. They take evident delight in some of their lessons, a vibrant Year 6 dance lesson for example, and identify with the suffering of others, such as the Kindertransport children.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The present picture of teaching is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection that judged it unsatisfactory overall with a particular need to improve teaching in Year 5. A number of the current teachers are new to the school and priority is rightly given to helping them settle quickly to their tasks. Some high quality teaching was seen during the inspection and is having a positive impact on children's learning. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, in almost half the lessons observed teaching was good or better. Some good teaching was seen in all year groups. The strongest teaching was in Years 5 and 6 where one in five of the lessons observed was very good and two were excellent.
20. The school checks the progress of its brighter children carefully, but in some lessons their tasks are not sufficiently challenging and this hinders their progress. In some classes, the work for children with special educational needs is not matched closely enough to the targets identified in their individual education plans. As a result, they struggle to complete the tasks and do not make the progress they should. In one Year 3 class, some unsatisfactory teaching was seen in English and science and in personal, social and health education. Additional evidence about teaching was obtained from scrutiny of children's work in all classes. This indicates that there has been some high quality teaching, but that over time it has mainly been satisfactory.
21. Most lessons have a clear structure and this helps children to make progress. Lessons are generally planned well and often start with an explanation of what is to be learned and how this links with previous work. Resources are prepared carefully and are readily available when required. The good teaching begins with secure subject knowledge, interesting activities and an expectation that children will work hard and behave well. Most children respond positively to this and take a pride in their achievements. Learning support assistants are deployed effectively and make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Features of the high quality teaching include:
- a high level of subject expertise shared very effectively with the children. Examples of this were seen in music and dance lessons;
 - imaginative and demanding tasks that motivate children to do their best. An example of this was observed in a Year 6 geography lesson on the key features of the River Chelmer. Another example was seen in a Year 5 history lesson in which children dressed up as well known historical characters and debated why they deserved to be featured on bank notes;
 - high expectations of what the children could achieve in the time available;
 - an emphasis on building up skills systematically, as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson about calculating area;
 - on-going feedback to children so that they know how to improve;
 - a real sense of enjoyment that encourages children to think hard and to develop skills effectively.
- The unsatisfactory teaching results mainly from:
- tasks not matched appropriately to the needs and abilities of the children;
 - difficulty in managing and controlling children so that time is lost in reprimanding them.
22. Overall, national initiatives in literacy and numeracy have been introduced satisfactorily, but opportunities are sometimes lost to reinforce literacy skills across the curriculum.

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

23. At the time of the last inspection, the curriculum was satisfactory and met statutory requirements fully. However, some lessons, particularly in science, music and physical education, were found to be too short. This had a negative impact on these subjects. The school has consulted with parents and increased the length of the school day. The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Lessons now are an appropriate length and this has impacted standards positively, especially in history. Skills in information and communication technology are developing rapidly. Teachers are using information and communication technology to raise standards across the curriculum in some classes. There remains a weakness in provision for teaching art and design.
24. Schemes of work have been introduced for all subjects so that children cover the National Curriculum in more depth. However, some teachers do not use assessment opportunities sufficiently to build on prior knowledge and skills. In 2000, the teachers planned much of their work around different themes or topics. While this worked well in Years 3 and 4, it was unsuccessful in Years 5 and 6. Children were confused about the subject knowledge and skills they were learning. Now all areas of the curriculum are taught as discrete subjects so that the children are no longer confused about different subject skills and knowledge. Visits to places of interest, such as The National Gallery and visitors to the school enrich learning.
25. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented satisfactorily. However, the impact on standards in mathematics is not quite as strong as previously anticipated. Children's skills in mental arithmetic are unsatisfactory. There are gaps in children's knowledge and these are linked to ways to calculate subtraction and multiplication quickly and the application of these rules to addition, division and solving problems. The school places heavy demands on the children to record all their work in written form. This reduces the opportunities for practical work and children do not take enough care in presenting their work well.
26. Overall, the school makes satisfactory provision for children with special educational needs. The procedures for identifying such children are sound and comply with national requirements. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises appropriately with outside agencies and the children benefit from this. Children's individual education plans are up to date and generally written well. Targets for development show careful diagnosis, but are not always used effectively to match work to children's requirements.
27. The curriculum includes a good programme for children's personal, social, health and citizenship education. This programme includes sex education, citizenship, the use and misuse of drugs, dealing with bullying and how to take care of each other. Some children follow news events and discuss the impact of these, especially on the local area.
28. Links with the community are satisfactory as they were at time of the previous inspection. The school has established links with a national motor company that built a weather station for the children to use in their geography lessons. Grandparents speak about their experiences of the Second World War. Members of different religious communities speak about what their faith means to them. There are 'theme days', such as arts workshops, where parents contribute their skills.

29. A good range of extra curricular activities provided by teaching staff, outside providers and volunteers known to the school, enhances children's musical and sporting skills. These are often oversubscribed. The curriculum is richer and more exciting for children in Year 6. They attend a residential visit to Isle of Wight.
30. Staff are aware of the importance of ensuring that all the different groups of children making up the school community are able to benefit to the full from what it offers. The progress boys and girls make is regularly checked to see that neither group falls behind the other. This has shown that boys' achievements in writing are not as good as those of the girls. The school has produced a good action plan to address this issue in the coming year.
31. There is a small number of children from ethnic minority and traveller communities. A strong and principled approach is taken to ensure that racism and prejudice have no place in the school. There is a detailed new policy to guide the school's practice in this area. Good use is made of the specialist advice and support from the local authority's Traveller Education Service. Children from these minority groups make steady progress in learning. Their development is checked regularly and the school's overall provision for them is satisfactory.
32. The school is a harmonious and tolerant community with no evidence whatever of racial tension. It carries out checks to see that ethnic minority children are able to take the fullest part in school life. Now it is important to put in place more formal systems to ensure that their learning is as good as it should be. Such monitoring should include a range of home and school issues such as:
- their take-up of out-of-lesson activities such as clubs, outings and school events;
 - whether they undertake roles of responsibility in school;
 - whether they have friends to play with;
 - whether their parents understand and are happy with school arrangements for lunches, assemblies, school and sports dress;
 - whether parents understand how to help with homework;
 - whether parents feel able to take part in the Friends' organisation, become a governor, or help in the school;
 - what practical steps the school takes to celebrate the rare bilingualism of some of the children and the variety of cultural experience they bring;
 - whether adequate written guidance is given to staff on dealing with incidents with a racial undertone.
33. Teachers have identified a small number of particularly able children and their progress is checked regularly and in detail. However, despite such identification and checking, the work they are set in many lessons is no different from that of the rest of the class and does not challenge them enough. At present, provision for these children is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. In some classes also, the work undertaken by children with special educational needs is not pitched at the right level and they struggle to keep up.

