

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MILLBROOK SCHOOL**

Waltham Cross

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117379

Headteacher: Miss M K Easton

Reporting inspector: Christopher Rhodes  
16408

Dates of inspection: 14 - 17 October 2002

Inspection number: 247771

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Gews Corner Cheshunt Waltham Cross
Postcode:	EN8 9BX
Telephone number:	01992 622975
Fax number:	01992 626801
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jan Andersen
Date of previous inspection:	22/05/2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16408	Christopher Rhodes	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Music Religious education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9275	Candy Kalms	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23805	Margaret Lygoe	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22669	Thomas Prosser	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Educational inclusion Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

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Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Millbrook School is in Cheshunt in Hertfordshire. There are 190 pupils aged between four and eleven on roll, which is broadly average for a school of this type. The pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. A significant number of pupils in all classes start or leave the school at times other than the beginning of the year and this has a disruptive effect on their learning. An average percentage is entitled to free meals. Approximately two in every five pupils has special educational needs, usually moderate learning difficulties. This is well above the national average. Four pupils, whose educational needs are severe, complex or persistent, are given the protection of a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils from ethnic minority families is low and few use English as an additional language. Attainment on entry has been well below expected levels in the past; it is currently typical of most schools. All the teachers in Years 3 to 6 are comparatively new to the profession or to education in the United Kingdom.

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

The school provides an appropriate education and no longer has the serious weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 are close to those expected nationally and are improving each year. Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6, but the class contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The overall quality of teaching is good, leadership and management are sound, and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good overall
- Computers are used effectively in all areas of the curriculum
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes are generally good. They are very good in many lessons
- Relationships within classrooms are good and are based on trust and respect
- Support staff make an important and valued contribution to pupils' learning
- The provision for special educational needs is good

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

- Pupils' individual learning needs are not always identified accurately enough
- The ways in which the school plans its future, allocates responsibilities and updates its policies need revision
- There are not enough resources for the full nursery curriculum, or for aspects of English, science and other subjects
- Parents do not have enough information about their children's progress. Links with the school are not strong enough

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since 2000, when the school was last inspected, standards have risen, the quality of teaching has improved and the amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been greatly reduced. Progress against the key issues has been at least satisfactory and has been good in some aspects. Teachers' planning has improved and the quality of teaching and learning is now monitored systematically by the headteacher. Satisfactory progress has been made in setting the school's longer term development, but the governing body is not involved early enough in the discussions. Standards of behaviour and punctuality have improved. The headteacher and staff are committed to improvement and have the capacity to achieve it.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

**Key**

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

Standards in science were in the top five per cent nationally in 1999 but were well below average in 2000. The results reflect the above average number of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups.

Early indications are that **standards in national tests** in Year 2 in 2002 were in line with national averages in reading, and below average in writing and mathematics. If confirmed, this would indicate an improvement over 2001 against all schools in reading and mathematics. Year 6 pupils did not do as well in English as in 2001 but maintained the average standards in mathematics and science. Standards are rising each year in Year 2. The steady improvement seen over time in Year 6 is broadly in line with the national trend. The school sets, and achieves, realistic targets based on pupils' prior attainment.

**Current standards** in the reception class indicate that most children are well on course to reach the early learning goals identified for their age. Pupils in Year 2 are working at nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics, but are below average in science. Approximately two out of every three pupils in Year 6 have special educational needs and, although they have made satisfactory progress since Year 2, standards in the current Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in religious education, information and communication technology [ICT], history and music are at expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in art and design and physical education are above expected levels in Year 2 and broadly in line in Year 6. There was not enough inspection evidence to make a judgement about standards in design and technology in Year 2 or in geography.

Pupils' **achievement** in relation to their starting points is satisfactory and sometimes good, because they are keen to learn and the teaching is generally good. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress, especially when they work closely with a supportive adult.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils have positive attitudes and come to school willing to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Most pupils conduct themselves well in lessons. Some of the boys in Years 5 and 6 do not always behave well and occasionally affect the learning of others.

Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Despite the high turnover of staff, pupils and teachers relate well to each other. Older pupils respond well to the limited opportunities to exercise responsibility around the school.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are below the national average. Punctuality has improved since the previous inspection.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and reception	Years 1 and 2	Years 3-6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

**The quality of teaching** is good and has improved since the previous inspection. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced from 19 per cent to 2 per cent. Teaching is strongest in Years 1 and 2, where 11 of the 15 lessons observed during the inspection were good or better. The teaching of English is good throughout the school, and reflects the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the improved quality of planning and the way in which teachers have worked hard with pupils to raise the quality of their writing. Teaching of mathematics and science is sound. Teachers teach ICT skills confidently and make sure that computers are used regularly in all subjects. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively and pupils use them regularly in other subjects.

Teachers plan thoroughly, using the new computerised system to help them reduce the level of their paper work. They have a good understanding of their subjects. They have been particularly successful in their management of pupils' behaviour so that lessons are orderly, routines are understood and pupils get on quickly with their work. Teachers in all classes work closely with their skilled support staff. This makes sure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and make good progress. Pupils whose first language is not English receive good quality support from specialist staff, and care is taken to ensure that they are included in all the school's activities.

