

INSPECTION REPORT

THE REDDINGS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hemel Hempstead

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117234

Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Debock

Reporting inspector: R Peter J McGregor
OIN 3525

Dates of inspection: 2–5 June 2003

Inspection number: 247745

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Reddings Bennetts End Road Hemel Hempstead Herts
Postcode:	HP3 8DX
Telephone number:	01442 406500
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jean Hewison
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3525	R Peter J McGregor	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught What the school should do to improve further
9391	Norma Ball	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school works with parents How well the school cares for its pupils
27225	Anna Sketchley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
28069	David Mylroie	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Geography History Special educational needs	How well the school is led and managed

The inspection contractor was: e-Qualitas Ltd, Langshaw, Pastens Rd, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0RE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Reddings provides education for pupils from the age of three, in a nursery class, to eleven. The school is about the same size as most other primary schools, with 166 full-time pupils and 23 part-time in the nursery. Most pupils transfer to local secondary schools. There are similar numbers of boys and girls in the school overall, though Years 2, 3 and 4 show significant imbalances. About fifteen per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, mainly from Asian or Asian British (Pakistani) backgrounds. For about eleven per cent of pupils English is an additional language, a very high proportion when compared with the country as a whole. A small number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school has no refugees. The proportion identified as having special educational needs, about twenty seven per cent of the pupils, is above that found nationally. A well below average proportion of pupils has statements of need. Special educational needs are mainly specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, and emotional and behavioural issues. Judgements made in this report about national test results, taken at the end of Years 2 and 6, sometimes refer to similar schools: these are schools with more than twenty but less than thirty-five per cent of the pupils taking free school meals, an above average proportion. About six percent of the pupils left or joined the school other than at the start or end of the school year. This is an average mobility figure. Pupils of a full range of ability attend the school but, overall, standards are well below average on entry. The area around the school is socially and economically mixed with private and housing association properties, but the general socio-economic mix of pupils on entry is well below average. Only one of the nine teachers has been at the school for more than a year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Reddings is a sound and improving school. The entire teaching staff, including the headteacher, have arrived in the past eighteen months. Many positive changes have taken or are taking place. Pupils' achievements are currently sound, although earlier in the year, as a result of staffing difficulties, they were unsatisfactory. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and 6 is well below average overall but higher in some areas. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with a particular strength in the teaching of the youngest pupils and, in several lessons, in managing pupils' behaviour. A number of boys in junior classes have negative attitudes to learning and these are proving hard to combat. Leadership is strong and increasingly effective, and good management systems are being introduced that are helping to improve teaching, learning and standards. The school currently is expensive to run, and so provides unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Clear vision and direction is provided by the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, governors, staff and parents.
- Staff assign a high priority to the care of pupils and apply the schools' good approach to behaviour management.
- Staff work closely together as a team for the benefit of the pupils.
- Very effective specialist support is provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and effective.

What could be improved

- Some pupils have a negative attitude to learning. The disruptive behaviour of a small but significant minority of boys affects their learning and that of others.
- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' standards in maths and science are well below average at the end of Year 6.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to improving literacy and numeracy in a range of subject lessons.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of ICT is unsatisfactory and the facilities are poor.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection five years ago, pupils' standards needed to improve but the quality of teaching, care and the curriculum were judged to be good, and leadership and management very good. Since that time, under four headteachers, the school has undergone many changes. The school is now on an even keel and providing an acceptable standard of education, although overall improvement since 1997 is unsatisfactory. Very good changes are taking place under the leadership of a recently appointed headteacher, supported by a deputy headteacher seconded to the school by the local education authority.

Pupils' standards are lower than in 1997, but pupils' knowledge and understanding on entry into the school are also lower now. Their achievements today, relative to their abilities, are satisfactory and therefore similar to five years ago. The quality of teaching, found to be satisfactory now, is not as good as described in the last report, although care is good and similar. The quality of the curriculum is similar overall to that reported previously, but with different strengths and areas for improvement. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are significantly worse than six years ago. Considering the time senior managers have been in post, they have achieved much. The current judgements of good leadership and sound management are an indication of the progress made and the green shoots of success seen, although the overall quality is not as good as described previously.

In 1997, two main areas for improvement were identified. Weaknesses in curriculum planning in the infants have been thoroughly resolved. Staff skills in ICT are now satisfactory, although standards and provision in ICT remain a serious concern.

The school has the capacity to make further substantial improvements.

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				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	E	B	A	very high A*
Mathematics	E	E*	D	C	well above average A above average B average C
Science	E	E	D	C	below average D well below average E very low E*

Pupils in Year 2 attained much higher standards in the 2002 national tests than in 2001, although below average when compared with the national picture in reading, writing and maths. Reading was the area of greatest strength. When compared with similar schools, the results were average. Boys did not achieve as well as girls and the data suggests that lower attaining pupils did not do as well, relative to their capabilities, as the higher attainers. In teacher assessments of science, standards were higher than in English and maths and similar to national averages.

In the end of Year 6 national tests, pupils attained much higher standards in 2002 than in 2001. When account is taken of their assessments in 1998 - their Year 2 tests - results show that progress through their junior classes

was unsatisfactory. The data indicates good progress in English, but unsatisfactory progress in maths and science. As in the infants, higher attainers, relative to their capabilities, did better than lower attainers.

Results for Year 2 and Year 6 have fluctuated over the five-year period, with high points in 1999 and 2002. The overall trend in results over this time was similar to the national trend. The school targets in 2002 for both English and maths were not met. Targets for the current year are much reduced – to well below national average levels. These targets are appropriately challenging for pupils who, overall, were well below average on entry to Year 1 and have experienced serious disruption in their education.

Children's standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are well below average, with few of the pupils attaining the Early Learning Goals, the standards expected of children by the time they start in Year 1. Progress is satisfactory overall and children's achievements are sound but older Reception age children do not do as well as the younger ones in the Nursery because of the way they are all grouped together. Throughout the school, current standards are well below average, overall. Attainment in English is below average, showing good achievement based on pupils' standards on entry to Year 1, and reflecting the large amount of time spent on the subject. In maths and science, the well below average standards in Year 6 represent satisfactory current achievement, but over time the pupils' work has been unsatisfactory. Science work is of a higher standard in Year 2, close to the level expected nationally, indicating good achievement. In several subjects, standards are below what the pupils could achieve because of the lack of time allowed for their study. The quality of support provided results in very good progress by pupils for whom English is an additional language and good progress for those with special educational needs.

All bar one of the staff who teach at The Reddings are new this year. Following a turbulent autumn term in 2002, when the pupils' education was disrupted, the school has begun to reap the benefits of recent, greater stability. The causes of current achievement and standards are very different from those that led to the test results in 2002.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Unsatisfactory overall. The approach of a small number of junior age boys is unacceptable. Many pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Good in the infants. The impact of a minority of older boys results in barely adequate behaviour overall in Years 3 to 6. Behaviour is good around the school and in assembly, because of school expectations and the active presence of staff.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils accept responsibilities willingly. Most are caring to one another. Staff work very hard to form effective links with pupils and relationships are generally good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The long-term absence of a minority results in well below average attendance overall. Satisfactory and improving punctuality.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
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Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The highest quality observed was in the Foundation Stage classes, where teaching was very good, although learning was satisfactory because of class organisation problems. English teaching was good throughout Years 1 to 6. Maths teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In science, the quality varied but was sound overall. In other subjects, the quality of teaching and learning varied, but was satisfactory overall, with the exception of ICT where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, mainly because of the poor facilities.

Strengths in teaching three- to five-year-olds included well-organised classrooms with an emphasis on well-structured learning. Staff set very good personal examples for the children. The national strategies for teaching and learning English and maths in infant and junior classes are proving to be very useful. Other strengths in the teaching observed included the management of pupils' behaviour, which at times was very trying, good planning, and well-paced work which demanded a lot from the pupils. Areas of weakness included inappropriate pupil behaviour in junior classes that was not sufficiently well controlled, too much teacher talk at times, and insufficient attention given to lower attaining or uninterested pupils, who produced too little or unfinished work.

Literacy and numeracy are thoroughly taught in English and maths subject lessons, but insufficient emphasis is given to these important skills in other lessons. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop ICT skills.

Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well catered for through specialist lessons.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils' learning was satisfactory, matching the quality of teaching. However, in Years 3 to 6, learning was not as effective as the teaching, although still satisfactory, because of the impact of a minority of pupils with negative attitudes. For pupils with short attention spans, their listening and concentration in the afternoons can be unsatisfactory, particularly when lessons are interrupted by silly behaviour. In ICT, the lack of appropriate facilities results in passive pupils, developing inappropriate learning skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The National Curriculum subjects, Foundation Stage, personal, social and health education, and religious education are well planned; the only exception is ICT. Not all class timetables ensure a balanced coverage of subjects and there is insufficient emphasis on literacy and numeracy in planning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans are of good quality with clear targets. Helpful support staff, particularly when working with targeted groups, result in good progress for the pupils. The provision is well managed and structured.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Very effective language assessment helps staff to plan what is taught. Pupils make very good progress in acquiring English as a result of the support they receive from the school and visiting specialists.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Satisfactory. Provision for cultural development is good and satisfactory for social, moral and spiritual development. The school provides a good

development	range of experiences of local and more distant cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. This is a caring school where staff try to involve all pupils in their learning. The approach to behaviour management is good, with effective checking that pupils do behave. Monitoring and following up absence is unsatisfactory. Assessment of pupils is satisfactory but implementation is inconsistent. Insufficient use is made of assessment data in setting and then monitoring targets for pupils. Assessment systems are improving.

Following a period when parents were very unhappy with the school, where they felt they were not kept informed of important staffing changes that affected their children, they are now satisfied with what is taking place and believe that the new headteacher is involving them appropriately. The partnership with parents is sound and improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good leadership and sound management. The vision for the future is clear and appropriate. Pragmatic and effective work in many areas, led by the headteacher and supported by the deputy head, is helping to make rapid improvements in behaviour and achievement. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory and improving, carried out by staff new to their roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are a committed group of supporters, with varying degrees of knowledge about the school. Their monitoring role is the least well understood aspect of their work. Requirements for ICT are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. Scrutiny of pupils' books is effective and monitoring of teaching and learning by the most senior staff is good. Evaluation of subject-based work by some staff is insufficient. A comprehensive and good improvement plan has been drawn together following good consultative procedures.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and systems are appropriate. Satisfactory resources are well used, except in ICT where resources are poor. Classrooms and grounds are of good size but the ICT room is poor. Staff plan well to use the good facilities.

Staff are well qualified and sufficient in number. Some teaching assistants are very good. Accommodation is satisfactory. Money is spent carefully and efficiently. Improvements are needed in several areas of school life but, overall, the school is applying 'best value' principles appropriately by consulting parents and pupils to gain their views and comparing the school's achievements with like schools.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils like school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of consistency in setting homework

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are making good progress • The school expects high standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak communication with parents • Insufficient extra-curricular activities
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The thirty-five percent of parents returning their questionnaires were generally positive about the school as were the small number of parents attending a meeting prior to the inspection. The point was made very strongly by parents that the new headteacher, supported by her deputy and the staff, had made great improvements in recent months. This was following a very poor start at the beginning of this academic year when severe staffing problems resulted in an unacceptable education for their children. The inspectors agree that most, but not all, pupils now like coming to school and that the new headteacher and her staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, but good in some classes and much better than earlier in the year. Communication with parents was found to be satisfactory, with evidence of new, good initiatives. Homework is not set consistently, with some classes receiving more than others, and the range of extra-curricular activities in subject areas is disappointing for the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Overall standards are well below average and achievement is satisfactory.