34. When the school was last inspected, the opportunities provided for children to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally were found to be satisfactory. There were particular strengths in the range of cultural provision, although children had too few opportunities to learn about the range of cultures found in Britain today. The report noted that the same criticism had been made in the previous report and that the school had not addressed it satisfactorily.
35. Provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development are still satisfactory, while the arrangements made for promoting children's social development are good, an improvement since the last inspection.
36. Assemblies provide good opportunities for quiet reflection on the children's own beliefs and those of others. In one assembly, children learned about the Hindu festival of Divali and something of the beliefs and religious practice of Hindus. They joined in a short Hindu prayer and sang a relevant hymn enthusiastically. In another very moving assembly, children heard a story about the bombing of Hiroshima and a small child who was dying of radiation sickness. The assembly developed a tangible sympathy with those caught up in a human tragedy. Some class lessons also provide an occasion to think about the feelings, beliefs and experiences of others. Older children, for example, learned about the wartime Kindertransport, the compulsory transportation of children by the Nazis. They felt deeply for the children and their parents and were appreciative of the relative security of their own lives.
37. The school day provides many occasions for extending and reinforcing children's sense of right and wrong. In circle time, they discuss events that occur in the classroom, learn to listen to each other's points of view and think about how they can help each other. They apologise when in the wrong and are taught the importance of fairness and honesty.
38. A wide range of activities promotes children's social development. They work well in pairs and small groups in lessons, such as science and physical education. School rules are displayed prominently and the children are fully aware of them. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced class and school councils. These provide a very valuable opportunity for the children to be involved in the running of their school and to learn about some fundamental democratic processes, such as representing others, respecting majority views and keeping notes of meetings. The school's "buddying" system ensures that children can find friends and help when they need it. They take seriously their responsibilities in the wider world, collecting for charities at Christmas and visiting elderly people in sheltered housing nearby. Letters of thanks testify to how much these visits and the children's harvest gifts, are appreciated. Recently, children planned and ran their own Bring and Buy Sale to support a Blue Peter Appeal. The annual Year 6 residential visit to the Isle of Wight gives children an excellent opportunity to experience social living away from the home.

39. Opportunities for cultural development are provided through a lively range of educational trips, for example to museums and to the Hindu temple in Neasden. Theatre troupes sometimes visit the school and the children participate in local music festivals. They wrote poems about Harvest to celebrate National Poetry Day and some have enjoyed their work with Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The arts curriculum, however, has areas of weakness. In particular, children's drawing and painting lacks creativity and quality. There is still too little provision for children to appreciate the multicultural nature of life in Britain today. Work in literature, art, music and dance contribute little to their awareness in this area. This weakness was noted in both the school's previous inspections and its response has not been satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Children are cared for well and the procedures for monitoring and supporting their personal development are good. The procedures for assessing children's attainment are now satisfactory and an improvement on the previous inspection. The school does not, however, use this information well enough to plan work at different levels. Parents agree that the school supports children well.
41. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety of the children are sound. The designated member of staff with responsibility for this area has a clear understanding of the role. Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with the local authority's health and safety policy on the subject. First aid provision is in place with an appropriate number of staff trained. Records are kept diligently of any accidents that occur.
42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance continue to be very effective since the last inspection. Registers are kept well and in accordance with statutory requirements. The school is very good at following up unexplained absences on a daily basis.
43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive conduct are effective. A revised policy for behaviour has been drawn up in consultation with parents and children and is consistently applied by most staff. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme complements this policy in promoting improved behaviour around the school. Rewards are given for good behaviour and this is having a positive effect on children's attainment.
44. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting children's personal development are effective and an improvement on the previous inspection. Where personal targets are set, parents are involved and teachers' expectations are shared with them.
45. The school has reviewed and improved its assessment and record keeping procedures since the last inspection when they were a key issue. It now monitors

how children are progressing, their strengths and weaknesses and what they have achieved in English, mathematics and science. Some teachers use this information well to plan next steps in weekly and daily plans, but this is not consistent across the school. Some targets are not clearly linked to progress and are too vague, for example, 'untidy presentation, needs to slow down'. In other subjects, children's attainment is noted at the end of each teaching unit. This enables the school to keep track of individual progress through the National Curriculum levels and to check that children achieve these. The school is developing the use of computer-based systems to monitor progress and set targets in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. These systems should enable the school to determine accurately children's progress and adapt programmes of study to meet needs. The school plans to develop a range of portfolios of work including photographs to help teachers assess children's achievements and progress.

46. There is a range of assessment activities involving children. "Pupil progress books" are kept as a record of assessment activities that take place during the term. However, their use to show next steps is inconsistent. Individual, group and class targets for literacy and numeracy are pasted in exercise books and presented in ways that are understood by the children. Class and group targets help the children put their individual targets into context. These targets are displayed in some rooms, but this is not consistent. Children are mostly clear about their targets and know what they are going to learn in each lesson. The school keeps a personal profile for each child and uses this to record strengths and weaknesses and points for discussion to be raised at consultations with parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. "Partnership with parents" is an area identified in the school development plan for further development. The school is consulting parents by sending out questionnaires. There was a 50 per cent return rate on the school's own questionnaire sent out in May this year. There has been another about the quality of the annual report to parents and the format of the parents' meeting. The responses from parents have been analysed and action is being taken where appropriate to bring about improvements.
48. Parents' views of the school generally continue to be positive since the last inspection. The parents who attended the meeting with inspectors and those who returned the questionnaire are satisfied with the quality of education provided. They view the school as satisfactory. Their children like coming to school and parents agree that it expects them to work hard and achieve their best. The majority of parents consider teaching to be good and agree that children make progress. A very large proportion of parents feel comfortable with approaching the school about any problems they might have. However, some parents do not consider that they are kept well informed about how their child is getting on. A similar number do not feel that the school is well led and managed.
49. The quality of information to parents is satisfactory overall. A newsletter is sent out to parents at regular intervals. The school prospectus is very informative and comprehensive and is attractively presented. The annual report from governors to

parents is also informative, but lacks the legally required detail concerning how teachers' professional development impacts on teaching and learning. End-of-year reports give an accurate picture of academic progress and contain targets for children and parents to aim for. These reports meet statutory requirements.

50. The parents' involvement in the children's learning is satisfactory. The school has identified the need to continually encourage parents to support their child's learning at home and school. A Family Literacy class has been organised on a weekly basis where parents are invited to come and establish ways in which they can better understand what their child is doing in school and the homework they are given. This class was originally intended for parents of children in Year 3 but because of the poor uptake it has been opened up to parents of children in all year groups. A small number of parents come into school to listen to children read and offer general support in classes. The "Friends of South Green" association raises funds by organising social events and this money has been spent on resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership provided by the headteacher is satisfactory and an improvement since the last inspection. The school has worked hard, with some success, to overcome weaknesses identified in the last report. It has managed this in spite of a large turnover of staff caused by a variety of reasons and difficulties in appointing permanent replacements. The interests of the children are put first and there is a positive climate for learning. The school's ethos of a caring community is reflected successfully in its daily life. It analyses its results in national tests carefully so as to inform decision making about how to bring improvements in standards. These are rising, albeit slowly and everyone is determined to do better. However, a significant number of parents do not feel that the school is well led and managed or that they are kept sufficiently informed about how their child is getting on. Inspectors found that the annual reports to parents provide an accurate picture of each child's progress and include targets for the child to aim for. The school has identified the improvement of its partnership with parents as a priority within its development plan. Progress has been made and acknowledged by parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors. More needs to be done to reassure parents, but the school is on course to achieve this.
52. The governing body is now more established than at the time of the last inspection and fulfils its responsibilities well. It meets regularly and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors use this knowledge effectively in the formulation of the school development plan. There are link governors for subjects and for special educational needs. A programme of visits is in place that helps them to be well informed about what the school is doing. It includes some lesson observations and written feedback to teachers. This process is carried out sensitively and enables governors to see teachers and children at work. As a consequence, they are better able to make decisions about the allocation of resources.
53. Recent staff changes, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher and a senior teacher, have meant that a new senior management team is now in place. The role of each team member has been reviewed and agreed to ensure all areas of

the school's work is monitored and supported. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Although the senior management team is in the very early stages of establishing itself, it is already having a positive impact on raising standards and has the potential to do more.