**The quality of learning** is generally good. Pupils respond positively to the good or better teaching. They concentrate hard and enjoy being challenged. There is no consistent approach to marking, and pupils do not always know how to improve. Learning in lessons is only unsatisfactory when teachers plan work that does not challenge pupils of different ability. The tendency in such lessons is to expect pupils to do as much as they can, rather than being set precise targets based on what they can achieve with effort.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Similar to that found in most schools. Visits, visitors and contributions from the local and wider communities enrich the overall curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is a high awareness of pupils' individual needs. Support in lessons and groups is effectively targeted on their particular and individual needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school has very good support from the local authority. Pupils learn very quickly, and play a full part in lessons and activities.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in providing pupils with a firm basis for their moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Day-to-day provision is secure. However, the school has not formally clarified all the whole school procedures needed to support pupils' welfare. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory.

A significant minority of parents is unhappy about many aspects of school life. The school's links with parents are unsatisfactory. There are shortcomings in the quality and range of information provided by the school to keep parents well informed.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff work effectively together, and provide appropriate guidance and support to the rest of the team. The number of teachers available to manage aspects of the curriculum is limited, and too many responsibilities have to be undertaken by senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are hard working and supportive, but are not involved enough in planning and monitoring the school's future development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and learning regularly, and has helped teachers to improve their skills.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used efficiently, but there are not enough materials to deliver aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum in sufficient depth. The school has also identified gaps in the resources for English, ICT and design and technology.

There are sufficient staff for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The school building is used effectively. The school makes particularly good use of its computers and other ICT systems in the office, ICT suite and in all classrooms. The headteacher, governing body and staff seek to get the best value when purchasing goods or services.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The children are making good progress</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of information they are given about their children's progress</li> <li>• Homework arrangements</li> <li>• The ways the school works with parents</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

A small number of parents completed the questionnaires or attended the meeting. Inspectors agree with their positive views. They also agree that parents still do not have enough information about how well the children are doing, and that the school and parents should work more closely together. The range of activities provided outside lessons is broadly typical of that found in many schools. The amount of homework is similar to most schools but varies too much in quantity in older classes.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1. Children in the **nursery and reception classes** are on course to achieve the nationally identified Early Learning Goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and for physical and creative development. They are likely to exceed the goals for personal, social and emotional development.
2. Standards in the rest of the school are reported in Year 2 and Year 6 because they are the ends of the two key stages in primary education. Limited comparisons can be made with the standards seen at the time of the previous inspection as it was a 'short' inspection and concentrated mainly on English, mathematics and science. Since 2000 standards in these core subjects have fluctuated. They were well below average in the Year 6 tests in 2000 and have since risen, but they are due to fall back in 2003 because this year's cohort has a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
3. **Current standards in Year 2** are in line with the national averages for **reading, writing and mathematics**. This is an improvement over the 2001 National Curriculum test results when standards were below average in reading and writing, and well below average in mathematics. Standards were then well below average in reading and mathematics in comparison with similar schools, and below average in writing. Early indications are that the standards reached in the 2002 tests were in line with national averages in reading, and below average in writing and mathematics. If confirmed, this would indicate an improvement over 2001 in reading and mathematics, and a continued improvement in the current Year 2 in writing and mathematics.
4. Approximately two out of every three pupils in **the current Year 6** have special educational needs, and although pupils have made satisfactory progress since they were in Year 2, current standards are below average in **English, mathematics and science**. Standards in the Year 6 tests in 2001 were close to the national average in English, mathematics and science in comparison with all and similar schools. Pupils did not achieve the same standard in 2002 in English as in the previous year, but standards in mathematics and science were maintained at levels close to the national average. The test results show a steady improvement since 1997, apart from 2000, which is broadly in line with the national trend. Boys and girls tend to achieve similar results in English and science but do not do quite so well in mathematics. The school sets, and achieves, realistic overall targets based on pupils' prior attainment. However, some group work in older classes, in mathematics for example, does not offer enough challenge for higher attaining pupils and affects their overall standards.
5. Standards in **science** are currently below average in Year 2, and teachers do not expect any of the current class to achieve the higher level 3 in next summer's tests. Current standards in religious education, information and communication technology [ICT], history and music are at expected levels in Years 2 and 6. Standards in art and design and physical education are above expected levels in Year 2 and broadly in line in Year 6, and reflect the very secure subject knowledge seen in the teaching in younger classes. There was not enough inspection evidence to make a judgement about standards in design and technology in Year 2 or geography in either Year 2 or Year 6. Standards in English, mathematics and science were in line with national averages in Year 2 and Year 6 at the time of the previous inspection.
6. Teachers make appropriate use of **literacy and numeracy** in other aspects of the broader curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 used their note taking skills, for example, in a religious education lesson to record key facts about Buddhism, and scanned texts quickly in an ICT lesson when using a computer manual. Year 4 used their numeracy skills in a music lesson to measure the length of a vibrating sound and their knowledge of science to suggest reasons why metal percussion instruments produced a longer note than one made from wood. Particularly good use is made of the **ICT skills** pupils learn in the ICT suite and in the touch-typing sessions included in their 'early morning work.' These enable teachers to plan a wide range of computer-based work into every subject. Pupils work quickly and effectively at their workstations because

they can use their skills confidently and competently. A good example was seen in a Year 3 history lesson when pupils learned effectively, using their literacy and ICT skills to respond to a program about the Romans.