Strengths

- Good progress is made in English over time and in science in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Areas for improvement

- Standards are well below average in some subjects.
 - Standards in literacy and numeracy are not developed widely enough.
 - Pupils' knowledge and understanding of ICT is unsatisfactory.
 - Lower attaining pupils do not achieve as well as higher attainers.
1. Children make sound progress achieving satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage across the six areas studied. Their attainment is generally well below average when they start in the Nursery. Learning, although satisfactory overall, is not as effective as it could be because Nursery and Reception children stay together in the same class for much of each morning, which disadvantages the older ones as the year progresses. Teaching approaches and preparation are often very good but the width of experience and age in the class is too great to enable all to progress well, and the older pupils with greater prior knowledge are disadvantaged. The outcome for the pupils is that few reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year and attainment is well below average.
 2. Children's personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory. They begin to learn to make choices between the range of activities offered, to play constructively and to behave appropriately. Achievements in communication, language and literature are similarly sound. Many enter the Nursery unable to communicate clearly and good early progress is often made, but progress is not as rapid for the older pupils. A few pupils have a good sight vocabulary by the time they leave Reception. Mathematical development follows a similar pattern. Several children can count to at least five at the end of the Reception year but others cannot. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is well below average, as in the other five areas of learning, but here too their progress through the Foundation Stage is sound. Several children know of the need for light and water for plant growth and have some knowledge of computer keyboards. Children's creative development is satisfactory. They explore tasks in the role-play area, are keen to sing, but do not always have the confidence to be creative. Progress in children's physical development is good, as effective individual use is made of the good resources available. Their attainment in this area is higher than for other goals, as pupils, for example, show an awareness of space and cut and stick paper.
 3. English standards in Year 2 are below average but achievements are good, as a result of the effective progress made across Key Stage 1, building on well below average entry standards. Pupils know of reading strategies and try to use them and they develop their speaking and listening skills. Opportunities for writing are satisfactory, but the lack of practice across subjects earlier in the year when the school had a very serious staffing problem, has left a legacy of underachievement. In mathematics, satisfactory progress overall over the two years up to the age of seven has resulted in well below average standards. Here too the staffing issues have affected continuity in learning over time and achievement is much better now than earlier in the year. The current focus on number work is helpful to the standards currently being attained by pupils. In the third core subject, science, standards are higher than in English and mathematics, and similar to national expectations; pupils' achievements are good considering their

prior knowledge. Some higher attainers understood the idea of fair testing and they had reasonable recall of science knowledge.

4. A generally similar picture is apparent in Key Stage 2, with below or well below average standards, currently satisfactory achievement, but unsatisfactory work earlier in the year because of the staffing problems. In English, the investment of time in the subject has helped pupils to attain below average standards and to make good progress over time. Speaking, listening and writing skills are underdeveloped but improving. Higher attainers generally achieve more, relative to their capabilities, than lower attainers, whose work is often unfinished. Year 6 pupils are having to make great efforts to catch up with wasted opportunities earlier in the year; a number have not developed the more advanced reading skills. Mathematics standards are well below average and achievements are satisfactory over Years 3 to 6. Boys are less successful than girls because they do not concentrate as well and, as in English, higher attainers are more successful than lower attainers. Number work standards are much better than those in using and applying mathematics. Pupils' attainment in science is well below average and their achievements just satisfactory overall, although much better currently than earlier in the year.
5. In other subjects, pupils' achievements are usually satisfactory. Attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is below that expected of pupils of their ages. ICT standards are well below average because the resources and accommodation are so poor. Pupils have had insufficient opportunity to use computers and their achievements and progress are unsatisfactory. In art, progress and achievement in Key Stage 1 have been satisfactory, but in Key Stage 2, in Year 6, work has been unsatisfactory because time allocated to art has been used to revise work in the core subjects for national tests. In geography, history, music, physical education, religious education, and design and technology, satisfactory progress is being made throughout both key stages. In history and geography the pupils low literacy skills impact on what they can attain, however. In design and technology, skill levels are low in both designing and making but pupils enjoy this work and concentrate reasonably well on their tasks. Singing is sound but pupils have too few opportunities to compose in music lessons. In religious education, pupils are learning a good number of facts about the world's religions but they do not reflect sufficiently on their meaning. Physical education standards are highly variable, with some very skilled boys and girls, but others with very low skills.
6. Pupils' literacy standards are below those expected. Standards in English are higher than in some other subjects but there is insufficient focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening, reading and writing skills across all subjects. Mathematics skills are infrequently reinforced in other subjects and are too low and unsatisfactory. They are often used better in mathematics lessons where pupils expect to apply them.
7. By the end of Year 6, the attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language is in line with other pupils in the school providing they have attended the school for several years. They make very good progress in their acquisition of speaking skills and achieve satisfactorily in all subjects.
8. There is an ethos amongst the teaching and support staff who work with pupils with special educational needs that they will do well and achieve. As a result, standards of attainment for these pupils are at least in line and often better than would be expected, bearing in mind their individual needs, and several achieve well during their time in the school. Most of their work is carried out in the classroom where they concentrate well when in supported groups. They are able to discuss their work sensibly with each other and adults and are pleased with their achievements.
9. Since the last inspection standards have fallen, particularly in Key Stage 2, although currently standards are improving as staff raise pupils' expectations, and work to improve standard assessment test results. Improvements have been unsatisfactory since the last inspection report in 1997.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Overall, standards in this area are satisfactory.

Strengths

- Most pupils, particularly the younger ones, behave sensibly in lessons and around school.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are generally good.

Areas for improvement

- A significant minority of pupils, mainly older boys, have negative attitudes to work and conduct, and disrupt learning for themselves and others.
- Attendance shows an unsatisfactory picture overall due, in the main, to prolonged absences of a few pupils. Figures are well below the average national figure.

10. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Younger pupils' behaviour is much better than that of pupils in Years 3 to 6. The determined efforts of the headteacher and staff to improve behaviour throughout the school are beginning to have a very positive effect. The decline in standards of behaviour that has occurred since the last inspection, commented on by parents, is now being successfully reversed. The majority of pupils behave sensibly in class and around the school because they understand and accept the standards expected of them and staff supervision is good. They are polite to visitors and recognise that respect for others and good manners are important. At play time they are lively and mostly mix well together. In lessons, especially in the infant classes, pupils do as they are asked, listen well to the teacher and to each other and settle to their work well. However, in Years 3 to 6, a significant minority of pupils, and especially boys, can be rude and aggressive and their behaviour is an unpleasant contrast to that of most other pupils. In order to manage poor behaviour, the attention of the teacher is diverted to a few pupils behaving badly, sometimes for long periods, and the learning for the whole class is affected. For example in a Year 6 music lesson, a few pupils were determined not to join in the lesson and behaved in a loud and silly manner so that the rest of the class could not share the experience of providing mood background music for miming tasks. Teachers generally manage poor behaviour well and are provided with good support by the headteacher and deputy. Where unacceptable behaviour occurs, the final sanction of exclusion is appropriately used to reinforce the school's determined approach to continue to improve behaviour. There were five fixed-period exclusions for unacceptable physical or verbal aggression during the 2001-2002 academic year.
11. Pupils' attitudes are, overall, unsatisfactory and this is especially so in Years 3 to 6. Parents are pleased that most pupils like to come to school. However, a minority of pupils do not show enthusiasm for their work or a willingness to stick to their tasks. Where there is a topic that is fun and a variety of tasks are planned, they remain on task and have satisfactory attitudes to learning, such as a Year 4 class doing science experiments about wind and friction in the hall. They used umbrellas to see the effect of wind drag. By contrast, when concentration and more effort are required, a few pupils become bored and begin to show difficult and unpleasant behaviour. This disrupts the class and frustrates other pupils so that they too lose interest in their work and wait passively until the poor behaviour is dealt with. The majority of younger pupils show enthusiasm in their lessons and they work with some persistence, such as a Year 1 class who were retelling the story of the three pigs to each other in a literacy lesson. Where lessons are not so well structured and do not have good pace, even the generally positive attitudes of infant pupils decrease and they work steadily but without seeming to enjoy the lesson or find any interest in their work.
12. During group work with their teaching assistants, pupils with special educational needs behave well and have good attitudes to work. However, in larger groups they are not always as well behaved. Pupils for whom English is an additional language generally work hard, concentrate in lessons and behave well.

13. Pupils' personal development and relationships are sound and underpinned by the school's clear social and moral values. Pupils are generally happy to undertake a number of responsibilities in class. Older pupils also carry out one or two duties for the school, such as preparing the hall for assembly. The school council is not currently operating but there are plans to reintroduce the council soon. Pupils appreciate being praised for what they do well. They are aware of the need to help others and, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils were showing good enterprise in collecting money through a 'lucky draw' to help children in Iraq affected by the war. Pupils are able to work sensibly in groups and encouraged to show respect for what other people say and think. At times they show real interest and this was very evident in the assemblies seen during the inspection, when pupils listened in a mature and sensible way and most were keen to be involved. Relationships are good and even pupils whose behaviour is a cause of concern like and respect their teachers.

14. Attendance is unsatisfactory overall and well below the national average. There have been a number of short-term absences for minor illnesses during the year but the main reason for the school's poor attendance figures is the very long periods of absence of a few pupils. There have been two pupils with long periods of absence for family reasons and eight pupils who have had extended holidays to visit their relatives abroad. Such periods of absence for several months have a serious impact on the school's attendance profile and these pupils' achievements. The very positive approach of the headteacher to challenging late arrival in the morning has led to an improvement in punctuality during the year so now fewer families are late arriving at school.

15. Since the last inspection in 1997, attendance has fallen greatly, behaviour and attitudes are significantly worse, and pupils' personal development is not as good. Notwithstanding the substantial and on-going improvements in all four areas, as recent policies and systems are rigorously implemented, progress since the last inspection has been poor.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Effective use is made of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy in English and mathematics lessons.
- In a number of lessons, teachers showed very good behaviour management skills, sometimes in very trying circumstances.

Areas for improvement

- Poor, cramped and very stuffy ICT facilities make teaching and learning of this subject very difficult.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to specific teaching of literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to the learning of lower attaining pupils in some lessons.

16. The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage stems from the quiet, calm ethos and effective relationships between adults and the children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teaching adults plan carefully to try to meet the greatly varying needs of the children and provide a clear and very good personal example for them. Language is used skilfully and with care to help develop pupils' vocabularies and use of Standard English. For example, when a group of pupils described a range of shoes in a box - slippers, boots, trainers – discussions went on to describe 'boots clomping' and similar phrases. Teachers work hard to give children responsibility for their own learning at an early stage, focusing on imaginative and sustained play. Learning is not as effective as teaching, however. Progress and achievement over time is satisfactory rather than very good because of the manner in which Nursery

and Reception children are organised. Both groups of children are taught together for much of each morning and the range in pupils' attainment is so great that it proves very difficult to challenge and extend the older groups as well as promoting the learning of the very low attaining and new arrivals. Some are vociferous and can be difficult to manage; others are quiet and hard to involve in their learning.