54. The headteacher rightly places emphasis on the importance of monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection a more systematic programme of formal observation of lessons has been put in place and is proving beneficial. It involves senior staff and governors and includes oral and written feedback to teachers. This is part of the school's efforts to raise standards and quality of education, but is particularly important at the present time because of the recent changes in staff.
55. Subject co-ordinators are keen to help raise standards. Recent staff changes mean that a number of them are new to their responsibility, although some are quickly beginning to make a significant impact. They help to monitor standards through looking at teachers' planning. The co-ordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education, together with physical education, provide good leadership for their areas of the curriculum. The school is benefiting from this because it helps to drive improvements forward.
56. The school's arrangements for the management and organisation of the special educational needs provision, including children with statements of special educational needs, is satisfactory overall and national requirements are met. The special needs co-ordinator liaises with the link governor for this area of the school's work and with outside agencies. She also oversees the work of the learning support assistants and meets with them half termly. However, the co-ordinator is aware that some teachers could use children's individual targets for improvement more rigorously when planning and delivering lessons.
57. The school has an appropriate number of teachers, although half of them have been in post for only a few weeks. One is newly qualified. Some provide consistently good teaching. Since the previous inspection, the number of learning support assistants has been increased. They are shared across all classes and are used to good effect, often in support of children with special educational needs. The learning support assistants make a significant contribution to the general life of the school as well as to children's attainment and progress. Most have undergone training, but there is still work to do to raise their skills. Visitors are welcomed in a friendly manner by administrative staff and they ensure that the school runs smoothly on a daily basis. The lunchtime supervisors also make positive contribution to the life of the school.
58. There are clear job descriptions and a system of performance management has been introduced. It is applied to all eligible staff. High priority is rightly given to staff training and the induction programme for new teachers is satisfactory. This is building their confidence and helping them to settle quickly into the school.
59. Accommodation is good as it was at the time of the last inspection. The new computer suite is a good facility and is having a positive impact on standards in information and communication technology. The playground has been improved so that children who wish to play in a quieter area can do so. The dining space is small

and the school has plans to extend this and to provide a meeting room when finance is available.

60. Resources are good overall. In information and communication technology resources have improved and are now good. This is having a positive impact on standards. Teachers do not use computers often enough in their day-to-day tasks, to enhance displays or ease their work load. Resources remain good, as they were in 2000, in design and technology, music and science. This said, there are few instruments from a range of other cultures. The storage and general organisation of the resources throughout the school has improved. They have been organised into central areas and are labelled clearly so that staff and children can find them easily.
61. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards of financial management noted at the last inspection and day-to-day budget management is good. The school development plan targets each year's spending carefully towards raising standards and is clearly costed. The headteacher and governors now analyse the school's performance in greater detail to identify its strengths and weaknesses and these determine priorities in the development plan.
62. Within the budget governors have wisely given priority to appointing sufficient well-qualified teachers and support assistants. Additional funds have been allocated to the establishment of the new information and communication technology suite, assisted by the Friends' Association. Funds the school receives for special purposes, such as for the education of children with special educational needs, is properly used.
63. The present year's financial forecast is for a deficit, to be offset by a surplus carried forward from previous years. This surplus was well above that needed to meet unexpected contingencies and its reduction represents sound financial planning. The sum that is to be carried forward into 2003 is a much reduced, but prudent, figure. The governors are aware that savings may need to be made from 2003 in view of the declining number of children in the neighbourhood.
64. Staff and governors are committed to gaining the best value they can for the children from the resources available to them. They are fully aware of how the school's standards compare with those in similar schools and they direct their efforts and financial resources to raising levels of achievement. The inspection has found the early signs of success in this effort. They regularly seek competitive tenders for goods and services. They consult parents about the priorities for the annual development plan and the children also have a voice through the School Council.
65. Taking into account the standards achieved, the quality of education provided and the costs, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. The governors, headteacher and staff should take action to:
 - (1) improve mental arithmetic and the use and application of numeracy skills; *

Paragraphs: 1 - 12, 23 – 26, 77 – 81, 84;

(2) raise standards in writing and the general presentation of work;*

Paragraphs: 1 - 12, 23 – 26, 72, 81, 94, 112, 116, 141;

(3) raise standards in art;*

Paragraphs: 1 - 12, 23 – 26, 98 – 102;

(4) improve the use of assessment to inform teachers' planning;*

Paragraphs: 23 – 26, 45, 56, 126;

(5) ensure the provision in lessons for the brighter children and those with special educational needs are consistently met throughout the school;*

Paragraphs: 1 - 12, 23 – 26, 45, 56, 83, 91, 126;

(6) raise the profile of multicultural education especially through the arts curriculum;*

Paragraph: 39.

* identified in the school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	7	16	23	3	0	0
Percentage	4%	14%	31%	45%	6%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	230
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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
	2001	31	32	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	17	29
	Girls	27	23	30
	Total	47	40	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (82)	63 (73)	94 (76)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	19	29
	Girls	28	25	31
	Total	48	44	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (82)	70 (78)	97 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	216	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.1
Average class size	29.1

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	209

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	597,393
Total expenditure	576,011
Expenditure per pupil	2,390
Balance brought forward from previous year	46,920
Balance carried forward to next year	68,302

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	233
Number of questionnaires returned	78

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	41	53	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	21	64	8	0	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	9	78	5	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	69	9	1	4
The teaching is good.	18	68	3	3	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	49	18	5	8
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	47	5	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	38	59	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	13	65	17	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	14	53	17	6	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	22	68	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	55	13	4	0