7. Pupils with **special educational needs** make good progress because the school places a high priority on individual achievement. Teachers and classroom assistants give sensitive support to pupils, resulting in increased confidence and self-esteem. The focused support given to pupils with particular needs is a significant strength in the school, and enables pupils who have severe, complex or persistent needs to receive the specialist teaching and encouragement they need within the normal context of a mainstream classroom.
8. The number of pupils for whom **English is an additional language** is relatively small. Their progress is good and they learn very quickly because they receive good quality support from specialist staff and are fully included in all the school's activities. Other pupils within the class look out for them and ensure that they understand what is going on, as was seen in a Year 5 ICT lesson where a boy within the group made sure that the girl with English as an additional language understood exactly what the teacher wanted.
9. Pupils' **achievement** in relation to their starting points is difficult to assess overall as many pupils join the school or leave it during the six years of primary education. There have been eleven new pupils in Year 6 since they were in Year 1, and eleven others have transferred to different schools. Overall achievement by those pupils in Year 6 whose progress can be tracked is satisfactory and sometimes good because they are keen to learn and the teaching is generally good.

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

10. Pupils' **attitudes and behaviour** are variable, but are good overall. Children in the nursery are settling happily into school routines. They play and work well with other children, sharing resources and taking turns. Children in the reception class continue to develop the good attitudes to work that they acquired in the nursery.
11. Most pupils in Years 1 to 6 have positive **attitudes** to school and come keen to learn. They are motivated and interested in their work in most lessons. They concentrate and follow instructions quickly. They listen attentively to their teachers and respond well when the work is interesting. They are often keen to answer questions, take part in discussions and offer their ideas. For example, Year 2 pupils contributed enthusiastically to a discussion about Queen Elizabeth 1 in a history lesson. In contrast, there are a few occasions when pupils are talkative, noise levels rise and they lack concentration
12. **Behaviour** in the school is variable but is good overall. This contributes significantly to the quality of school life and the learning that takes place. Most pupils know the expected standards of behaviour and behave well in lessons and around the school. There are, however, a minority of boys in Year 5 and Year 6 who do not always behave appropriately in lessons. Teachers generally deal effectively with these pupils, but the flow of lessons is disrupted, affecting the learning of others. The number of exclusions has increased since the previous inspection. There were two exclusions last year and there have been two further exclusions in the current term. Harassment and bullying are rare, but any incidents are dealt with appropriately.
13. **Relationships** between pupils and teachers are good despite the number of staff changes. Relationships between pupils are good. Pupils of all ages relate well with each other, for example pupils from different year groups play sensibly together on the playground. All pupils have been well integrated in direct response to the school's measures to include all its pupils fully in all its activities. Pupils co-operate and collaborate well in lessons. They share equipment and resources sensibly when working together. They generally respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others and are supportive of those with special needs.
14. **Pupils' personal development** is satisfactory. Pupils are friendly and polite around the school. They settle quickly to work and work well independently, in pairs and small groups, as

seen in a Year 5 physical education lesson. Some, however, have not developed enough confidence to take responsibility and show initiative in their own learning. Whilst many pupils are aware of the impact their action can have on others, a few show a lack of personal responsibility in their attitudes and behaviour, not always appreciating that their inappropriate behaviour impacts on the rights of other pupils in the class. Pupils have few meaningful responsibilities and little involvement in activities around the school but pupils in Year 6 are helpful when they assist reception pupils at lunchtime.

15. **Attendance** is unsatisfactory because it is well below the national average. This affects the learning of pupils. Data shows that levels have been declining since the last inspection. There are several reasons for absence. Whilst many are due to illness, other pupils transfer to the school with a history of poor attendance in their previous schools, and a considerable number of absences occur when parents take their children on holiday during term time. Unauthorised absences are broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality has improved, although some pupils are still arriving late in the mornings.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The **quality of teaching** as seen in lessons, teachers' preparation and records, is good overall and has improved considerably since the previous inspection when approximately one in five lessons were unsatisfactory. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning have been tightened, and the positive effects of the introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies can now be seen in all subjects. Teachers generally understand the importance of explaining to the pupils what they will have learned by the end of the lesson, and include a more rigorous structure of taught introduction, group activity and a finishing plenary which draws together the main teaching points.
17. The quality of teaching in the **nursery and reception classes** is satisfactory overall with strengths in providing for children's personal, emotional and social development, and in developing children's mathematical understanding and their early ICT skills. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. However, inspection evidence indicates that the general level of attainment on entry to the nursery and reception classes is currently average when compared with that seen nationally. Overall, children learn satisfactorily in all the areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They learn to develop their personal, social and emotional skills effectively because staff set high standards through personal example and are sensitive to individual needs. Mathematical development is good because teachers set work at different levels of difficulty according to the needs of the children and teach basic numeracy skills successfully. Younger children do not have enough resources or opportunities for developing their language skills.
18. The strongest teaching is seen in **Years 1 and 2**, where 11 of the 15 lessons observed during the inspection were good or better. The teachers are more experienced than in Years 3 to 6, and their work challenges pupils and encourages them to do their best. One lesson, art and design in Year 1, was excellent because the pupils were given such a clear understanding of what they had to achieve, the teacher was very confident with the materials she was to use, her resources were well prepared and the basic drawing and colour mixing skills were taught very effectively. All the pupils made visible progress during the lesson because of the focused systematic teaching and the very good support for lower attaining pupils or those with English as an additional language. The overall quality of teaching is also good in **Years 3 to 6**. This is much to the credit of the staff concerned who are relatively new to teaching or to teaching in the United Kingdom.
19. Good teaching was seen in all subjects, an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the curriculum, and teach basic skills effectively. This is particularly the case in Years 1 and 2, and in English and ICT in all parts of the school. All staff manage their classes very successfully and, apart from dealing with a few older boys, do not have to waste time reminding the pupils that they are expected to work hard and behave well. Support staff are used effectively in all classes. They support pupils quietly during whole class sessions, and are respected members of the teaching team when they work with particular groups. This was seen, for example, when the teaching