17. The overall satisfactory quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 ranged in individual lessons from very good to unsatisfactory, with strengths in English and science. Effective use was made of the three-part lesson in English and, to a certain extent, in mathematics. In science, there was a good emphasis on explaining learning intentions to the pupils. The quality of teaching in the few lessons seen in other subjects was satisfactory overall but with some variation. In art, work showed that pupils learn new vocabulary and improve their literacy skills, and in music, teachers' appropriate subject knowledge and skills enabled pupils to learn effectively. Where teachers' subject knowledge was good and pupils' behaviour was well managed, learning was most effective. Work was usually matched to the differing needs of pupils. Teachers' knowledge and planning were at least satisfactory in ICT, but the poor, very stuffy, cramped conditions in the computer room pushed teachers' tolerance levels to the limit. This unacceptable environment reduced the quality of teaching and learning.
18. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning was also satisfactory. Learning was only just satisfactory because of the attitudes of a minority of boys in some classes, who tried to reduce the effectiveness of the teaching. Teaching of English and mathematics were good because of the effective use of the national literacy and numeracy strategies although insufficient use is made of ICT. These strategies provide a useful structure and carefully considered work that focuses the pupils on their learning. Behaviour and attitudes, if somewhat briefly in some cases, improved as a result. Science teaching was sound, with well-considered questions and clear explanations resulting in some good learning. In all other subjects, with the exception of ICT, the picture is similar. Teachers have sound or better subject knowledge, they work hard at managing pupils' behaviour, and have appropriate expectations of the pupils. In ICT, as in Key Stage 1, the facilities and accommodation detract from the work of the teachers and restrict what can be achieved.
19. An example of very good teaching took place for older juniors in a lesson on the meaning of 'environment'. The high quality questioning took pupils' initial answers further, developing their understanding. Terms such as global warming, the greenhouse effect and pollution were discussed knowledgeably. Work was made relevant to the pupils and anecdotal experiences maintained their interest. Expectations were clear and high and pupils with special educational needs and low attainers were as involved as the most able. Pupils were helped to work together, as individuals questioned one another within groups. The end session involved further questioning as groups presented their findings, which had been thoroughly researched using the internet. Learning was very effective as pupils concentrated, communicated and listened well. In a much less successful lesson, where pupils were learning about ancient Greek culture, pupils were slow to settle and those with negative attitudes, all low attainers, learnt little. Those not wanting to learn did not respond well to praise or admonishment and interrupted what others were trying to do. The pace of work as a result was slow; the pupils who made effective progress were the self-motivated high attainers who got on quietly and completed tasks. Teaching in such an environment was difficult, and unsuccessful. At other times, teachers spoke for too long and work was not well enough matched to the needs of lower attaining pupils.
20. Homework is set, but not consistently so, and there are differences between years in the quality and quantity of what is expected. A more consistent approach is needed, where relevant tasks are set, that reinforce work in lessons or require research and enquiry. Marking is also carried out inconsistently. Some pupils' work is thoroughly checked, both class and home work, with helpful targets for improvement and guidance on how to improve, whereas other tasks remain unmarked for some time, if marked at all.

21. Classroom support staff are often very effective, helping a range of pupils to learn more easily. This is not always the case however and, on a few occasions, learning support assistants were more occupied with technical activities than the learning of the pupils.
22. Teachers plan well for pupils who have English as an additional language. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are very well supported by the visiting teachers from the local education authority, who work on developing their understanding of concepts in English as well as their ability to communicate on a day-to-day basis. In lessons where they are well supported by high quality teaching assistants they make very good progress, learning effectively. Their work reflects what is being covered by all pupils in the class and is firmly based within the National Curriculum.
23. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well especially when they are given effective and appropriate support. This is particularly true in classes where the teacher uses the targets set on a pupil's individual education plan as the basis for planning. For example, in one class where one pupil had behavioural problems, he behaved and took part in the lesson as a result of the teacher – pupil relationship, as they followed the targets set out in the pupils' pastoral support plan. A number of high quality teaching assistants, with good subject knowledge, are highly regarded by their teacher colleagues, and are included in planning and assessment activities. Good communication between teachers and support staff is a strong feature in the good provision for these pupils, enabling them to learn well.
24. Literacy skills are promoted in some lessons and work is sometimes marked for accuracy in written English. Grammar and spelling levels, which are often low, are helped by this practice. Pupils' speaking skills are very infrequently corrected, however, and teachers do not focus on improving specific language skills in subjects other than English, for example in history and science. The same situation exists in numeracy, where insufficient attention is given to teaching number work specifically in most subjects, but particularly in design and technology, physical education and science.
25. The quality of teaching is lower than at the time of the last inspection, with fewer very good lessons and more that were unsatisfactory. The strengths identified in 1997 are similar to those today, but they are less apparent now. Weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge six years ago no longer apply but there are other issues that need to improve. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

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

The overall provision for the curriculum is satisfactory.

Strengths

- Good short-, medium- and long-term plans are in place to ensure full coverage of all subjects.
- The national strategies for English and mathematics are well embedded and make a significant contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good.
- Cultural diversity and understanding are celebrated and well promoted.
- Some assemblies are of a very high quality, promoting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very well indeed.

Areas for improvement

- The organisation of the school day results in not all the available time being effectively used.
- Opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT skills to be used in other subjects are not planned rigorously enough into the curriculum.

- Further opportunities for extra-curricular activities would be appreciated by both pupils and their parents.
26. The curriculum has strengths but also some areas of weakness. Planning for the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good, with an appropriate emphasis on the Early Learning Goals. The planned curriculum is not as effectively implemented as it could be, however, because Nursery and Reception class children have to be taught together for much of the time in the mornings.
 27. The new staff team have worked hard to ensure that all subjects are effectively planned for, but the way the school day is currently organised does not help delivery of the curriculum. Although sufficient time is allocated overall, the balance of work across subjects is uneven. Some lessons are too long, whilst others are too short and in both cases this affects the quality of what is offered. The school plans well for English, mathematics and science but a disproportionate amount of time is spent on English and this takes time away from other subjects. The preparation for national tests in Year 6 resulted in insufficient curriculum opportunities in art earlier in the year, but this situation is being redressed currently. The national strategies for English and mathematics have been properly implemented and make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, the use of these skills is not planned rigorously enough within the rest of the curriculum and as a consequence they are insufficiently used across a range of subjects. Other subjects of the National Curriculum are broadly covered, with sound policies and planning for continuity and progression in learning, with the exception of planning for the use of ICT in subjects. In this respect, statutory requirements are not fully met for ICT.
 28. Pupils' personal development, including a knowledge of sex education and the misuse of substances, is supported by a comprehensive programme for PSHE. For example, time is made available - circle time - for pupils to discuss together social successes or difficulties. Overall, the school makes appropriate provision for the intellectual, physical and emotional development of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language.
 29. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have the opportunity to take part in all activities offered by the school, and in addition, a very successful Urdu club takes place weekly, where pupils are taught the language. Lesson activities are modified appropriately for pupils with special educational needs, who join in all that takes place in their classes. The individual education plans drawn up for pupils with special educational needs identify sensible targets which help teachers in their planning, with the result that pupils can make good use of the learning opportunities offered to them. The targets set for each child are specific and attainable, for example "learn strategies for spelling using known letter patterns". An adequate number of targets for each pupil cover literacy, numeracy and behaviour where appropriate.
 30. The school currently offers a few extra-curricular activities, in particular football, netball, recorders and guitar. Pupils particularly remarked upon enjoying the Urdu club and found the "booster" classes helpful in preparation for their national tests. Although these make a valuable contribution to certain areas of the school curriculum, they do not offer sufficient enrichment of the wider curriculum. The school already has plans to introduce, by the end of the year, further clubs to support the curriculum. Visits to places of interest, such as a nearby mosque, and a residential trip to Norfolk all contribute significantly to pupils' learning experiences.
 31. The school makes satisfactory provision for the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils. The behaviour policy and the school's 'golden rules' are understood and respected by most pupils and these provide a sound basis for moral and social development. Through discussions with class teachers, assemblies and the PSHE programme, pupils are able to discuss and think about a range of social and moral issues and to develop a clear understanding about how they should behave to others and how what they do and say has an affect on other people. In assemblies, some of which are very

good indeed, issues such as bullying, respect, boasting, being confident, forgiveness and kindness are developed and often linked to a parable or religious story to give an example. As a result of the clear and consistent emphasis placed on social and moral development, pupils gain in confidence and maturity as they move through the school and standards of behaviour are improving. Care for others, respect and good manners are emphasised, as well as the need to work hard and always do your best.

32. Relationships are generally good between teachers and pupils and all adults provide a good example to pupils, treating them with courtesy and respect. Parents appreciate the fact that the values and attitudes the school promotes have a positive effect on their children. There is also a developing emphasis on being responsible for yourself as well as being part of a class and having a wider responsibility. This includes charity collections that pupils undertake. Although a significant minority of older pupils find it difficult to keep to the school code and do interrupt lessons, the school is developing into a well-ordered community in which pupils show enjoyment in their work and play and a desire to learn and do well.
33. The school values the cultures of the pupils and this is reflected in the Urdu Club, in the use of labels in other languages, and the way pupils greet each other at register time, in a language other than English. Through the reading books available to pupils, music, art and stories read to them, pupils learn about children and their experiences in other lands and the religions and cultures of other people in the world. Good use is made of a limited but valuable range of visits out of school to extend the understanding and experience of the pupils. Through history and local studies that pupils undertake around their neighbourhood, they develop a sound understanding of their own local history as well as of the Ancient Greeks, Tudors and Victorians. The school promotes cultural understanding well.
34. Pupils' spiritual development is soundly developed. The assembly programme is appropriately structured to allow pupils to learn about and reflect on a variety of moral issues and how these affect their daily lives and influence those around them. Moments of prayer and quiet reflection are respected by most pupils who behave sensibly in assembly and recognise that it is a special time in the day. There is an emphasis in many classes at all levels through the school on valuing nature, the environment and one's own growth and development. In the Foundation Stage, for example, children spent time looking at feet and shoes. They looked at their feet closely to see shape and size, toes and heels, and then carried out right foot prints in pink paint which they found very interesting, with a real sense of magical discovery. The improving understanding of right and wrong, and of respect for others, also has a spiritual dimension, especially in the careful approach taken by adults in helping pupils with behaviour problems come to terms with their difficulties.
35. The school has valuable links with local industry, including help from a large oil company who assisted with the development of the school's bog garden. Good curriculum links have also been developed with the local secondary schools.
36. When the school was last inspected the curriculum in Key Stage 2 was judged to be good, with the exception of ICT, unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum now is not as well planned for Key Stage 2, it is similarly effective in the Foundation Stage and better in Key Stage 1. Improvement since the last report is satisfactory overall.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Pupils are well cared for and assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Strengths

- Pupils feel safe and confident at school because staff make pupils' welfare a high priority.
- Good monitoring of pupils' behaviour is leading to improvement.

- The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is well tracked and recorded.