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

ENGLISH

67. The last inspection found that most children started the school with above average attainment, but that by the end of the junior stage attainment was broadly in line with the national average. This was because there was significant underachievement among older children due largely to an unsatisfactory level of teaching in Year 5. In addition, brighter children and those with special educational needs did not make sufficient progress. A key issue was to raise the level of attainment in writing. Since then, the school has analysed its national test results carefully and checked children's progress over time. Considerable effort has been put into raising attainment, particularly in writing, although this has sometimes been hampered because of staffing difficulties. The school's as yet unverified results in the 2002 national tests for children aged eleven, indicate that attainment is again in line with the national average. Since 1997, the results have fluctuated, but have shown an upward trend.
68. At the beginning of this term there were considerable changes of staff. The present situation is that most children begin the school with above average attainment. This is not maintained consistently in all classes with the younger children, but the pace of learning increases considerably in Years 5 and 6. This is because the quality of teaching in these year groups is now mostly very good. Scrutiny of work together with lesson observations, show that attainment in Year 6 is broadly in line with the national average. However, the improvement in the quality of teaching for the older children is already beginning to have a positive impact. As a result, standards are rising and are likely to continue to do so, although this may not be reflected immediately in national test results.
69. The national initiative on literacy has been introduced satisfactorily and the co-ordinator for the subject feels that it is helping to raise standards. Texts are chosen well and appeal to the children's interests. However, more could be done to reinforce literacy skills across all subjects and to challenge the brighter children, particularly in Years 3 and 4. The school's analysis of its results in national tests shows that girls out perform boys, usually more so in writing than reading. Considerable effort has been made to tackle this issue with some success. Staff training has included the teaching of different genres and a consideration of how children learn. Individual targets for children with special educational needs are clear and realistic, but are not always used sufficiently well to help plan and deliver lessons. When this happens, the tasks are not matched closely enough to the children's needs and they do not progress as well as they might. Appropriate efforts are made to use homework for all children that includes reading, writing and spelling as a means to enhance the work covered in lessons.

70. Children are pleased to talk to visitors about their work and matters that interest them. They are polite and respectful. They listen carefully during lessons and usually respond well to prompts and encouragement. Many use a good range of vocabulary and are able to communicate meaning clearly. By age eleven, most are confident speakers and often use their own experiences to develop answers to questions. Their speaking and listening skills are generally better than those found in most schools. They contribute to discussions well and are prepared to ask questions of their own. An example of this was observed in a lesson about the features of autobiographical writing. The children asked questions, made sensible suggestions and used the class text effectively to back up what they were saying. This helped to bring about a better understanding of the purpose of an autobiography.
71. Most children read regularly at home as well as at school. However, several younger children are experiencing frustration because they are on books that are too difficult for them. Reading diaries are used throughout the school to record the book each child is reading and the progress being made. This is a useful link between parents and teachers, although not many parents use the diaries to record comments about how well their child is doing. By the age of eleven, children's reading skills are mainly in line with that expected for their age. Many read with growing confidence and fluency. Brighter children sometimes read with real expression. All children show satisfactory understanding of story lines and main characters, but often find it difficult to predict story outcomes and reasonable alternatives. Most can name their favourite authors, but the school needs to extend the reading programmes of the brighter children so as to widen their experience and knowledge of literature. Many children know how to find particular books in a library and can use an index and a contents page successfully to help them find information.
72. The last inspection identified writing as a key issue for improvement and the school has tried hard to bring this about. Progress has been slow and by age eleven children's attainment is below that found in most schools. However, the hard work is beginning to bear fruit and there are signs of improvement, although more needs to be done and the school recognises this. Many children continue to have considerable difficulty with writing and this impedes their progress in all subjects. They write for a range of purposes and are beginning to think more carefully about the use of language and its meaning. Older children have undertaken some useful work on planning a plot, the characters and structure of a story. They have been given opportunities to express their views and opinions through writing and some have managed to do this in a lively and interesting way. For example, in a book review a Year 6 child wrote, "*It is very hard to tell which are the best parts because the book was an absolute buzz and really made you want to read on.*" Presentation of work is too often untidy. Children use lines books to practice handwriting, but do not always transfer their skills successfully to other written work. Teachers give appropriate attention to spelling and grammatical structure, yet children make too many simple errors.

73. Some of the teachers have not been in post long. Nevertheless, almost all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and most of it in Years 5 and 6 was very good. The structure provided by the literacy hour has given teachers clear guidelines about the organisation of lessons and this is proving beneficial. Resources are prepared well and lesson plans are usually clear about what children are to learn and how. This is often explained to them at the beginning of the lesson so that they know what they are going to do. Most children have good attitudes towards the subject and behave well. The best teaching stems from:
- high expectations of what children can do so that they respond by thinking and working hard;
 - very good control and management, including the effective use of praise and encouragement that helps build children's confidence;
 - ongoing reinforcement of basic skills, such as the spelling of simple words and the use of the dictionary to check unfamiliar words;
 - skilful use of questions that assess what children understand and need to learn next;
 - effective deployment of support staff to help children who need it most;
 - a sense of real purpose that ensures time is used productively. An example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson during which the teacher used the children's drama skills to physically portray the meaning of verbs. They did this with imagination so that their understanding of verbs and their use in writing, moved forward quickly.
74. Unsatisfactory teaching occurs when tasks are not matched appropriately to the needs and interests of the children and when the teachers' management and control is not sufficiently effective. As a result, children struggle to make progress and valuable time is lost.
75. The co-ordinator for English has held the post for some two years. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject and provides effective leadership aimed at raising standards. She has recently redrafted the school's policy statement and it is due to be presented to the governing body soon.
76. The school broadens and enriches children's literacy experiences successfully. Activities have included visiting drama groups, Christmas productions, Book Fairs and Book Weeks. The co-ordinator also runs a popular drama club as an extra-curricular activity that is open to all the children. These events and activities help to enliven children's interest in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

77. At the time of the last inspection, children's attainments at the end of the junior stage were broadly in line with those found in all schools nationally. Children entered the school with above average attainment that was maintained in Years 3 and 4 but in Years 5 and 6 children were underachieving significantly. The needs of the brighter children and those with special educational needs were not met. There was a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. At the time of the last inspection, children were taught in year groups that were organised according to ability. Currently, children in Years 3, 4 and 5 are taught in their classes, but in Year 6, they are set into three groups according to their ability.
78. The situation now is that children enter the school with above average attainment. This is not sustained consistently in all classes in Years 3 and 4. The pace of learning increases rapidly in Years 5 and 6 so that attainment is similar to that found in most schools at the end of the junior stage. Scrutiny of previous work and teachers' planning shows that teaching and the mathematics curriculum over time have not always been satisfactory and children have made slower progress than they should. This is because, except in Year 6 and one class in Year 5, all children often work on the same tasks. The particular needs of the brighter children and those with special educational needs are not met sufficiently.
79. National test results in 2002 indicate that standards are similar to those in all schools nationally. They are not as good when compared to schools with children from similar backgrounds. The overall trend is a slow but steady rise in results. The school missed the target set for the number of children to reach the expected level 4 or above in 2002. It has set very challenging targets for 2003, but with a high number of children with special educational needs in Year 6, these targets will be hard to achieve.
80. Recent analysis of national test results and children's previous learning shows that there are gaps in children's knowledge. These gaps are linked to ways to calculate subtraction and multiplication quickly and the application of these rules to addition, division and solving problems. Children's skills in mental arithmetic are unsatisfactory. Only half the children reached the expected or higher level of attainment in 2002.
81. The children's attitudes to work varies from unsatisfactory to good, depending on the quality of teaching and the suitability of the work they are given. The attitudes of the children in Years 5 and 6 are better than in Years 3 and 4. This is the reverse of the situation at the time of the last inspection. However, as in 2000, children throughout the school do not take enough care in presenting their work well. Much of the work is untidy and means children do not set out their working correctly and, as a result, make errors in their calculations. This hinders their progress.