assistant worked with pupils in Year 1 who were acting out the story of Goldilocks. She made sure the 'bears' asked their questions correctly, and introduced the language of size (biggest bowl, smallest bowl) without losing the fun of the activity itself. Staff make very good planned use of the school's extensive range of computers in all areas of the curriculum. A very good example was seen when two pupils in Year 6 used their drafting skills on screen to improve their text, and their understanding of letter sounds as well as the spell-checker, to find the correct spelling of the illness 'chicken pokes.'

20. Although the amount of **unsatisfactory teaching** was very small, two per cent, there were a number of occasions when parts of lessons became too relaxed and pupils did not work as hard as they could have done. Teachers mark books regularly but, because there is no agreed whole-school marking policy, the focus is different from class to class. This is confusing for parents and pupils. Planning is thorough but does not always indicate clearly enough what each ability group within the class is expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. This makes it harder for teachers to set tasks that are closely matched to pupils' ability or to measure their progress, and for the pupils themselves to know what is expected of them. Examples of this were seen in Year 6, for example, where higher attaining pupils were not set consistently challenging work in mathematics. Homework is set throughout the school, but the amount and type differs too much from year group to year group. Parents would welcome a more consistent approach especially in older classes.
21. Pupils with **special educational needs** learn effectively. Liaison between teachers and support staff is good. Appropriate records are kept and the objectives in individual education plans are specific. Although teachers usually take great care to make sure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of lessons, there are very occasional lapses when individual pupils are withdrawn for specialist support. Sometimes they are not told on their return what has happened in the lesson while they are away, or their withdrawal to read, for example, comes at a key time in the lesson and they miss crucial teaching.
22. **Pupils whose first language is not English** are well taught and supported by specialist and local authority staff. A very good example was seen in Year 1 when the specialist teacher enabled a Bengali newcomer to play a full part in the lesson. The lesson was about self-portraits and the teacher was very skilled and sensitive in talking about skin tones. All the pupils felt comfortable in the discussion and their self-esteem was enhanced. Specialist staff advise class teachers so that pupils with English as an additional language can continue to learn effectively when the immediate support is not available.
23. The overall **quality of learning** is also good. Pupils respond very positively to the good or better teaching. Their interest levels are high, and they enjoy learning new skills or increasing their knowledge. This is especially evident in ICT lessons, and in the better taught literacy and numeracy sessions, when learning basic skills is fun as well as rigorous. Learning is not as effective when pupils are not told why they have to complete a certain exercise, the work is not set at the correct level of difficulty or the pace is too relaxed and pupils are not working towards a specific target within a set time.

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

24. The **quality and range of the learning opportunities** provided for the pupils are satisfactory and the school has tackled the key issues identified in the previous inspection report successfully. The school day has been lengthened, and the level of detail in teachers' planning is now satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the provision for ICT is a significant strength. Statutory requirements for the delivering of the National Curriculum are met in full.
25. The school day is now longer than it was when the school was previously inspected. A shorter lunch break has given more time for lessons during the afternoon session. At the beginning of the school day, teachers plan a series of productive activities for the first half-hour. Many of these are linked with literacy, but pupils also have a regular opportunity to practise their computer keyboard skills. Planning for all subjects is now satisfactory and the shortcomings

identified in the previous inspection report have been remedied. The school has just introduced a new and comprehensive computerised curriculum planning package for Years 1 to 6. Curriculum plans seen during the inspection were satisfactory, although in some lessons teachers do not yet vary activities sufficiently to ensure that they are catering fully for all ability groups. The art and design and design and technology co-ordinators have provided useful additional guidance to ensure that skills and techniques are developed systematically.

26. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is good, and the recent focus on writing has led to a rise in standards across the school. The strategy for teaching numeracy is satisfactory, and mathematical skills are used appropriately in science, for example, where pupils read scales and record measurements. English and mathematics are taught in ability groups across Years 5 and 6. This allows teachers to focus more closely on a narrower range of needs. However, even within these groups, there is a considerable spread of ability and not enough is done at present to match work closely to group or individual needs. ICT skills are taught in the computer suite, and every classroom has six computers. ICT is used very productively across the curriculum, for example for research on the Internet or with CD-ROM, or using the digital microscope.
27. Planning for pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and follows national guidance. There is appropriate provision for outdoor activities. Literacy and numeracy activities are carefully matched to individual needs in the reception class. Planning for the other areas of learning, and for the nursery class, is more general and there is scope for identifying the learning intentions for pupils from a wide range of abilities more precisely.
28. The school makes good provision for pupils with **special educational needs**. The commitment to include all pupils in every aspect of its life ensures that they have the same opportunities as all other pupils. The effective liaison between the co-ordinator, headteacher and classroom teachers makes sure that support within the classroom and through withdrawal are well targeted with the minimum disruption to continuity. Staff are aware of the identification processes and the school's policy to identify pupils with special educational needs as early as possible so that extra help can be provided. Individual education plans are written in detail and set targets for review at the end of each term. This is a long time scale for pupils whose needs are only marginally additional to the school's differentiated curriculum, and makes it harder for teachers to identify how those needs are going to be met in individual lessons.
29. The school is effective in meeting the specific needs of individual pupils who are given the protection of a statement of special educational needs. They are welcome and integral members of all aspects of school life. The level of support provided by specialist support staff is very good. External advice is sought as necessary and appropriate links are made with the various agencies and providers. Pupils with English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum, especially when their work is planned closely with the specialist support teachers and class teachers.
30. **Extra-curricular provision** is satisfactory overall and similar to those found in many schools. Older pupils have the opportunity to play netball and football during the year and occasionally other clubs are available. Pupils take part in a wide variety of educational visits and also have the valuable opportunity to participate in two residential journeys. Links with the community are good. Pupils visit neighbouring shops and the parish church, as well as the Royal Gunpowder Mills. Visitors to the school include a minister and local people who talk about their lives during World War 2. Year 1 and 2 pupils benefit from being taught football skills by coaches from West Ham. There are satisfactory links with the local secondary schools.
31. Provision for pupils' **personal, health and social education** is satisfactory, and all classes have a weekly 'circle time' when pupils can discuss sensitive issues in an atmosphere of trust. There is a policy for sex education and older pupils are given guidance on the dangers of drug misuse.
32. The overall provision for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is satisfactory, and is good for children in the Foundation Stage. The school makes good provision for the **moral development** of its pupils. This is reinforced by the personal example provided consistently by all members of staff. From the start of their school life in the nursery,

children are taught right from wrong and are encouraged to consider the effect of their actions on others. Classes discuss and agree their own rules. Positive behaviour and good attitudes are praised in class and in a weekly assembly.

33. The provision for pupils' **spiritual development** is satisfactory and is appropriately extended beyond religious education lessons and assemblies. For example, work in science gives pupils the opportunity to appreciate the wonder of the natural world and in art pupils admire the beauty of others' work.
34. Satisfactory provision is made for the pupils' **social development**. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, and to consider others as they work. The residential visits enhance the older pupils' social development. Year 6 pupils have a suitable although limited range of responsibilities and look after the Reception class at lunchtimes. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the activities of the local and wider community by supporting charities and by visiting a centre for the elderly to sing carols at Christmas. The provision for pupils' **cultural development** is satisfactory. Year 1 and 2 pupils had the very good opportunity to widen their experience when they visited the National Gallery. Pupils learn about different cultures and traditions through geography, music and religious education, and have an appropriate preparation for life in a diverse multi-cultural society.

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

35. The day-to-day care of pupils and arrangements for **child protection** are satisfactory. The headteacher tells staff to refer any concerns to her informally, but a formal pattern of regular information and training has not yet been established. There is no policy relating to 'looked after children.' First aid arrangements are appropriate. The headteacher has the major responsibility for dealing with minor injuries and pupils who feel unwell. The governors have approved a health and safety policy, which will be subject to an annual review. Risk assessments are not carried out regularly enough and, as a result, that there has been no recent check of the site and premises to identify or remedy any issues. Inspectors drew this and other health and safety issues to the attention of the headteacher.
36. Despite the high turnover of teachers, individual class teachers know and understand the needs of pupils in their class well, using the knowledge to monitor their personal development. There are no school systems to record and monitor pupils' personal development with the result that there are no recorded patterns that can be used to inform new members of staff. Teachers do, however, share any concerns informally with the headteacher. Personal, social and health education contribute to pupils' personal development. Pupils' achievements are recognised each week in an assembly and through the rewards system.
37. The school has appropriate procedures **to monitor attendance** and follow up absence. These have improved punctuality in the school but are not systematic enough to improve levels of attendance. Registers are checked and pupils with irregular and unsatisfactory patterns of attendance are identified. The headteacher contacts parents and referrals are made to the education welfare officer. Satisfactory procedures **promote good behaviour**. The headteacher and staff are working hard to meet a wide range of behavioural problems and most teachers manage challenging behaviour well. The behaviour policy does not, however, reflect all the systems that are being used currently in classrooms. Informal information is given to teachers on the systems to use, so that teachers are using a consistent system of rewards. Concerns about unacceptable behaviour are discussed informally with the headteacher and, where necessary, individual behaviour programmes are introduced. Bullying does sometimes occur, but pupils feel the school deals effectively with any incidents.
38. The **arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment** and tracking their progress are satisfactory overall. The school has just introduced a new computerised assessment recording system. This is linked with the curriculum planning program and is intended to allow teachers to plan more accurately for individuals and groups of pupils. It is too early to form a judgement on the success of this system. The school plans to make assessments on all National Curriculum subjects through the program. Previous records are quite limited, although individual progress in English and mathematics is monitored very carefully and targets are revised each year.