Areas for improvement

- Attendance is not well monitored and following up of unexplained absences is not rigorous enough.
 - Target-setting and keeping records of pupils' progress are not carried out in a systematic and consistent way.
 - Two health and safety issues: the computer room provides a poor working environment and the adult toilets are inappropriately located off the dining-room.
37. Matters of child protection are well managed. The school is a caring and inclusive community and pupils feel safe and confident. Regular fire drills and inspections of equipment take place and arrangements for first aid and medical care of pupils are good. Very good links have been established to a number of agencies, which extend the care provided by the school, for example the school nurse and the education welfare service. Two matters of health and safety were noted as concerns. Toilets for members of staff open directly off the dining hall with only one solid door to give privacy to the cloakroom area. The location of these facilities was of special concern at lunch time when pupils were lining up for their lunches outside the cloakrooms. Secondly, the new computer room is poorly ventilated and provides a poor environment in which to work.
38. Procedures for monitoring personal development are satisfactory overall. Although all teaching staff have only been in post for a limited amount of time, they assign a high priority to recognising the needs of pupils in their care, and have worked with great determination to get to know the pupils and their individual needs. As a result, staff have a good knowledge of pupils and of how they are developing as young people. This information is not recorded systematically, however.
39. Monitoring of behaviour is good and this is helping to improve standards throughout the school. The behaviour policy is well structured and used by adults. The sanctions and rewards that apply are understood by pupils and are used to support those few who find it difficult to comply and can be disruptive in class. Staff are clear in their approach and spend time talking to pupils where behaviour is unacceptable, to help them to understand how they can make things better and how what they do affects other people. Within the behaviour policy and the tiered structure of sanctions, there is nevertheless a flexible approach so that staff can respond to each situation and put in place support to meet the needs of the individual as well as recognise the seriousness of the poor behaviour. Incidents of poor behaviour are well recorded and positive behaviour is recognised and marked by rewards. The celebration tree in the hall, with leaves to record the positive contributions of pupils, is a very visible monitoring tool and loved by the pupils.
40. Monitoring of attendance is unsatisfactory. Office procedures are inconsistent and ineffective. No close monitoring of the registers takes place on a regular basis. There is no consistent approach to telephone and letter contact with parents to draw their attention to concerns about attendance, or to follow up at a very early stage when no reasons are given for absence. The education welfare service provides good support to the school and follows up on the more serious cases of poor attendance. The active approach of the headteacher and deputy headteacher and the introduction of a late book in the reception area have helped to improve punctuality to school. Each day the headteacher greets pupils and parents and there is immediate challenge to those who arrive late.
41. Assessment is satisfactory overall but with some variation in practice as staff new to the school come to terms with procedures, and the systems themselves are reviewed by the new headteacher. In English and mathematics, teachers keep individual records of pupils' progress, in some cases daily. A more consistent approach would be helpful, and one less onerous than is currently followed by some staff. In science, group records enable teachers to maintain a sound understanding of progress against planned activities. In other subjects, the approach and records of progress are more variable with little

information held about some subjects. End-of-topic tests in science and in some other subjects, and end-of-year assessments in English and mathematics, provide useful data. This is not, however, used sufficiently to review pupils' successes or to make curriculum adjustments. Individual teacher annotations on their own planning do provide helpful assessment information. Where targets are set, pupils are not always aware of them and a more consistent approach is needed.

42. The progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language is carefully tracked. Progress in home language development is also followed, through the work of a specialist and through the assistance of older siblings. This represents very good assessment practice.
43. For each pupil with special educational needs at the 'school action' stage or above, an individual education plan is drawn up. Their contents are discussed regularly and monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator, assessing the progress made by each pupil. This is good practice. Personal support plans are also drawn up for pupils with more difficult behavioural problems to support them in improving their behaviour.
44. The quality of care provided is similar overall to that reported in the last inspection, although assessment procedures are not as rigorous or as consistently applied. Progress since that time has been just satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Overall, links with parents are satisfactory.

Strengths

- Parents have generally positive views about many aspects of the school.
- Good opportunities, both formal and informal, are being offered for parents to become more involved with the school and to discuss their children's progress.
- Good measures are in place to welcome new parents into the school and to make information accessible to all.

Areas for improvement

- Not all parents feel comfortable approaching the school with problems.
45. The partnership with parents is sound and improving after a very difficult period in which the confidence parents had in the school and the standard of education being provided for pupils was shaken. The majority of parents appreciate that their children enjoy school and that they make progress in their learning. They believe pupils are expected to work hard and to do their best in their work and are encouraged to become mature, sensible and responsible young people. The inspection supported these positive views. A number of parents did not feel that the school worked closely with them or that they were as well informed about the progress their children were making as they should like to be. A further concern was the range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. Some parents were also unhappy about the amount of homework that was set. The findings of the inspection did recognise that, although a great deal had been done to improve the links with parents and also the range and flow of information between home and school, there are areas which could still be improved. The school is aware of this and working to improve the partnership with parents. Extra-curricular activities are limited but trips from school and school clubs are improving.
 46. Although there is more to do to strengthen the links and involve parents fully in the life of the school, a very good start has already been made. A satisfactory range of information is available. The prospectus and annual report of governors are being redesigned and more information will be available to parents explaining the aims of the school and recent developments. Newsletters will also shortly be available on

a more regular basis as the school recognise that parents would like more frequent news and information sent home. A positive feature of the information provided is the termly meeting with parents focusing on reviewing pupils' targets and keeping parents well informed about the progress their child is making. The school regrets that these meetings are not as well attended as they would wish. The annual report to parents on their children's progress is detailed and informative, including helpful targets for improvement, such as to develop fine motor skills in Reception or to learn certain multiplication tables in Year 5. The report is sent to parents before the summer term parents' meeting so that it can be discussed with staff, and a number of parents send back to the school a return slip commenting on the report itself. A very good recent initiative has been the regular coffee mornings arranged for parents by the headteacher. Informal and friendly, these meetings provide an opportunity for exchanging ideas and asking questions.

47. Parents provide satisfactory support to the school. A few parents help regularly in classes and with practical tasks and many parents volunteer to help with trips and outings from school. A positive feature is the parents and teachers association, which has a range of social and fundraising events each year to support the school. Funds raised have been used to provide useful equipment and additional facilities, such as new playground equipment. The help parents give with their children's work at home is satisfactory overall but the school recognises that some parents find it difficult to support their children with homework. New parents are given a good introduction to the school. On each class window is a good range of general information for parents to keep them updated and good arrangements are in place to keep parents who have language or literacy difficulties fully involved. The school is aware that some parents do not yet feel comfortable approaching the school with problems and feel that the partnership is still being built between them and the school. Where problems develop, the school is quick to make contact with parents and involve them in devising plans to help support pupils and resolve difficulties. Consultations with parents on key issues relating to the school do take place. Good exchanges with class teachers at the end of the day and the positive approach of the headteacher are helping to make a stronger partnership with the parent body.
48. Effective home-school links have been forged by teachers of English as an additional language, which are helping parents to become involved in their children's learning. Parents are welcomed in school to discuss their children's progress and any issues that need to be addressed.
49. The school makes every effort to ensure that parents are invited to the annual reviews for those pupils who have a statement of special educational need. Targets set in individual education plans are shared with parents, and pupils and parents are encouraged to contribute to the target setting process. However, they do not currently sign the plan to show that they have read it and are in agreement with it.
50. The excellent partnership between parents and staff referred to in the last report is not as strong today, but it is improving rapidly, and from a very low base point only two terms ago. The current sound partnership represents unsatisfactory progress since 1997.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The overall quality of leadership and management in the school is satisfactory.

Strengths

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and, together with the deputy headteacher, is building an effective and hard working team committed to raising standards.
- Senior management is not afraid of taking difficult decisions in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning for the pupils.
- The school's clear aims and values are a result of wide consultation within the school community.

- A number of high quality teaching assistants and specialist staff ensure that the learning of pupils with special educational needs is good and very good for pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Areas for improvement

- Not all governors have a clear understanding of their roles in guiding the future direction of the school and monitoring its progress.
 - ICT is not used sufficiently in administrative procedures.
 - The quality of ICT resources and accommodation is poor.
 - Targets in the good school development plan are not linked closely enough to financial costs.
51. The new headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has made significant improvements in her short time at the school, which have begun to reverse the unsatisfactory progress made in this area since the last inspection. The headteacher and deputy are both enthusiastic, have a clear educational vision for the school, lead by example, and are committed to making further improvements. This effective senior management team is having a positive impact on all aspects of school life. Their good leadership has built up a committed and well-motivated staff team who are putting a lot of effort into raising standards. Senior management is not afraid of taking difficult decisions in order to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve. As a result of the complete staff turnover in the past eighteen months, all are new to their roles, such as subject co-ordination. They are receiving helpful training in order to understand more fully what is required of them. Management of the school is sound.
 52. The school has clear aims and values which have been drawn up through consultation between teachers, governors, parents and pupils. This is very good practice. These are being used as the starting point for all developments and, as a result, the school is becoming a very welcoming and caring community, where all its members are valued and in which achievement is starting to improve. Good induction procedures ensure that future new members of staff will be given the necessary support so that they understand and subscribe to these aims and that they quickly become part of the team.
 53. A further strength in the leadership and management of the school is evident in the good provision for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. In this area, good co-ordination and effective management mean that pupils receive appropriate support, and teaching that is matched to their needs. This leads to pupils learning well. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very effectively managed.
 54. The governing body is committed to the well-being and education of the pupils at the school. Through its appropriate committee structure, it ensures that the school and the governing body meet all statutory requirements with the exception of provision for the teaching of ICT. Governors are beginning to work as part of a team with the headteacher and staff to shape the future development of the school, particularly with regard to the raising of academic standards. Some governors visit the school regularly, and are aware of their evaluation role. Governors are working on a visiting policy and have plans to make this aspect of their work more effective in the future.
 55. Most governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the education provided within the school; some do not. They contribute to and finally approve the school improvement plan and have started to monitor its implementation through reports given at meetings and through visits to the school. A few governors do not have a clear understanding of the work of the school nor of their own role in supporting this. The governors have appropriate policies for the school including those that promote appropriate race relations and planning for disabled access to the buildings, although some of these are in draft form.
 56. All subject co-ordinators are new to their roles. They have not yet had the opportunity to observe colleagues teaching in order to identify strengths and areas for development in their particular subject. Plans exist for them to carry out joint lesson observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher in

order to develop monitoring skills. This is good practice, working towards achieving moderated and reliable judgements which will help in the drive for improvements. Co-ordinators and senior managers look at the quality of work in pupils' books and have received training from outside experts in other aspects of their roles. These reviews mean that co-ordinators are aware of which areas of their subjects are most effectively taught and in which improvements are needed, for example the quality of handwriting and presentation, and the underachievement of some lower attainers compared with higher attainers. Past issues of underachievement in the school are now being addressed as a result of the work being carried out.