82. In the nine lessons observed, six were satisfactory, two were good and one was excellent. In the excellent lesson in Year 5, children made very rapid progress. This is because the teacher:
- linked the mental starter activities to the knowledge, skills and understanding the children required to meet the overall objective of the lesson. For example, children threw a die twice and multiplied the two numbers together. This was done at great speed and children competed in pairs to see who could find the answer on a number square first;
 - built very effectively on work done in the lessons earlier in the week on perimeter to develop new work in finding the area of a shape by multiplying the length times the breadth;
 - used a varied range of strategies, such as practical, paired, group, whole class, written and mental calculations throughout the lesson, often asking probing questions that challenged children to think hard and draw on their previous learning;
 - made the task real, relevant, important and challenging when children had to calculate the area of a paddock to restrict the amount of grass that was available for a horse to eat. The children were told that this was very important, as the horse would die if it ate too much grass and their findings would help the owner of the horse. As a result the children became highly motivated. The teacher demonstrated the way for the children to do the calculation very clearly showing the children that a paddock 8m x 6m had the same perimeter as one 13m x 1m but a different area. The children were challenged to find the smallest, but best shaped paddock, for the horse with a length of rope measuring 28m;
 - gave very clear explanations that children understood easily and gave them confidence to try out their ideas;
 - provided many opportunities for children to use their initiative;
 - revised what children had learned very well so they made fast progress and were challenged to work at a higher level of attainment;
 - deployed the learning support assistant to assist children who found the task difficult to do their very best.
83. In other lessons, teachers' planning is linked, over the week, to the format recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. In the short term, teachers in most classes do not plan work closely enough to the needs of children identified as being very good at mathematics or those with special educational needs. Year 4 planning is inconsistent. Scrutiny of teachers' plans over time show that in one class planning is thorough and detailed and in the other there is little to show what the children are to learn or the expected outcomes. This makes it hard for the teacher to assess children's progress and ensure lessons meet their precise needs. Learning support assistants provide effective support for children with special educational needs so that they play a full part in lessons. However, the work the children do is often similar to that of the other children in the class.

84. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented, but it is being used more effectively in some classes than others. Teachers in most classes do not give sufficient attention to raising children's mental arithmetic and rapid recall of number patterns and facts. Too often teachers use a commercial scheme to guide their planning and children's learning without taking full account of links with the National Numeracy Framework. These factors cause significant gaps in children's knowledge. In some classes, children have few opportunities to work with practical resources to consolidate and extend learning. The school is now aware of this and is trying to alter the situation. Some classes have begun to use information and communication technology to enable children to collect and interpret information as graphs.
85. There is a clear policy for children to receive homework in mathematics. However, the parents are right to state that this is not implemented consistently in every class in each year group.
86. The subject co-ordinator is newly appointed. In a short period of time, with the help of the local authority and school's induction programme, she has identified the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and in children's attainment and progress. In addition, results from standardised and national tests have been analysed to find out where the school needs to improve and so raise standards. This information has been shared very well with all staff and in some classes this is already paying dividends. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a programme of training to take place shortly to raise skills and knowledge, especially in teaching mental arithmetic and investigative and problem solving skills. The co-ordinator is a very good role model to others in terms of teaching and the way responsibilities are carried out.

SCIENCE

87. At its last inspection in 2000, standards in science were found to be average. The report noted, however, that this marked a decline in performance from the levels reached in earlier years. Standards at the end of Year 6 are still average.
88. National tests taken in 2001 showed that the standards reached then were also average in relation to schools nationally. However, published data allows the school's performance to be compared with that of similar schools. This comparison shows that a smaller proportion of children at South Green reached the nationally expected level than in most schools with a similar intake of children.
89. Standards overall have risen slightly over recent years. Although national comparisons were not available at the time of the present inspection, the children's results in the 2002 tests were similar to those in 2001.
90. While standards until now have improved only slowly since the last inspection, the school has taken the action necessary to bring about more substantial improvements in the longer term. In particular, the standard of teaching has improved, the programme of work followed has been refined and other weaknesses noted in the 2000 inspection have been addressed. Staff are more confident in their teaching of the subject and children's attitudes and behaviour are now more positive. The results of these efforts are becoming evident in the work of the younger children, but have not yet borne fruit in Year 6 because these children lacked consistently good teaching in the past.
91. The previous inspection noted that less able children made unsatisfactory progress in science because they had too little support in class. There have been improvements

in this respect, but there are still instances in which these children struggle to cope with lessons that have not been adequately adapted to meet their needs. In some classes, more able children do not learn as swiftly as they might because the science work they are given is no more challenging than that given to the rest of the class. Children from ethnic minority backgrounds, however, progress at a similar rate to others in their class.

92. The science programme children now follow covers all the required areas of the National Curriculum. Much of the work involves children in practical experimentation, confirming predictions they have made and learning to draw conclusions from their results. Most of this practical work is lively and interesting for the children. In recording their work, they use correct scientific language, such as “mixture”, “solution” and “opaque”.
93. By the age of eleven, most children understand that materials can be classified as solid, liquid or gas and know the characteristics that distinguish each. They have learned a range of ways of separating mixtures and can explain, for example, the processes needed to obtain salt from a solution, or iron filings from a sand mixture. They know that it is important to make sure their experiments are fair and reliable. In making saturated solutions children appreciate that differences in heating, or stirring, will affect how materials dissolve. Most children can design and build a simple electric circuit, using a cell, a bulb and a switch. Many can add other devices and use conventional circuit diagram symbols. However, there are gaps in the understanding of some children who find difficulty, for example, in explaining what would happen in a complete circuit if the switch were taken out. While most of the work seen in the inspection was in the area of materials, children also have an average level of knowledge of living forms and habitats and how friction and gravity affect daily life.
94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and better than at the time of the last inspection. Five lessons were seen during the inspection and all but one were satisfactory or better. The best lessons seen were in Years 5 and 6. Where the teaching is really good there is a good emphasis on children carrying out experiments and investigations for themselves. Teachers balance the teaching of science knowledge, with learning how scientists operate, through prediction, experimentation, observation of results and by drawing general conclusions. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and this helps them direct discussion and questioning in ways that make the children think hard and learn quickly. Children are encouraged to record their practical work in their own words, but with due attention to using scientific vocabulary accurately. However, there are weaknesses to be addressed even in otherwise satisfactory lessons. Importantly, some teachers do not consistently remind children to write neatly, spell correctly and present work with care. This lack of attention to basic skills undermines the thrust of literacy teaching. Lessons seldom include sufficient challenge for children who learn science quickly and in one lesson the work presented had been covered before. Little use is made of the school’s good information and communication technology facilities to extend and enrich work in science.
95. Children enjoy their practical science activities and their attitudes and behaviour are generally satisfactory. They work hard and enjoy finding out whether their predictions are confirmed by their results. They are confident in discussion and try to apply what

they have already learned to new challenges. When they work in small groups, they share tasks well and learn from each other. Occasionally, they are too noisy in their work, but their exuberance results from engagement with the task in hand and is seldom disruptive.