Annual testing has been introduced in English, mathematics and science for pupils in Years 3 to 5. The results of these tests are used appropriately to allocate pupils to sets or groups and to identify stronger or weaker aspects of subjects. At present day-to-day assessment is not focused sharply enough on the needs of individuals or groups within classes or sets. This makes it harder for teachers to plan work that challenges groups within the class at the correct levels of difficulty. Although the school has previously set specific English and mathematics targets with each pupil, this has not yet been introduced in the current year. This makes it harder for pupils to focus on what they have to do to improve.

39. Assessment procedures at the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall. Pupils' progress towards the early learning goals for children of this age is recorded regularly. The nursery staff have begun to make more detailed observations of individual pupils and this will enable them to link assessment and planning more closely. Assessment of progress in mathematics in the reception class is good, and helps the teacher to match work to individual needs. The teacher used a tape recorder effectively to assess pupils' speaking skills and understanding. Assessment in Years 1-6 in other subjects is under development. A good example was seen in a Year 2 ICT lesson where pupils' understanding and skills in communicating information electronically was carefully tested and recorded, and is to be used as the basis for future differentiated work.
40. The school ethos reflects its commitment to educational inclusion, and the rights pupils have to the best possible education. Pupils with **special educational needs** are identified as early as possible. The school complies with the Code of Practice and draws up IEP that match their particular needs. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational need is fully implemented. Statements are up-to-date, subject to regular review and staff are aware of their requirements. Staff liaise regularly with the appropriate agencies. Teachers know their pupils well and meet their needs sensitively.

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

41. A significant minority of parents is unhappy about many aspects of school life. Although only a few parents attended the meeting held prior to the inspection, they made their concerns known about a number of areas. Parents who completed the questionnaire expressed similar views. Nearly half of the parents who completed the questionnaire were unhappy with the information they receive about their child's progress, the number of extra-curricular activities provided and their relationship with the school. They were unhappy with the amount of homework provided and a quarter of those who responded did not consider the school well led and managed.
42. The school has not developed a fully effective **partnership with parents**, and insufficient progress has been made to address the concerns expressed by some parents at the time of the previous inspection. Induction procedures into the nursery are satisfactory and include home visits, but this initial relationship is not being developed enough in the rest of the school. The school does offer opportunities to learn more about the curriculum through, for example, literacy and numeracy workshops, but contacts between the school and most parents is limited and most have little involvement in school life. A supportive parents association does, however, organise fund raising events.
43. Parental involvement in their children's learning is satisfactory. Younger pupils are encouraged to take reading books home regularly and although some teachers set homework, a regular pattern of homework has not been established in all classes. The homework policy is out of date, but parents have recently received brief information about the work their children will cover each week. Younger pupils have reading records but these are not being used consistently as a method of communication. Older pupils in some classes have no standard system of recording the work they are given to do at home.
44. **The quality of information** provided by the school for parents is unsatisfactory overall, although a weekly newsletter keeps parents informed about school matters and key dates. The prospectus contains useful information on school routines but it does not include information for parents of children in the nursery. Few opportunities are provided for parents to understand the curriculum. This reduces their understanding of the school's work and the opportunities for

those parents who want to help their children at home. Occasional information evenings have been held to explain, for example, the statutory assessment tests. Topic headings are provided for some areas of the curriculum, but these offer limited information about what is being taught in lessons. The current system of one consultation evening early in the school year is not enough to keep parents informed about their children's progress over time. The annual written reports are unsatisfactory. The standardised formula does not provide clear information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses and, in some cases, subject reports and targets for improvement are the same for pupils of differing abilities in the same class.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. **The overall quality of leadership and management** is sound. Some aspects are unsatisfactory which, if left unattended, will have a progressively negative impact on pupils' standards. Recent staff changes have meant that senior staff are currently carrying too many individual responsibilities. Co-ordinators' roles and responsibilities are not laid out in up-to-date job descriptions. School priorities for development over a period of more than a year are not identified systematically and therefore informed judgements are not made about the longer term allocation of funding. As a result, certain curricular areas, especially the nursery, do not have enough resources. The school has a high number of staff changes, highlighting the importance of updated policies that reflect and confirm the school's current practice.
46. **The headteacher** ensures that every pupil is treated equally and has an equal chance to receive an appropriate education. She has managed, despite the national difficulty of recruiting staff, to develop a well-motivated team of teachers and support assistants who are highly committed to the school's success. The monitoring of teaching that she has carried out has been valuable in assessing standards and helping teachers to improve their teaching skills. The percentage of unsatisfactory teaching has been considerably reduced. A significant proportion of the headteacher's time has been spent organising support for pupils with special educational needs. She has been the major influence in dealing with a significant number of pupils who have behaviour problems and, as a result of her efforts, the school community is now well ordered with good behaviour seen both in the classrooms and in the playgrounds.
47. **The senior management team** is effective and has given an appropriate emphasis to the needs identified in the previous report. However, the perceived lack of financial resources has resulted in a rather narrow perspective for the school's future development. The headteacher and senior management team now have the opportunity to develop an ambitious and professionally stimulating school improvement plan that reflects the vision, expertise and ambition of the teaching staff. The current consultation process for developing the plan is not wide enough and does not include sufficient opportunities for the views of everyone in the school: staff, governors, pupils and parents, to be heard and, where appropriate, included. Senior staff are appropriately involved in monitoring the school's overall achievements in national tests.
48. The provision for pupils with **special educational needs** is managed effectively. The co-ordinator [SENCO] is employed on a part-time basis and works in partnership with the headteacher with a clear division of responsibility. The headteacher is mainly involved with behaviour issues while the SENCO covers all other aspects of special needs. They have a very good grasp of current issues and are fully aware of the changes to the Code of Practice. The special needs governor is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and attends the school on a regular basis. Together they make a very strong and effective team. The funds provided by the local education authority to support pupils with statements of special educational needs, and those provided by the governing body, are spent efficiently, ensure good provision and result in pupils' good progress.
49. **The governing body** fulfils its statutory duties and supports the headteacher's actions to try and raise standards in the school. A number of governors take an active part in school life, visiting weekly and working in partnership with the staff by, for example, listening to pupils read. Each governor is linked to a class of pupils, which they shadow while they are at the school. Governors report that this is a valuable source of information and helps them to understand the school's strengths and weaknesses.