57. Currently, the school has an informal system of performance management based on interviews held between the headteacher and members of staff. Although such a process is valuable to all concerned, the nationally recommended framework has not been fully implemented, as other developments have, rightly, had a higher priority. This unsatisfactory situation is now being resolved and the full scheme will be implemented within the current term. The headteacher has had her own professional targets set by the governing body.
58. The school has a good, comprehensive improvement plan. It has been drawn together as a result of consultation between staff and governors and contains all of the subject action plans. Appropriate priorities for development are centred around raising standards, in both academic and personal development. The priorities are clearly linked to resource needs and the criteria for judging success, with clear time limits. However, not all of the targets have costs linked to them, which is a weakness, bearing in mind the school's tight budgetary restraints. It is clear from the plan that the school is setting its own agenda for improvement whilst at the same time responding to national and local education authority initiatives.
59. The arrangements for the financial management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school has a set of financial routines which are understood and followed by the staff involved. The governing body has outlined areas delegated to the headteacher with regard to the day-to-day running of the school and in particular financial management. All grants made to the school by outside agencies are effectively used and all the recommendations set out in the most recent audit report are being implemented. The headteacher and the governing body's finance committee together, effectively oversee the management of the school's finances. The finance committee monitors expenditure regularly, approves the annual budget, and recommends it to the full governing body for approval.
60. Overall the school's procedures for ensuring best value principles are sound. The school has clearly set out strategies, including competitive tendering, for ensuring that the best value for money is obtained for all items of expenditure. The school is beginning to develop its systems for consulting parents and pupils - they have recently been consulted about the school's aims and there are plans to revive the currently defunct school council. The governing body compares the quality of education offered by the school with other schools, through comparing National Curriculum test results with those of other schools. However, the data does not exist in the school for them to be able to do this for more than the most recent results. The school's running costs are high when compared with similar schools because of the presence of the deputy headteacher, who does not have responsibility for a class, funded by the local education authority to help alleviate staffing and other problems at the school. Taking account of the current satisfactory management and good leadership, satisfactory teaching and learning, satisfactory achievement, unsatisfactory pupil attitudes and attendance, sound behaviour and the high cost per pupil, the school is considered to be providing unsatisfactory value for money at present.
61. The school's use of new technology to increase its efficiency is unsatisfactory overall. The voluntary fund is maintained in a manual ledger rather than on the computer which results in an inefficient use of time by the administrative staff. Insufficient use is made of ICT in administrative procedures. Attendance is not recorded on the computer which makes it difficult to follow up and spot trends in absences. Only limited use is made of programs to track pupils' performance and personnel data is only

just being entered onto the school's system. ICT is only used on a limited basis in classrooms as a tool for learning and is not used sufficiently to support learning in English and mathematics.

62. Staffing is good. The school has sufficient well-qualified teachers to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and that a satisfactory education is provided. The school employs some highly effective teaching assistants who provide very good support for the learning of the pupils with whom they work. In one or two cases the support is less effective, where staff do not have a clear understanding of their role.

63. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, as is the range of resources available. There are two halls and the classrooms are well proportioned, light and airy. The large attractive grounds are well used by teachers to enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils. However, some weaknesses in the accommodation do have a negative effect on standards. The ICT room is poor and provides an unpleasant working and learning environment. It lacks ventilation and is too small to accommodate a whole class. The number of computers is insufficient for children to carry out work effectively; there are too few chairs and those that are provided are uncomfortable and do not encourage pupils to adopt the correct posture when using a computer. The organisation of the school office space is also unsatisfactory. The head's office and the general office are separated by the dining hall, which hinders effective communication. The staff toilet facilities are unsatisfactorily located.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. To continue the significant improvements made in recent months, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) Work with pupils, their parents and other adults to create a more consistently positive attitude towards the school, so that improvements are made in pupils' attendance, pupils' attitudes to learning, and the behaviour of a small minority of boys;
(paragraphs 10, 11, 14, 40)
- (2) Raise the standard of pupils' work in mathematics and science, and ensure a consistent approach to covering the skills of literacy and numeracy in all subject teaching;
(paragraphs 4, 6, 24, 27)
- (3) Offer pupils many more opportunities to use ICT in a range of ways so that their knowledge and understanding increases to at least an average standard for their ages. Improved resources and facilities for teaching and learning of ICT are essential if standards are to improve.
(paragraphs 5, 17, 18, 27, 63, 123-126)

65. The governors may also wish to consider including the following points in their action plan:

- ◆ Current arrangements for Reception and Nursery classes working together in one class, in one room, do not enable a high enough proportion of children to attain the Early Learning Goals. *(66-83)*
- ◆ Not all governors have a clear understanding of the work of the school. *(55)*
- ◆ The structure of the timetable in some classes is unhelpful in attaining higher standards. *(27)*
- ◆ One or two teaching assistants are insufficiently effective in lessons. *(21, 62)*
- ◆ Some marking of pupils' work does not provide sufficient constructive criticism or a clear indication to pupils as to how their work should improve. *(20)*
- ◆ Work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' prior knowledge, particularly for lower attainers. *(4, 19)*
- ◆ Insufficient use is made of ICT in school administration and there is insufficient clarity over administrative procedures. *(61)*
- ◆ The location of the staff toilets, just off the dining hall, is inappropriate and a health and safety concern. *(37, 63)*
- ◆ Pupils would benefit from a wider range of extra-curricular activities. *(30)*
- ◆ Targets in the school development plan should all be carefully costed. *(58)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

43

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	14	15	4	0	0
Percentage	0	19	34	37	10	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 over two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	166
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	46

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	25

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8
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 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	12	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	23	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (69)	79 (66)	83 (62)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	23	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (66)	83 (66)	93 (66)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	12	19	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	16	14	16
	Total	24	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (50)	69 (32)	81 (79)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	7
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	22	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (50)	63 (64)	66 (75)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	141	4	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	2	1	
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	17		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2		
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	144

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	540767
Total expenditure	555643
Expenditure per pupil	3020
Balance brought forward from previous year	29670
Balance carried forward to next year	14794

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	17
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
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	178
Number of questionnaires returned	63

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	30	5	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	49	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	59	13	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	44	23	5	2
The teaching is good.	44	44	5	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	35	27	10	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	37	8	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	44	5	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	19	40	31	10	0
The school is well led and managed.	30	44	13	5	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	56	6	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	18	30	35	7

Other issues raised by parents

Parents believe the school is now making progress in several important areas, but state that their children had a poor time prior to the arrival of current staff, because of massive staff turnover and the resulting inconsistencies and discontinuities in management, care, teaching and learning.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

Strengths

- very good teaching, and support from the nursery nurse and classroom assistants, which enables children to make at least satisfactory progress
- a balanced curriculum effectively covering all six areas for children's development

Areas for improvement

- organisation of accommodation and classes in such a way that some Reception age children are not sufficiently challenged

66. Children enter the Reception year after their fourth birthday. There are two entry points during the year, one in September and one in January. Prior to joining Reception, most have attended the school Nursery daily for the morning session. Therefore almost all children join Reception having had a similar experience. The overall standard of their attainment when children join the Nursery is well below average, with several at the very early stages of personal and language development.

67. Nursery and Reception children work together for much of each morning. This helps to achieve a good transition from one class to the other but older children are disadvantaged as the year progresses by this arrangement. There are separate Reception and Nursery classrooms available but, with one teacher and two support staff, best use cannot be made of these different facilities with just one designated class. Children from age three to over five are together in one area, and the demands of the well below average entry into the Nursery are great. Therefore not enough time can be made available for challenging the older pupils to reach the Early Learning Goals in preparation for Year 1.

68. The curriculum is well planned and appropriate and the quality of teaching and support from the nursery nurse and teaching assistants is very good, but children's learning and their achievement are only sound in most areas of development because of current arrangements. The school is working towards improving organisation by creating an integrated early years unit, where there will be enough space and facilities for two separate groups of children, the Nursery and Reception classes, in one area. This entails making structural changes to the building. Such an arrangement would enable the teacher to oversee the work of both age groups in one large area whilst managing facilities and time more effectively to meet the needs of all children. In this way, with the current very good quality of teaching, a higher proportion of the Reception group could attain the Early Learning Goals.

69. The quiet, calm ethos and good relationships that exist between adults secures a very settled start for all children. They are very well cared for and activities are effectively planned and organised around the six areas of learning. There is a very good balance between learning activities planned by the teacher and those chosen by children. The two classrooms, outdoor facilities and good quality materials provide very good potential resources, but with current staffing levels for the number of pupils in the Nursery and Reception children, best use cannot always be made of them.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The rooms are organised in such a way that children have good opportunities to make choices and decisions from the variety of activities planned for them, especially first thing in the morning. Reception children are encouraged to be independent and organise their personal belongings by hanging up their coats and being responsible for changing their shoes. They work and play together constructively, share and take turns and tidy up well at the end of an activity. One afternoon, children were involved in several different activities and after each one they put away equipment quickly and efficiently and no time was wasted. Reception children begin to have other small responsibilities such as taking the register to the office. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and expect them to be polite, help one another, be kind, gentle and listen to each other. They are reminded to put their hand up and not to call out. This creates a good foundation for behaviour in school in the future. Challenging behaviour is dealt with firmly but positively. During snack time, pupils sit quietly with their drink and fruit, remembering to say please and thank you. Reception age children, however, because they spend each morning with the Nursery children, are not always given the personal attention they need to develop further. In areas such as sharing ideas about cultures and beliefs, and responding with a range of feelings, they could achieve more. Overall children make satisfactory progress, with the greater success for Nursery children than Reception. Most of the pupils in Reception are unlikely to attain the Early Learning Goals for personal, social and emotional development

Communication, language and literacy

71. Teaching in this area of development is very good. Children are offered many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening, including playing in the role-play area which, during the week of the inspection, was a shoe shop. This complemented their theme for the week, which was "feet". On another occasion, the shoe shop had become a café. Many join Nursery unable to communicate clearly but by the time they are nearly ready to leave Reception most talk in sentences and can be clearly understood. In a very well planned lesson to introduce a new sound and its letter formation, the teacher used a wide variety of approaches to help all children learn. She demonstrated the actions for the letter "y" clearly and most children learned swiftly because they enjoyed making the movements. This was followed up by carefully planned tasks related to each child's ability. Writing areas, sometimes set up by the children themselves, are a sign of their keenness to write. Reading books are taken home on a regular basis and all children have a book bag. Reading records are conscientiously kept by the teaching assistant and parents are encouraged to contribute to a reading dialogue between home and school. A few children have a good sight vocabulary and use their knowledge of sounds to tackle new words or use the pictures to help them.
72. Overall, children make satisfactory progress. Nursery age children's achievements are good but those in Reception, because work is not always challenging for them make just satisfactory progress. Many of them are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year, for example, in using talk to clarify their thinking and to explore meanings of new words, and in attempting to read more complex words. Late each morning, when the Nursery children leave, the Reception pupils have a dedicated literacy time. This is helpful in extending their knowledge and understanding of language.

Mathematical development

73. Teaching in this area is also very good as staff work hard to meet the diverse and great needs of many of the children in a non-ideal class arrangement. By the time they leave Reception, several children can count to at least five and some can count beyond. In an activity counting the socks on a washing line the teacher successfully supported children in learning to add by pegging some socks on one side of the line and some on the other. Most could find the answer by counting all the socks and some could explain the sum and how they got their answer. Through a variety of activities, they become more confident and demonstrate the ability to count backwards as well as forwards. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the language of number such as "bigger", "smaller", "less than" and "more than". Children's work shows that a few can add and take away numbers beyond ten. During a session where

pupils were involved in a variety of activities the teacher worked with two higher attaining children. They were given a purse with ten 1p coins and asked to find different ways of sharing the coins between them to practise their number bonds to ten. The teacher then added two more coins and challenged them to take one coin away and record the number sentence.

74. Overall, progress for Nursery children is good, and sometimes very good, while those in Reception make satisfactory progress. The time available for Reception children to be taught mathematics is not always sufficient for these pupils to develop their understanding as far as possible, although, as for literacy, there is some dedicated time for these pupils at the end of the morning. Few of the Reception children will attain the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. The outside environment makes a very good contribution to this area of development and adults support children well in investigating their surroundings. Standards of teaching are very good. Previous work shows how children have examined the heads of flowers, worn special clothes for the festival of Eid - helping them to develop a knowledge of different faiths and cultures - and observed change through cooking pancakes. They have met people who help us, like the fire brigade, and extended their speaking and listening skills by thinking of the questions they want to ask them. During the week of the inspection, children planted sunflower seeds and knew that these would need water and the light to help them to grow. They sold shoes in the shoe shop and looked at each other's feet through magnifying glasses, studying the lines that make everybody different.
76. Children enjoy using the computer and several have developed good mouse control. They can select colours, drag and click, use the stamp icon and position their pictures on the screen. Children often choose to use the computer in the classroom and some are able to decide whether or not this is appropriate for their task.
77. Progress in this area of learning is good overall, considering the children's lack of prior experience, but with shortcomings in some areas for the Reception age pupils in, for example, finding out about and knowledge of past events in family life and looking closely at differences and similarities. Not all pupils at the end of Reception will attain this Early Learning Goal.