96. The science co-ordinator has held this post for some years and gives effective support to colleagues. Arrangements for checking teachers' planning and children's progress are satisfactory and the management and leadership of the science programme are good.
97. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and the action it has taken is gradually bringing improvements in standards. More needs to be done, however, to ensure all groups of children, in all classes, make the best possible progress.

ART AND DESIGN

98. No lessons were seen during the period of the inspection. Interviews with Year 6 children, an examination of teachers' planning and scrutiny of children's work and displays around the school informed judgements.
99. Attainment in art and design is below that expected for children of aged eleven. This represents a fall in standards since the last inspection when attainment was judged to be satisfactory. In Year 3, children use pencils, pastels and oil crayons to make drawings of fruits. They blend and use colour and there is evidence of some good observational work. In Year 4, children use a range of media including paint, paper and fabrics to make collages. The standard of drawing in self-portraits is below that expected for children of this age. In Year 5, children have made some drawings of people in order to learn about proportion, skin tones and the use of paint for different textures. This work in drawing and painting shows little use of imagination and is again below that expected for children of this age. In Year, 6 children are currently making collections of pictures of hat styles and are designing masks for a forthcoming school production of 'Wind in the Willows'. Overall, the work seen shows little use of imagination, experimentation or creativity and these aspects of children's work are insufficiently developed.
100. Discussions with children show that most of them enjoy the subject and have good attitudes towards learning. The unsatisfactory standards in creative art and use of imagination indicate an emphasis in teaching on design. The distinction in the scheme of work and in children's sketchbooks between art and design and design and technology is not clear. Some children are confused by the use of the sketchbook for the two subjects. They talk about a range of experiences, such as sewing pencil cases from fabric, making designs in cross stitch, drawing to scale and making Celtic patterns and clay models. Children's knowledge of the work of well-known artists is limited. Scrutiny of work over time shows that there are too few opportunities for children to use their imagination, to experiment and develop creatively. The subject makes little contribution to the children's cultural development.
101. At the time of the inspection, assessment of children's work is insufficiently developed to impact on standards of achievement. Marking is not consistently used in sketchbooks to make a contribution to children's knowledge of their own learning.
102. The co-ordinator for art and design is new in post and has a clear vision for the direction of the work of the school. There is a good supply of resources, but these need review and organisation so that they are used effectively. Planning, displays and children's work are monitored and there are plans to develop a portfolio of annotated

work samples for assessment. The scheme of work for art and design is new and is being evaluated. There are plans for it to include opportunities to study visual arts from other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. The standard of teaching seen during the inspection was good. The curriculum has been developed and children now have more opportunity to evaluate their own work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
104. Children in Year 6 reach average standards for their age. This is consistent with the findings of the last inspection. There are some examples of good work, but unsatisfactory standards of presentation in sketchbooks and in some lessons mean that children do not achieve as well as they should. In Year 3, children follow instructions carefully to cut, fold and assemble various materials. Children select what they need and experiment with making tabs for a box suitable for its purpose, for example one child was making a box for beads. In year 4, children learn about food technology and what constitutes a good fruit salad, evaluating three commercial products. They explain why some combinations of fruit are better than others and why some, such as bananas that go brown, are not suitable. They decide what will make a good fruit salad that they will prepare in the next lesson but they do not take sufficient care in standards of presentation in drawing and writing. In Year 5, children are skilled at the use of tools and select the materials they need to make moving pictures using cranks and levers, hinges and springs. They can evaluate their work and say how it can be improved. In Year 6, children have made chess sets with clay using moulding and joining skills and painting with care.
105. Most children make good progress and their attitudes and behaviour are very good. Children work hard and are enthusiastic. They cooperate with each other sharing resources and helping with difficulties. In all lessons seen, most children are absorbed in their tasks and are pleased with their results. However, two hours is too long for younger children to sustain concentration on one task. Children from ethnic minority groups, travellers and those with special educational needs all receive the support they need. In one lesson in Year 5, children with learning difficulties were actively encouraged to demonstrate and celebrate their success and help others in the class with some ideas.
106. Teaching in the lessons observed was good. Scrutiny of work and displays around the school show that teaching over time has been satisfactory. Teachers give clear introductions, tasks are explained carefully and good use is made of questioning to challenge and make children think. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and lessons are organised well, catching the children's interest. Appropriate attention is given to health and safety. Children are managed satisfactorily creating an industrious atmosphere. Teaching assistants and other adult helpers are deployed well to facilitate learning and support the children. There is inconsistency in planning across the school and in the use of assessment to ensure future learning meets the needs of individuals.
107. The school has drawn up a scheme of work that links with a nationally recommended programme of work. The range of opportunities to design, work with tools and equipment and evaluate processes and products is satisfactory. Long and medium term plans are detailed. They give learning objectives and outcomes, suggested activities, resources and links to other subjects. Children in Years 5 and 6 have the

opportunity in information and communication technology lessons to control models made in design and technology. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children are given chances to apply their skills in other situations, through entry, for example, to the 'Great Apple Race', a competition for local schools in which they were runners up last year.

108. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and expertise and has worked hard to develop the scheme of work and bring continuity to what is being done. There will be further impact on standards when there is consistency in assessment across the school and the planned portfolios of work are used to moderate children's achievements. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning. Resources are good and the range of equipment for food technology is to be extended. The co-ordinator gives the subject clear direction and is keen to promote the work of the school in the wider community.

GEOGRAPHY

109. Children's attainment at age eleven is are similar to that found in other schools nationally. At the time of the last inspection, children did not know enough about life in other countries and geography was taught as part of a themed topic. Scrutiny of previous work and displays indicate that children now have more knowledge of other countries and that geography is taught as a specific subject.
110. Children in Year 6 know about the key features of rivers. In the one lesson observed, children drew on their previous work to sketch a simple map of the route of the River Chelmer from its source to the confluence with the River Blackwater and out to sea. In discussion, children used the correct vocabulary such as, source, tributary, erosion, deposition and key correctly. Some children knew how to use Ordnance Survey maps and find places by using coordinates. The work on rivers is linked to the water cycle and the impact of rivers, such as the Nile, on the landscape.
111. Scrutiny of previous work shows that children in Year 3 have studied the climate of major cold countries, such as Greenland and Russia. In contrast they have planned holidays to hot places, such as countries on the equator. Children in Year 4 know how to draw and identify key features on a simple map. They know the difference between villages and towns and why people settle where they do. In Year 5, children are aware of tropical, desert, temperate and polar climates. They understand how we use water and its purification at water treatment works.
112. In the lesson observed, children's attitudes were good. The tasks caught the their interest and they shared their ideas with others confidently. The children persevered and a good amount of work was covered in the time available. The scrutiny of the work shows that they do not always pay enough attention to presentation. Sometimes work is not finished. Children do not use their literacy skills, such as handwriting or spelling, well enough to demonstrate their learning.
113. Only one lesson was observed in Year 6 and this was taught well. The teacher's knowledge was good and resources were used effectively to make learning purposeful. Probing questions deepened children's knowledge skills and understanding. The lesson built well on what children had learned before. Explanations were very clear. The children were managed well and reminded

appropriately of classroom rules when they became too excited. The teacher placed clear emphasis on promoting specific geographical skills and knowledge. The pace of the lesson was brisk, yet children learned new skills, consolidated them and applied them to practical tasks. The teacher's high expectations meant children covered a lot of work in the time.