50. The governing body are not as proactive in identifying the overarching needs of the school and relies heavily on the headteacher who also presents them with a budget to confirm. The school improvement plan is carefully costed and linked to targets within it, an improvement since the previous inspection. The school finances are well managed by the headteacher. Staff costs are high because of the number of support staff employed and have reduced the budget surplus to a very small percentage of income. The finance committee monitors expenditure carefully and follows the 'best value' guidelines issued by the local education authority. However, the current practice of delegating some funding to class teachers rather than to co-ordinators removes important opportunities for them to manage their subjects effectively.
51. **The school secretary and bursar** are effective links between the governors and the school. They are highly competent and well organised, and make a very good contribution to the financial management and day-to-day routines of the school. Very good use is made of office based computers and ICT systems.
52. Support staff are particularly effective in the contribution they make to teaching and learning when they are deployed to support pupils in class or when working in groups. The additional support provided for pupils with statements of special educational need is most effective when used to enable pupils to be taught alongside their classmates.
53. **The accommodation** is satisfactory. The amount of space in classrooms is appropriate for the number of pupils. The nursery is a very large room with high ceilings, which makes it harder to create an atmosphere that is both warm and secure. The new double glazed extensions to the older classrooms have added room and light, and make them much more effective as places of learning. The school staff make good use of all the space available with both small and large groups working in the available space. **Resources** are well used but aspects of English, science, design and technology, and especially the Foundation Stage, are under resourced. Provision in other subjects is adequate and is very good for many aspects of ICT.
54. The school has experienced a great deal of difficulty in appointing and retaining **staff**. This is a problem that many schools encounter and the governors and headteacher have, after a great deal of effort, managed to fully staff the school and it has sufficient teachers to teach the National Curriculum, the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and religious education. Governors have appointed three teachers from overseas, and made sure that they have had access to courses to familiarise them with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school does not have a staff handbook to help newly qualified teachers or new staff joining the school to become familiar with the routines and practices. The teaching staff have a suitable range of qualifications and experience amongst them, work well together as a team and are very committed to the school's successful future.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. To continue to raise standards the headteacher, staff and governing body should:
1. Target the learning needs of all pupils more accurately by
    - ensuring that work is always set at the right level of difficulty, especially for those older pupils who are capable of higher attainment [See paragraphs 4, 20, 23, 26, 71, 76, 77, 80 and 84]
    - developing, implementing, and monitoring the impact of a marking policy [See paragraphs 20, 71, 78 and 84]
  2. Improve the quality of leadership and management further by
    - evaluating the long as well as the short term needs of the school, and including them in the school improvement plan [See paragraphs 45 and 47]
    - involving the governing body earlier in planning the school's further development [See paragraphs 47 and 50]

- reviewing the allocation for curricular responsibilities [See paragraphs 45, 79, 86, 95 and 114]
  - updating key policies and monitoring their observance [See paragraphs 35-37 and 44]
3. Evaluate and meet the resource needs of the school, particularly in
- the Foundation Stage [See paragraphs 17, 45, 56, 59 and 63]
  - aspects of English, science, ICT, and design and technology [See paragraphs 53, 72, 86 and 109]
4. Improve links with parents and the range of information provided about their children's progress [See paragraphs 41-44]

In addition to the above, the governing body should consider the following for inclusion in the action plan:

- Address the health and safety issues drawn to the attention of the headteacher [See paragraph 35]
- Continue to develop the systems for monitoring and improving attendance [See paragraph 15]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	21	22	1	0	0
Percentage	2	10	42	44	2	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 two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10	180
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	79

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	10	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	19	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (74)	85 (74)	85 (81)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	20	22	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (74)	85 (85)	77 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
		2001	14	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	17	16	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (67)	73 (53)	95 (67)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (53)	71 (63)	73 (50)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

The above tables showing the standards attained have been partially omitted due to the small year groups.