Physical development

78. Teaching in this area is very good. The wide range of outdoor equipment and physical education activities led by the teacher help children to make good progress in the development of their physical skills. A good selection of ride-on toys and climbing apparatus helps them to balance, run, jump and climb, showing an awareness of space and those around them, as well as giving opportunities for adventurous play. The outside area is attractively arranged with both a hard and soft play surface. In both classrooms, through a variety of construction equipment, pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors, children are encouraged to practise and develop the finer movements necessary for writing, cutting and sticking.
79. During a very good physical education lesson, all children made very good progress. They were divided into groups, each with an adult and a box filled with a variety of boots and shoes. The teacher explained that she wanted the children to "talk with their bodies". Appropriate music was played for each type of shoe in turn as they extended their speaking and listening skills and described the movements they might make. The teacher demonstrated movements to support the children with ideas. This activity was especially suited to children for whom English is not their first language and the teacher was very careful to make every effort to help them learn new vocabulary. All children were captivated by the lesson, behaved very well and worked very hard for almost an hour. During this time many met the Early Learning Goals for this area of development.

80. The range of attainment in physical development is great, but with more pupils attaining the Early Learning Goals in Reception than in other areas of learning. The good progress made, through the very effective use of the resources available, results in below average standards overall.

Creative development

81. Teaching in this area is good. Previous work shows that children have had opportunities to build sculptures in wet sand, explore roles in the “Decorator’s Shop”, and paint rainbows on to acetate to hang in the outside area. By looking into a mirror and drawing a self portrait some have made recognisable face shapes with good detail. In their work about “Black and White” they have explored opposites and made prints. Several lack confidence in their work, however, showing a lack of early experiences.

82. Children are keen to sing and enjoy action songs. They sing tunefully and have a good recall of words. They have a good selection of musical instruments to use and have made some of their own to hang in the trees outside. Children’s progress is satisfactory overall, and as in the other areas of learning Nursery pupils’ achievements are better than those of the Reception age group.

83. Overall, the education provided in the Nursery and Reception class provides a sound start to school life for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, both of whom are very well supported. The Foundation Stage curriculum is firmly in place. Assessment procedures and records of children’s learning are very good and help the teacher to track progress and plan the next stage of development for each child. Staff are very knowledgeable about the children and their needs. They are aware of the shortcomings in the current arrangements, work very hard to resolve the problems, and know that they are not always successful. The current satisfactory, rather than good or very good, outcomes are not a reflection upon the quality of teaching or the curriculum, but on the way the pupils in the Foundation Stage are organised. Leadership of the area is good with well thought out procedures and approaches. The overall quality of management is satisfactory.

ENGLISH

Overall provision for English is satisfactory

Strengths

- good teaching overall and good teacher knowledge
- good implementation of the national literacy strategy
- good relationships and teachers’ knowledge of their pupils
- good planning to match the work covered in lessons with the needs of the pupils

Areas for improvement

- marking as a tool for assessment to be used consistently in all classes
- applying pupil knowledge learnt during lessons to their independent writing
- opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills

84. Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were below the national average for both reading and writing. When compared with similar schools, however, they were both average. At the end of Year 6, results for English were above the national average when compared with all schools and well above average when compared with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving

the higher level 3 in Year 2 was average for both reading and writing. In Year 6, the number of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was well above the national average. Since 1998 results at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated in both reading and writing. They fell steeply in 2000 and 2001 and rose in 2002. At the end of Year 6 results rose in 1999, otherwise they followed the same trend as for Year 2. Overall girls perform better than boys in the tests.

85. The evidence gained during the inspection shows that attainment by the end of Year 2 is below national expectations in all aspects of English. This is also the case for the pupils in Year 6 where their levels of attainment on entry to the school were well below the national average. The proportion of higher attaining pupils is lower than average and there is a higher than normal number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills as in Year 2, where pupils retold the story of the “Three Little Pigs” and recorded their versions onto tape, and in Year 5, where pupils were learning how to construct an argument. However, insufficient focus is currently being given to developing these skills. The pupils are currently being taught writing skills well but they are not given sufficient opportunities for practising these in extended pieces of free writing in which they are able to use language creatively. Several younger pupils knew about strategies for reading unknown words, such as building them up. However, they found it difficult to put these into practice, which impacted on their ability to understand what they were reading. Several older pupils have well-developed higher order reading skills such as “reading between the lines”. However, the majority of the older pupils find this difficult despite the fact that they are being well taught in guided reading lessons.
86. From examples of work seen from earlier in the year, it is clear that there has been underachievement in the past. However, taking into consideration the level of attainment of the pupils when they enter the school and as a result of the overall good quality of teaching they are currently receiving, achievement by most pupils is now good. As a result of the support offered by a number of high quality teaching assistants, pupils with special educational needs achieve well and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well.
87. In Years 1 and 2, attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are good overall. In Years 3 to 6 they are satisfactory overall. However, in these classes there is a significant minority of poorly behaved boys who have negative attitudes to work, which often interrupts their own learning and that of other members of the class.
88. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to good and was good overall. As a result, achievement and attainment are beginning to rise. The best teaching and learning occurred in lessons where teachers had good subject knowledge, as seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were writing letters inviting someone on a trip to the jungle. They were supported well in setting out the letter and deciding the features to use when writing. In most lessons, the teachers had good relationships with the pupils and were aware of their individual needs which supported their learning well. In Year 3, pupils were encouraged to write excuse letters for not attending school, having discussed their first paragraph as a class with the teacher. Good learning also took place where the behaviour of the pupils was well managed, as in Year 2, where pupils were learning to write a story based on a model they had been given.
89. Where the teaching and learning were satisfactory, the pace of the lesson was not as brisk and pupils became bored; learning objectives were not shared with the pupils and the teacher supplied answers rather than expecting the pupils to use their own words.
90. The quality of teachers’ marking in English is generally satisfactory with good examples seen in some classes. Teachers make positive comments on work and tell the pupils where they have made mistakes. In the best examples, this was extended to giving pupils suggestions as to how they may improve in future. This is not consistent, however, in all classes.

91. The curriculum is sound. The national literacy strategy is being followed by the school and has been implemented well. There is a very generous time allocation for teaching all aspects of English but this is not always used to best effect. A good library lesson was seen during the inspection in which pupils were using alphabetical order to sort books for replacing them correctly on the shelves. The lesson was too short, however, for the task to be completed. This was also the case in some guided reading sessions. English skills are being taught in other lessons, as seen in Year 4 religious education where pupils wrote about the Easter story as if they had been eye-witnesses. However, teachers often miss opportunities in other lessons for pointing out links between what they are learning in that subject and what they have learnt in English. Computers are not used enough as a tool for learning in English.
92. English lessons are taught by class teachers, well assisted by a number of high quality teaching assistants, who considerably enhance the learning of the pupils. In one or two cases, the teaching assistants were less effective and need further training in their role. The school has a small but adequately stocked library and each classroom has a selection of fiction books to support reading.
93. Leadership in English is currently satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is beginning to develop systems for ensuring that teachers get the necessary support and advice. The headteacher and deputy have observed lessons and given feedback in order to continue to develop the quality of teaching. Plans exist to include the co-ordinator in these observations in the future. Management is also satisfactory. The quality of planning is good and systems for tracking pupils' progress and assessing the quality of work are being put into place. As a result of the quality of leadership and management, standards are rising which is beginning to address the unsatisfactory progress made in this subject since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Overall provision for mathematics is satisfactory

Strengths

- improved continuity in learning and a clear understanding of areas for further improvement
- good attitudes to learning in Years 1 and 2
- some good teaching
- effective use of the national numeracy strategy to improve teaching and learning

Areas for improvement

- pupils' standards and their achievement in mathematics
- negative attitudes and poor behaviour of a small minority of older boys
- the match of work to, and expectations of, lower attaining pupils
- insufficient emphasis on teaching the language of mathematics and too little use of ICT as a learning tool
- inconsistent marking and insufficient use of assessment data to set clear targets for individual pupils

94. In the end of Key Stage 1 assessments at the age of seven, pupils' attainment was below average in 2002. These results were a great improvement over previous recent years, when results were well below average or very low. Current standards are well below average, representing satisfactory progress and achievement over the year as pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics is well below average on entry into Year 1. In individual lessons observed, average standards were attained by several of the pupils. For example, many in a Year 2 class could add and subtract numbers up to ten and higher attainers had some understanding of the value of the digits in two figure numbers. Others struggled to count reliably and problem-solving skills were very low. Recall of number facts is slower than expected and, for example, a number of pupils in Year 2 found it difficult to identify that 29 was

greater than 16 and less than 37. Most pupils struggled to remember names of shapes such as hexagon and pentagon. Pupils' work in their books confirms the well below average standards.

95. Pupils' attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments taken by Year 6 pupils in 2002 was below average. As in Key Stage 1, these results were much higher than in 2001 and in the preceding two years, when results were well below average or very low. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 4 at age eleven increased from 32 percent in 2001 to 69 percent in 2002 but, considering the pupils' Key Stage 1 results in 1998, the 2002 test results indicated unsatisfactory achievement over time. Current standards are well below average and also represent unsatisfactory progress over time. However, the quality of recent work in pupils' books and the learning taking place in observed lessons now shows satisfactory and improving achievement. Relative to pupils' capabilities, high attainers are making better progress than low attainers and those not motivated to learn. Boys are making less progress than girls. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because teaching assistants are usually effective. The strongest area is number work, achieved through the effective use of mental activities at the starts of lessons. The weakest is using and applying mathematics, where standards are low, for example in presenting results and information in a clear and organised way and persevering with searches to solve problems. Staffing difficulties over the past two years have resulted in poor continuity and progression, but these issues have now been resolved and teaching and learning are at least satisfactory.
96. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in infant classes and just satisfactory overall in junior classes. In Years 1 and 2 pupils behave well, generally enjoy their mathematics lessons and have a positive approach. In Years 3 to 6, many are quiet and attentive but their concentration is less than expected for pupils of their ages. When teachers are explaining new work or discussing problems with the class, several start to fidget and lose interest after just a few minutes. A small minority of older pupils, usually boys, are rude and intolerant, and interrupt the learning of others. Their antics result in the lower than expected attainment of boys compared with girls.
97. The teaching was sound in Key Stage 1 and this quality, coupled with the pupils' generally positive attitudes, results in satisfactory learning. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was better and good overall, but the negative attitudes of a few pupils reduce its impact on learning, resulting in satisfactory current achievement. In all lessons observed, the national numeracy strategy had had a good impact, with three-part lessons, clear introductions, effective use of mental mathematics starter activities, appropriate group work and good summary sessions when teachers and pupils reviewed what had been learnt, reinforcing important messages. Teaching assistants were usually effective in supporting pupils in their learning. Work was usually matched to pupils' abilities. In the Years 4 and 5 mathematics sets, teaching and learning were effective, not least because the restricted range of attainment within each class enabled work to be more closely related to pupils' prior learning and capabilities. Pupils' behaviour was usually well managed but sometimes school procedures were not followed when boys were silly, with the result that learning was not as good as it could have been. Too little use is made of ICT in mathematics lessons. Insufficient reinforcement of the language of mathematics takes place, which is particularly unhelpful to lower attaining pupils.
98. The curriculum is appropriate and all areas of the National Curriculum – with the exception of the use of ICT in mathematics – are planned for, although a greater focus on problem solving and using and applying mathematics would be helpful. Assessment is satisfactory overall. The quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, however, and recorded information on individual pupils is not yet used consistently to track pupils' progress and to set challenging targets. Resources are satisfactory. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The staff know what has to be done to raise standards and are committed to making improvements. Good monitoring of pupils' work is taking place. Staff are about to be trained in evaluating teaching and learning in lessons and appreciate the importance of this task and the need for it to be carried out effectively. Standards, progress and pupils' attitudes are lower or worse than those reported in the last inspection and, although many issues have

now been resolved and the situation is getting better, improvements since 1997 are unsatisfactory overall.