114. The geography co-ordinator is new to the role and so has had little time to do more than check teachers' plans for this term to ensure they meet the requirements of the programme of work. There is a clear action plan to develop the resources and practical elements of the subject. The curriculum is enriched in Year 6 by field trips to the Isle of Wight to look at the physical geography of the island and a visit to Chelmsford to look at the key features of the River Chelmer.

HISTORY

115. Children's attainment in Year 6 is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, especially in Year 5, is much better and the subject is taught as a specific subject and not part of a themed topic. Lesson plans now take into account children's prior learning and tasks challenge children's intellectual effort. The curriculum is now taught thoroughly and in depth. Information and communication technology is being used effectively to improve children's attainments. In Year 3, children used a program that helped them to think about the way archaeologists uncover information from the past. The program reinforced learning in other lessons and developed children's historical enquiry skills appropriately. This captured children's interest.
116. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work show that children in Year 6 know about life at the time of the Ancient Egyptians. They are aware of why life developed by the river Nile, methods of farming, hunting, transport, the Pharaohs and gods and goddesses. Children know about the process of mummification and the Egyptian beliefs about life after death. Teachers encourage children to develop historical enquiry skills, ask questions and find out information from books. A recent trip to the British Museum made this period of history relevant to the children's understanding. The teachers' enthusiasm has inspired children to watch recent television programmes about the building of the pyramids and Tutankhamun. Some children know a lot about this period of history and talk about it with confidence and enthusiasm. However, children's unsatisfactory writing skills hold back progress in recording their ideas accurately.
117. In Year 5, children know about the differences between the lives of rich and poor families in the past. They learned how to take notes about the characteristics of life in Victorian times while watching a video of 'Oliver'. In a very good lesson, children used information they had found as part of their homework about famous Victorian people such as, Lord Shaftesbury, Alexander Graham Bell, Elizabeth Fry and Florence Nightingale, to decide who was most worthy to be placed on the back of a five pound note. Children dressed in role, justified why they were more worthy than others and the teacher made very effective links with the impact on our lives today.
118. Children in Year 4 are developing their knowledge about the life and times of Henry VIII. They have also looked at the way items found from the time of the Tudors help us to understand life as it was then. Children wrote imaginary letters from Henry VIII to his friends and made them look like old documents. These are imaginative and allow children to express their understanding in their own way. One child wrote, *My Old*

Friend, do you remember me, Norris? Henry VIII. Well I've got bad news. Me and Catherine got divorced a year ago. She was lovely before she turned ugly. Yours sincerely, HT. P.S I am marrying Ann Boleyn. Other children went on to explain that Henry wanted a son and heir to succeed him on the throne. In Year 3, children know the main features about the Roman Invasion and the differences in the way the Celts and Romans lived.

119. Children are enthusiastic about learning in history. They learn a great deal from the visits to places of interest, such as Colchester Castle, the examination of artefacts, and research using information and communication technology. Their unsatisfactory writing skills hold back progress in recording information accurately. In some cases, children do not complete their work and they are not asked to complete it. There are careless errors in spelling.
120. Two lessons were observed in history, one was good and the other very good. The teachers' knowledge was very good. Lessons were planned thoroughly and made learning real. Both lessons promoted children's social development and encouraged the use of historical enquiry skills. In the very good lesson, children drew on their previous research and homework in discussions. The teacher made clear how events in the past impact our life today. Children's speaking and listening skills were promoted very effectively. The teachers' enthusiasm for history was conveyed effectively to the children who were motivated to do well. The interest of some children was deep enough for them to watch programmes about different periods of history on television and this enhanced the depth of their knowledge, skills and understanding, especially about the Egyptians.
121. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has not yet had time to fully analyse the strengths and areas for development in the subject in order to raise further children's attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122. A computer suite has been completed since the school was last inspected and is equipped with 17 computers. This means that whole classes of children working in

pairs can be taught together and can have access to the Internet. As a result of this improved provision the school is better equipped to teach information and communication technology skills and most children, including those with special educational needs, use computers confidently. The information and communication technology suite is having an impact on standards that are rising quickly. Some good examples of the application of skills were seen during the inspection.

123. By the age of eleven, children use the mouse and keyboard with confidence. They can load and save their work, follow on-screen instructions and are beginning to use the Internet to find and retrieve information. Children in Year 5 use the Internet with success to find pictures of famous Victorians they are studying. They select, copy and save the pictures in their personal folders for use in future lessons. Children use word processing software to select fonts, sizes, colour and layout and use word art to bring their work to life. As part of their history work, Year 6 children have used desktop publishing to make three fold leaflets about Egyptian gods and goddesses. They use data handling programmes and spreadsheets to produce graphs and charts based on facts from other work such as a study of the locality. Their level of attainment is in line with national expectations and is consistent with the findings of the last inspection.
124. Most children are now making good progress in their learning and clearly enjoy the work, showing a great deal of enthusiasm. Children are confident in their use of the equipment and work collaboratively helping each other with problems. Occasionally, the children's excitement results in a very noisy working environment and this can affect the pace of learning. Children are keen to learn and are pleased with their results. Children from ethnic minority groups, travellers and those with special educational needs all receive the support they need to be successful in the subject.
125. Information and communication technology lessons are taught satisfactorily. Teachers use their technical knowledge effectively to support children's learning. Lessons are well organised with clear explanations of tasks that allow children to build on previous learning and consolidate skills. Children know what is expected and what they are to learn. Teachers and learning support assistants move around the suite and use their expertise to help with difficulties, to support children with special educational needs and make teaching points. Lessons proceed at a lively pace and this leads to good teaching of skills. In one Year 6 lesson, children discussed types of information and their reliability and then followed written instructions to find web sites for their research on how to improve school dinners and find others' views on bullying. Where teaching is not so effective teachers are less confident in their use of the equipment. The children are less well controlled, noise levels rise beyond a working buzz and the pace slows. As a result, children are not then always focused on the task and do not make the progress they should.
126. The school follows a nationally recommended programme of work and children's attainment is regularly assessed during lessons and at the end each unit. However, assessments are not consistently used to inform future plans and work is not always matched to children's precise needs. The school is developing the use of a computer based assessment programme.
127. Children have the opportunity to use a range of software applications, including word processors, databases, spreadsheets, graphics and art programmes, presentation packages such as PowerPoint and desk top publishing. Work in controlling external devices is less well developed, as is the use of information and communication

technology to enrich other subjects. The single computer in each classroom further restricts children's opportunities for this sort of work. The school plans to network replacement classroom computers to the suite so that they can be used more effectively. The subject co-ordinator plans to work with new staff on developing links with other subjects so that full use is made of all the resources.