SCIENCE

Overall provision for science is satisfactory

Strengths

- teaching of skills for scientific enquiry at Key Stage 1
- good planning and organisation which ensures that all pupils participate fully in the lesson
- teachers' subject knowledge and use of questioning which engages pupils in learning

Areas for improvement

- teaching of skills for scientific enquiry throughout Key Stage 2
- marking, so that it tells pupils how to improve their work
- individual tracking of pupils' progress to inform planning and teaching

99. In 2002, the results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed pupils' attainment to be average in comparison with all schools nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in the assessments was also average. Pupils performed particularly well in investigative work and, when compared with schools in similar circumstances, their attainment was above average. At the time of the inspection standards were found to be average and not dissimilar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.

100. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated since the last inspection when they were found to be average. In 2002 they were below average nationally, but above average for schools in similar circumstances. There was no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Over the last five years, despite fluctuations, the trend is broadly in line with the national trend in terms of improvement. At the time of the inspection, attainment was found to be well below average.

101. On entry to school, most pupils' attainment is well below average but by the end of Year 2 their standards are higher and below average; achievement in science is good. All pupils notice similarities and differences when, for example, comparing materials. They predict what might happen when heating foods and about which liquids will freeze first. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to have a sound understanding of the meaning of a fair test when investigating how different places affect the melting time of an ice cube. They express their ideas clearly when drawing a conclusion about why materials change when they are heated. Most pupils showed they had a good knowledge of healthy and unhealthy foods during a lesson about health and growth.

102. Until recently, pupils' achievement throughout the junior years was unsatisfactory and Year 6 progress at the end of 2002 was well below average when compared with their attainment at the end of Year 2. However, achievement at the end of the current Year 6 is now satisfactory. This is because the school is quickly beginning to recover from the period of considerable. Work in pupils' books indicates that, since January, pupils have revisited previous learning, recapped upon essential knowledge and conducted experiments. Higher attaining pupils give good explanations and draw sound conclusions when investigating the power of the battery in relation to the brightness of a bulb. They achieve well in science. All other pupils find it hard to draw conclusions and because of this they often leave work unfinished. However, they demonstrate that they have made progress in their understanding about how to conduct a fair experiment and they record their work carefully with the use of charts and graphs. It is neatly presented, making good use of their literacy skills. Opportunities for scientific enquiry have improved since the last inspection but this has happened too late for it to affect the standards of the

current Year 6 pupils, many of whom will not reach the expected national standard this year. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language all achieve well.

103. From the lessons observed, and from talking to pupils and looking at their work, indications are that teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and sound overall in Key Stage 2. The quality of a few lessons seen was very good and this was characterised by very good planning and preparation. What pupils were expected to learn was clearly explained to them leaving them in no doubt as to the purpose of the lesson. Teachers used their good subject knowledge to explain concepts clearly and to pose challenging questions. This actively engaged pupils in learning and developed their understanding quickly helping them to make very good progress in the lesson. During a lesson where pupils were discussing the type of environment preferred by different insects, the teacher's very focused questioning supported pupils in their attempts to explain why they had chosen particular sites for their investigations into the habitats of certain creatures. Her very clear explanation of their task, and the teaching given about how to work successfully as a group, meant that pupils settled to work very quickly and produced good quality work together. Pupils with special educational needs made similar progress because they were very well supported by the classroom assistant. They were helped to pay attention during the introduction to the lesson.
104. Where lessons were less successful, though still satisfactory, this was because the first part of the lesson was rather long and caused pupils to become restless and not pay enough attention to what the teacher was saying. Sometimes, with younger pupils, more demonstration about the task was needed from the teacher before they felt secure in carrying out what they were being asked to do. Classroom assistants play an important role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, so that they gain as much as they can from the activities. They are included well in science across the school.
105. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection and improvement of the subject is unsatisfactory. However, staff instability has been a major factor in preventing the subject from making the necessary progress. Leadership and management of science have recently changed and are currently satisfactory. National guidance for the subject has been introduced and changes are leading to more effective teaching. Monitoring of pupils' work has been undertaken and although this has contributed well towards the school's knowledge of standards in science, systematic observation of teaching has yet to be introduced. Assessment of how well pupils have learned is carried out at the end of each topic studied. However, the tracking of individual pupils' progress to inform teaching is not yet in place. Marking of work is very inconsistent and does not contribute to pupils' knowledge of their own learning or tell them how they can improve.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall provision for art is satisfactory

Strengths

- good links with other subjects, enabling art to become an integral part of the overall school curriculum
- pupils' enthusiastic response to the subject

Areas for improvement

- more opportunities to learn, build upon and develop important skills such as observational drawing, painting and three-dimensional work
- the use of sketchbooks to collect and explore ideas and central themes, especially those of well known artists

106. Pupils' attainment in art is below that expected for their age although almost all make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 6 have made unsatisfactory progress this year due to a lack of time spent on the subject because "booster" classes for the national tests were held in the afternoons. There is a considerable drop in standards since the last inspection six years ago due to staff changes, which have adversely affected the leadership and management of the subject.
107. It was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection but pupils' work and displays around the school provide evidence of the building of some skills over time and of opportunities to use a variety of materials and techniques. Year 1 pupils investigate their surroundings and use what they have collected to make natural collages. The work is particularly well linked to science as they discuss the feel and texture of the materials they have collected. This also effectively extends their language as they learn the meaning of words such as "pliable", "rigid" "rough" and "smooth". Year 2 pupils build on the use of their environment when they are encouraged to observe very carefully in their drawings of things they have collected from the school grounds. Further good links are established with other areas of the curriculum in Year 3 when pupils make Viking longships and use the collage techniques learned previously for their Egyptian work. By Year 5, pupils' well-executed designs of local buildings, using a screen-printing technique, demonstrate that in some areas of art they are developing satisfactory skills. However, there are too few opportunities for three-dimensional work and little evidence of pupils being encouraged to use the work of well-known artists or craftspeople to explore ideas and techniques. This also limits the contribution that art makes to pupils' cultural development. Although sketchbooks have been introduced recently, their use is inconsistent and underdeveloped. A few show that pupils are beginning to consider tone when painting but there is little evidence of the central themes of pattern, shape, form, space or line. Observational drawing skills are insufficiently built upon throughout the school although there were one or two good examples in Year 6 when pupils studied Hinduism and drew the gods using artefacts as models. When talking to pupils, they responded by demonstrating enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject. All pupils are included and equally supported.
108. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory but the leadership and management of the subject has experienced very recent changes. Although the school is not monitoring provision adequately at present, it is aware of the deficiencies in provision and of some very artistic pupils. Plans are in hand to improve pupil assessment and standards. Resources are adequate.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall provision in design and technology is satisfactory

Strengths

- good awareness of pupils' lack of knowledge of aspects of design and technology
- a good planned range of design and technology experiences, using a variety of materials

Areas for improvement

- more emphasis on improving pupils' speaking and writing skills and the presentation of work

109. Pupils' achievements are sound and they are making satisfactory progress in their learning. The standard of work attained, however, is well below expectations overall, reflecting the low levels of concentration, prior knowledge and skills of many of the pupils. The low standard is apparent in pupils' design books. A few capable pupils do well. For example in Year 6, high attainers had read and understood much of the background information provided on the topic of 'shelters' (for a cold deserted Atlantic island rather than a traditional Pacific delight!) and could give a good account of important features of their designs. Low attainers and those not interested in learning, however, struggled to recall basic ideas and the quality of presentation and amount of their design work was of a very low standard. Pupils seen using scissors and other tools did so safely, but their skills were well below those expected

of pupils of their age. Year 3 pupils, having discussed the range of flavours to be used in sandwiches, showed a knowledge of hygiene and of skills below expectations of pupils of their ages as they made their own. Pupils' evaluative skills were of a low order.

110. The quality of teaching and learning in the few lessons observed was sound. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are secure. They know that a focus on the disassembly of objects is important, aware that the limited experiences of many of the pupils means they have little understanding of what objects are made of, or how they are constructed. At times, teachers spent too long speaking and pupils lost concentration and interest. When this occurred there was too little emphasis on pupils answering questions, giving extended responses using Standard English. Opportunities to improve pupils' literacy skills - through correcting their spoken English - were not always taken.
111. The variety of products made in lessons and seen in classrooms, and references to work in teachers' planning, indicate that a good range of tasks are carried out in the subject. Each year group is planned to have three design and technology projects in a year, using different materials, including food, card, cloth and electrical components. Straw and string winding mechanisms in Year 2, and slippers in Year 6, showed the outcomes of the use of some of these materials. Resources available are satisfactory and co-ordination of the subject is sound. Improvement since the last report has been unsatisfactory because progress and standards are not as good as six years ago.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall provision for geography is satisfactory

Strengths

- good use of school grounds for teaching geography

Areas for improvement

- geography not being used as a tool for developing pupils' literacy skills
- inconsistent marking
- missed opportunities for using ICT as a tool for learning

112. At the end of both Years 2 and 6, attainment in geography is below national expectations. The pupil's underdeveloped literacy skills have an impact on how well they are able to explain their ideas in their written work. When their attainment on entry to the school is taken into consideration the pupils achieve satisfactorily during their time at the school.
113. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make any judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
114. Work in pupils' books shows that the curriculum for geography is satisfactory overall. The National Curriculum programmes of study are covered and, as a result, pupils develop an appropriate range of skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in Year 6 have produced effective studies of rivers ranging from the River Nile to the Severn. Pupils in Year 5 are able to describe the water cycle and pupils in Year 2 consider life on the island of Struay and in the Mexican village of Tuocaró. Year 2 pupils have also thought and written about what it would be like to live on an island. These pieces of writing are effective in developing pupils' writing skills. However, throughout the school as a whole, such opportunities are often missed. Opportunities for using the computer as a tool for learning are also not taken.