MUSIC

128. The music co-ordinator, who has a high level of expertise in the subject, teaches part of the music curriculum in singing, performing and listening and using skills. These lessons take place in the hall in whole year groups. Teachers also take their own classes for a second lesson and follow a nationally recommended programme of work.
129. Standards in singing range from satisfactory to very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The children sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In assemblies children from Years 3 and 4 recall the words of the chorus and sing with enthusiasm and tunefully. However, they have difficulty with the words of the verses and this affects the quality of the singing. In Year 5, children can take part in a two part rounds and sustain their performance to the end. They can identify patterns and changes in pitch and use the correct vocabulary to describe their singing, for example, pitch and harmony and explain what these terms mean. One child described harmony as 'blending together as one in peace together'. In whole year lessons children work in groups harmoniously and rhythmically. They recognise and explore how sounds can be organised and sing with a sense of shape and melody. They perform simple patterns and accompaniments keeping a steady beat. In Year 6, children sing in two parts, each group singing a different song. They keep time and use un-tuned and tuned percussion to play simple ostinati in accompaniment. They sing with enthusiasm and strive to improve their performance. Standards of behaviour are good. All children, including those with special educational needs, are involved and good progress is made in using their creative ability. Standards overall are as expected for children in this age group.
130. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and sometimes very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection. Where teaching is very good the teacher has a high level of expertise and challenges children to improve performance and learn new skills. More effective deployment of class teachers and learning support assistants in the whole year lessons would raise standards in teaching further. In other lessons teachers and children work enthusiastically. In one Year 5 lesson, the teacher made good use of members of the choir to demonstrate singing in a round and challenged children to improve their performance. Improvements in teachers' subject knowledge, an increased pace and the use of a tuned instrument to give a starting note for class singing would raise standards further.
131. The range of musical opportunities offered by the school is satisfactory. There is a thriving choir, an instrumental group and a recorder group. Some children take lessons in guitar and keyboard from a teacher who visits the school. The children have opportunities to perform to their parents and others through participation in the

local music festival and a joint concert with the infant school. However, the contribution of the subject to the children's cultural development is unsatisfactory. Children have little experience and knowledge of music from different times and cultures and the school does not take the opportunity to link music with cultural events, such as Divali, that are the focus for assemblies.

132. The co-ordinator has adapted the nationally recommended programme of work into weekly units with suggested resources, but this has yet to impact on standards. Teachers' planning is monitored and the co-ordinator intends to monitor teaching during the year. This aspect of the role is not fully developed.
133. There are sufficient resources and a good range of instruments, but these need to be extended to include more instruments from other cultures and examples of music from around the world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. When the school was last inspected children achieved well in games and swimming, but their gymnastics skills were unsatisfactory. This was mainly because lessons in Year 5 were unsatisfactory. Some other shortcomings were also noted. In particular, lessons took too little account of the importance of children evaluating their own performance in discussion and working to improve it. Some lessons were too short to allow work to be developed in enough depth.
135. Attainment in the school is now good. By the end of Year 6, children achieve well in swimming and games. In the present inspection, lessons were only seen in games and dance, so it is not possible to say whether standards in gymnastics have improved.
136. Swimming is available to children in Years 3 and 4 and the great majority of them can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. They have developed a good range of games skills, play well in small groups and teams and enjoy the varied programme of games offered by the school. This includes netball, rounders, hockey, football, rugby, tennis and cricket. Levels of attainment in dance are in line with national expectations for children of this age, but they vary considerably from class to class. Where teachers are confident in teaching this part of the programme, children make excellent progress. They have learned to hold balance effectively, to express feelings powerfully through dramatic and well-planned movement and to work together in groups to produce short sequences of dance movement. In other lessons, however, teachers do not make adequate demands on children to refine and improve their performance. As a result, their learning does not progress as quickly as it could.
137. The quality of teaching is good and better than at the last inspection. All five lessons seen were satisfactory or good and one Year 6 lesson was excellent. A strong point in the lessons was the importance attached to children analysing their own performance and working to improve it through practice. This element of teaching has improved a great deal since the last inspection. Teachers often ask the class to

watch a particular child, or a group at work, in order to broaden the ideas available to their classmates. In the excellent lesson, children worked in pairs to develop dances expressing stylised aggression. They had seen the video of West Side Story and the teacher's excellent subject knowledge led the children to develop short dances of great originality. Teaching of this kind makes physical education a mental discipline as well as a physical one. This said, there were also some weaknesses in the otherwise satisfactory lessons. In particular, teachers do not all have sufficient knowledge of the subject to challenge the children adequately in the questions they ask and the challenges they set. Where this happens, the work of the children is not as good as it could be.

138. Clubs operate for badminton, football, netball and basketball. These are popular and supported well. Children with special educational needs and those from ethnic minorities take a full part in the programme of work provided.
139. Children enjoy lessons. They work hard, use considerable physical effort and collaborate well in paired work and in teams. They are keen to improve their performance and usually behave well in class.
140. The subject co-ordinator is very recently appointed. She has considerable skills and experience in the subject. The school has improved its monitoring processes and this means she is well placed to develop the subject further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Children's attainments are the same as those found in most schools at age eleven and are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This judgement is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Programmes of work are based mainly on Christianity, but also take account of the teaching and practices of other religions represented in this country, particularly Judaism and Hinduism. Children are beginning to learn that religious faith is a common feature of communities and that people who share a faith express it through religious observance and the way in which they live their lives. All children make satisfactory progress over time, including those with special educational needs. However, the general lack of writing skills sometimes hinders children's ability to put forward views and to communicate clearly what they know to others.
142. Interviews with children and scrutiny of previous work show that many can recount important elements of religious stories, such as those about Abraham, David and Ruth as well as those about Rama and Sita. The younger children have thought about prayer and special occasions, such as weddings and christenings. Many can relate their own experiences of these. They know that churches, temples and synagogues are important buildings and places where people go to pray. They have thought about what are important places for them and what makes them so. Most children show a growing awareness of the importance of religious festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and Divali. Many can explain, in simple terms, the meaning behind such occasions. Older children are beginning to understand something about the practices and lifestyles of people who belong to particular faiths. They know that there are special books, such as the Bible and that there are figures of authority in each religion.
143. By Year 6, many children have built up a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the use of religious symbols, such as crosses and candles. They recall much of the factual information they are given in lessons and deal well with the more abstract ideas often met in the subject. An example of this was observed when children were discussing and successfully defining the legendary Wisdom of Solomon.

144. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection and, overall, the quality of teaching was good. Children behaved well and demonstrated positive attitudes towards the subject. Relationships were good and children worked sensibly with one another. In good lessons, teachers' planning was clear, children were motivated well and tasks built effectively on previous learning. Teachers ensured that appropriate resources were to hand and that all children knew how to improve their work. As a result, they persevered and time was used productively.
145. Scrutiny of the school's records show that good use is made of visits to enrich the children's learning, for example to the local parish church and to a Hindu temple. Assemblies are used to celebrate important occasions, such as Diwali, and children listen and join in with enthusiasm. Good links are sometimes made with other subjects. An example of this was when children wrote poems about Harvest Festival during Poetry Week. These experiences help to make the subject enjoyable for the children and add considerably to their knowledge and understanding.
146. The co-ordinator has held the post since the beginning of this term. She has reviewed and updated the school's policy statement for the subject ready for consideration by staff and governors. She is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and has the potential to lead very effectively.