115. The school grounds are used well for teaching geography. For example, Year 2 pupils have looked at different habitats and Year 4 have carried out a litter study. The local area is also used well. Pupils from Year 1 have walked around the area to look at different man-made and natural features. They repeated this later in the year to look for the changes that had taken place.
116. The quality of marking in geography is inconsistent. The majority of work is marked and comments made are positive. However, few comments are made to help pupils understand what they need to do in order to improve further.
117. The overall quality of leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a short while, but has an action plan and improvements are in hand. As standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection, even with current improvements taking place, there has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

HISTORY

Overall provision for history is satisfactory

Strengths

- good coverage of National Curriculum programmes of study

Areas for improvement

- behaviour of a significant minority of boys which impacts on their learning and that of other pupils
- inconsistencies in marking
- missed opportunities for using ICT as a tool for learning

118. Overall standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 in history are below national expectations. Pupils find it difficult to express their ideas both orally and in writing. The attainment of higher ability pupils is in line with national expectations. However, there are only a few of these pupils in each year group. Bearing in mind pupils' level of attainment when they enter the school, their achievement in history during their time at the school is satisfactory.
119. Pupils' attitudes to history are sound overall. However, the disruptive behaviour of a significant minority of boys in some lessons prevents them and other pupils from learning more effectively.
120. Only a few history lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to come to an overall judgement with regard to the teaching and learning in the subject. Where teaching was good, the teacher had good subject knowledge, for example of why monasteries were good places for the Vikings to raid. Behaviour was also well managed and pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language were supported well in order to help them complete the work.
121. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is committed to learning the requirements of being a subject co-ordinator. The programmes of study outlined in the National Curriculum are all covered and the curriculum provision in history is satisfactory. In the work seen in pupils' books there were examples of longer pieces of free writing. For example in Year 6, pupils had written a letter to Mr. Gladstone about Ragged Schools. However, opportunities are often missed for developing literacy skills through work in history, as they are for using the computer as a tool for learning. The curriculum has been supplemented well recently through a variety of visits to the school by an archaeologist, a 'Roman soldier' and a 'Victorian lady'. Classes have also made visits to The British Museum and a Victorian school.

122. Most of the work seen was marked satisfactorily and had positive comments. However, few comments were made to help pupils improve their work further and the quality of marking varied between year groups. Leadership and management in the subject is satisfactory overall. Pupil's achievements and the standards they attain are lower than at the time of the last inspection and so progress since 1997 is unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall provision in ICT is unsatisfactory

Strengths

- planning to improve teaching, learning and standards in ICT
- the good quality of some teaching

Areas for improvement

- pupils' knowledge, understanding and achievement in the subject
- the number of modern computers available and other needed ICT equipment
- the poor accommodation where ICT lessons take place
- the range of ICT work taught - National Curriculum requirements are not met

123. Standards in ICT are well below those expected of pupils at the ages of seven and eleven and their achievements are unsatisfactory. The poor quality of ICT resources and accommodation make teaching and learning very difficult and restrict what pupils can achieve. The full requirements of the National Curriculum are not met. School staff are fully aware of this situation and have detailed plans in place that are intended to resolve problems as soon as resources become available.

124. Six- and seven-year-olds exploring the use of on-screen icons such as 'eraser' and 'fill' when drawing coloured pictures, and using 'delete', 'caps lock' and 'back space' keys when manipulating text from a book they had had read to them, showed a great range of skill levels. The lowest attainers had difficulty in finding individual keys, including letter keys, yet the most accomplished were familiar with the software in use, entering, retrieving and saving work with confidence. The proportion who were at the expected levels for their ages was low. Between a third and a half of pupils, in groups being taught, were struggling to understand. Younger pupils' general knowledge of the use of computers was very limited, with several only having access to computers in school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have the opportunity to carry out control work. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 show low skill levels, for example in understanding e-mail – unless the pupils use this form of electronic communication at home – and opportunities to use ICT equipment to sense and record data are very few. An older group of pupils using a drawing software package were working at a level expected of pupils two or three years younger, as they replicated patterns and used 'eraser', 'fill' and 'pencil' icons. The proportion of pupils working at expected levels was low.

125. The quality of teaching and learning observed varied but was unsatisfactory overall, mainly because of the constraints placed on teachers by the poor facilities. In a good lesson, behaviour management was very effective, explanations were clear and succinct and the structure and pace of work were maintained in trying circumstances. Weaknesses in other lessons included passive pupils making little if any progress in their learning, where one pupil in each pair at a computer just sat and observed uninvolved for much of the lesson, and insufficient pace and challenge in lessons. The small room where the eleven networked computers are based is far too hot to work in, has minimal ventilation and provides a very unpleasant and poor working environment. If the door is left open in an attempt to keep the temperature in the room down, the noise from physical education lessons in the hall next to the room disrupts teaching and learning. When music takes place in the hall, whether the door is open or closed, teaching and learning are interrupted by the noise.

126. Considering the poor facilities, curriculum planning for teaching and learning are appropriate. Staff are aware that standards are too low and that facilities must improve. Assessment records provide an overview of what is being achieved but would benefit from more detail to guide lessons more. The school has few ICT facilities which would enable pupils to develop their understanding of control, for example through the use of a programmable floor robot, or for sensing and recording information such as temperature. Computers in classrooms are not networked, do not have access to the internet and are little used. Greater use should be made of existing class-based facilities, but the pupils' low skill levels are unhelpful in independent work. Staff have received training in ICT. The school improvement plan shows that the school is working very hard to make positive changes. The headteacher has a clear direction for the subject and is working very hard to make improvements. In the context of the poor resources, but a current drive for substantial and worthwhile increase in achievement, leadership and management are effective. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, ICT was an area of weakness where substantial improvements were required.

MUSIC

Overall provision for music is satisfactory

Strengths

- teachers' thorough planning and good lesson organisation, maximising pupils' opportunities to learn
- pupils' enjoyment of music and keenness to learn

Areas for improvement

- more opportunities for pupils to make music using both their voices and musical instruments
- silly behaviour by a minority of junior age boys

127. Although their achievement is satisfactory, by the time pupils reach Year 6 most attain standards that are below those expected for their age. Standards have dropped considerably since the last inspection when they were above average. At that time the school employed a specialist music teacher. During singing practice, Years 3 to 6 demonstrated that they could sing together tunefully and appreciate the rhythm of a song. They successfully explored ways in which sounds can be combined and used expressively. They enjoyed the session and participated well with sustained concentration. Too few opportunities are provided, however, for pupils to compose and improve their own music to create different moods and effects.

128. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching was good, pupils achieved well although they did not reach standards appropriate for their age. In a good lesson where pupils were learning to recognise a rhythmic pattern, the teacher used very appropriate West Indian songs, making it easy for pupils to pick up the tune and the rhythm. This contributed well to their cultural development as they compared the language of the songs with their own languages. The lesson was well planned and organised which led to a good pace and satisfactory attitudes and behaviour from pupils. They enjoyed adding movement to their singing and, because they behaved sensibly, they learned quickly. Where teaching was unsatisfactory it was because the silly behaviour of some boys meant that the teacher had to abandon the carefully planned activity. This defeated any hope of satisfactory learning for most of the class, where some pupils were unable to name simple percussion instruments.

129. Although improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory, this is due to instability of staffing and leadership over a considerable period of time. The school does not have a secure idea of standards across the school but, within the new management of the subject, there are plans to monitor

them closely. A few pupils learn to play a musical instrument and recorder and guitar clubs exist but these activities are insufficient in number to make any substantial contribution to raising standards. All teachers work and plan well together to provide weekly opportunities for singing practice, but the lack of opportunities to sing in assemblies is a weakness. The schools' musical resources are good. The overall quality of leadership and management are sound, with changes in hand to improve standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall provision for physical education is satisfactory.

Strengths

- teachers' planning for lessons
- good indoor and outdoor accommodation

Areas for improvement

- misbehaviour of a small number of boys
- some teachers' knowledge of physical education

130. In the few lessons seen, pupils' achievements were satisfactory or better. Standards of attainment observed were similar to expectations, but wide ranging, with some very able pupils but others with low skills. Health and safety requirements were met. Pupils practised their control of direction when running, and practised aiming, throwing and catching beanbags. They also followed agreed rules of games such as chain-tag. Records of pupils' swimming, with about half able to swim the expected twenty-five metres, and evidence of pupils' skills in the range of areas expected in physical education, indicate that standards are below expectations overall.
131. Teaching and learning were sound with a number of strengths as well as areas for improvement. Strengths in teachers' work were their planning and preparation, behaviour management and well-structured activities, resulting in interested pupils who worked hard. Where teachers had good subject knowledge, the pace of lessons was faster and the pupils' attainment higher because pupils were motivated to learn. Where teachers were less secure in their knowledge, periods of organisation and inactivity were too long and insufficient emphasis was given to teaching specific skills. Warm-ups at the start of sessions were carried out well but this was not always the case for cool-down sessions at the end of lessons. Where pupils – invariably a small number of boys – misbehaved, they were effectively contained and managed, but their learning was unsatisfactory. Where pupils had not brought their kit to school, they were appropriately involved, describing and evaluating the learning taking place. Lower attaining pupils' pictorial representations of lessons were of an equally sound quality to higher attaining and older pupils' written work.
132. The curriculum is well planned with a satisfactory range of activities. These include gymnastics, dance, athletics, a good variety of team games and outdoor and adventurous activities in the summer term. Swimming is planned to return to the curriculum in Key Stage 2 in the school year 2003-4, after a year's absence. Resources are satisfactory. The school hall and separate dining hall provide good indoor accommodation for physical education. The school field and playgrounds are very good outside facilities. Parents help with popular and successful after-school football coaching clubs for which the boys and girls pay a small fee. Teachers' skills need to be improved in some areas of the physical education curriculum and a stronger emphasis on numeracy in lessons would be helpful. Leadership and management of the subject are sound and improving. Since the last inspection in 1997, improvement has been unsatisfactory, as standards and progress have fallen. The capacity for change is good, however, as plans are in place to make improvements.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall provision for religious education is satisfactory.

Strengths

- opportunities provided for pupils to enrich their understanding whilst practising their literacy skills, for example through eye witness accounts and letter writing
- the use of artefacts, visits and people from different faiths to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding
- mostly well-presented work

Areas for improvement

- encouraging pupils to gain a better understanding of how religions affect people's lives
- marking of pupils' work so that they know what to do to improve

133. By the time pupils are eleven, standards are below those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and are lower than those reported at the last inspection. However, achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.

134. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but talking to pupils and looking at their work shows that they learn mostly facts about religion. Insufficient emphasis is placed upon asking questions about meanings and understanding how religions affect people's lives. Evidence from work in Year 2 shows that pupils spend much of their time studying Christianity. They learn about the main characters in the Christmas story and sequence it so that it can be told in the correct order. They are also given an opportunity to express their feelings, for example in their letters to Father Christmas, as they ask for happiness, love and care for everyone at Christmas and for "all the world to be polite"! Such carefully planned activities provide good opportunities for them to practise their literacy skills.

135. Pupils look at who is important in their own lives, and study the importance of the religious leaders of the main world faiths. The use of worksheets is balanced with original writing and, where tasks are difficult for some lower attaining pupils, they are given work to match their ability. Higher attaining pupils complete their work and record it neatly but most pupils do not always finish their tasks. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not show them how to improve. A visit to the local church provides pupils with effective opportunities to study at first hand and they prepare earnestly by practising their readings. Older pupils write eyewitness accounts of the Easter story and by Year 6 they are studying the world faiths in more depth, comparing beliefs and learning about what underpins them. In their work on Hinduism, good links are beginning to be established with other subjects such as art.

136. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Although there are no formal procedures in place for monitoring standards, pupils' work has been carefully scrutinised and compared with agreed planning and the school's marking policy. As a result, a comprehensive action plan is in place to raise pupil attainment. The school takes the opportunity to enrich its curriculum by visits from Sikh parents who have talked to teachers and prepared food with pupils. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural and spiritual development, as do the well-organised and easily accessible resources. These resources give pupils the opportunity to develop a respect for diversity.