## Ethnic background of pupils

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
143	1	0
0	0	0
10	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
3	1	0
1	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	25

### Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	512051
Total expenditure	519909
Expenditure per pupil	2715
Balance brought forward from previous year	13224
Balance carried forward to next year	5166

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	190
Number of questionnaires returned	41

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	51	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	51	12	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	63	12	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	37	27	12	2
The teaching is good.	49	41	7	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	34	41	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	34	17	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	41	15	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	22	37	34	5	2
The school is well led and managed.	34	39	12	10	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	37	15	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	24	34	15	7

## **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**

56. **Provision** for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The nursery is housed in a large classroom, with an attractively painted story room and a separate, well-decorated toilet area. Facilities for outdoor play are adequate and readily accessible, although the courtyard space is very small for a whole class to use at the same time. Provision for experience with ICT is excellent. There are some shortcomings in provision in the nursery classroom, where the displays and resources seen were limited compared with those usually found in nursery settings. The reception class children are taught in one classroom for the morning and move to the nursery classroom during the afternoon. Teachers refer to national guidance when they plan, and work in the two classes is linked with a common theme for each half term. Outdoor activities are appropriately included in the planning.
57. Children are admitted to the nursery and reception classes in September and January. Staff are sensitive to the personal and emotional needs of young children, and most children settle quickly into the nursery routines.

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

58. Considerable emphasis is placed on the social and personal development of the children. Teaching is often good and children make good progress. Many are on course to exceed the nationally expected standard for the end of the school year. Staff have a consistent approach and are sensitive to those who are experiencing particular problems. Children are very aware of routines and quickly gain confidence through a number of well-planned experiences. For example, when the nursery children led a whole school assembly, most sang confidently, and a few older children spoke clearly as they acted out the story of 'The Little Red Hen.' The children are taught to take care of equipment and are encouraged to work alongside the staff to tidy up after themselves at the end of sessions. They concentrate, work together with others, take turns sensibly and learn to listen to others in class sessions. Children show tolerance to those who find this more difficult. The children's spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately through stories, assemblies and the general ethos of the school.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

59. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Most children are making satisfactory progress and most are likely to achieve the expected standards in speaking, reading and writing by the time they leave the reception class. Children learning English as an additional language make very good progress because they are given very good support and encouragement. All staff involve children in conversation during activities and encourage them to use newly introduced vocabulary. Children in the reception class learn their letter sounds and are taught to form their letters correctly. Most children in the reception class are beginning to write their names, and higher attainers do so confidently and legibly with correct use of upper and lower case letters. Children respond well to stories and enjoy taking part in imaginative role-play linked, for example, with 'The Three Bears.' There is very good support for children with particular difficulties and, as a result, their progress is good and at times very good. Children in the reception class are beginning to read simple texts with support. Some recognise a few words by sight and the higher attainers are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to work out unfamiliar words. Children in the nursery class do not have enough displays to promote early reading skills or an inviting writing area where they can practise early writing skills.

#### **Mathematical development**

60. The quality of teaching of this aspect is good and is targeted effectively on individual needs. Progress is good and a number of children are likely to exceed the nationally expected standard before they enter Year 1. Children in both classes benefit from the high level of adult support. In the nursery, children count, match and begin to recognise number shapes. Some use mathematical language in their play. Reception class children take part in a more formal

numeracy period. They enjoy counting and ordering numbers. The teacher is skilful in ensuring that the less able children are able to contribute and that higher attainers are challenged. While some children are still learning to count to five, others are familiar with much higher numbers and have some understanding of addition and subtraction. They are already beginning to record their work formally, but activities are always securely based on practical experiences. Activities are interesting and varied, and are linked very effectively with the half-termly theme.

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

61. Most children are on course to reach the nationally expected standard and teaching is satisfactory overall. The exception is ICT, where standards are above average. This is the result of very good resources and good teaching. Children control the mouse confidently and use simple programs with increasing independence. Children in the reception class operate the listening base competently and in one lesson they enjoyed working with the teacher to use the digital microscope to observe slices of fruit close up. They recognise and name a number of more common fruits and vegetables and look with interest at others, such as a pomegranate. When children have the opportunity to initiate their own learning they do so with enthusiasm. In one lesson children were keen to plant seeds (positioned for them to discover) to grow a beanstalk and the teacher quickly provided compost, pots and trowels. A good link was made later to the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk.'

### **Physical development**

62. Poor weather during the inspection week meant that there was little opportunity to observe outdoor play. Most children used wheeled toys confidently and with satisfactory control in the very small courtyard area. The nursery and reception classes have more formal physical education lessons. Children are encouraged to become independent in dressing and undressing, and staff are very sensitive to individual needs. Teaching is satisfactory, and the children learn to move with control and to listen carefully to instructions. In one lesson the reception children worked hard to improve their skills in controlling balls, although some found the activities very challenging. Teachers teach hand control, such as how to cut paper safely, very carefully. Children who are left-handed are quickly identified and encouraged to choose the correct tools. Pupils are on course to reach expected levels by the end of the school year.

### **Creative development**

63. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Pupils are on course to reach expected levels by the end of the school year. Planning for adult-led activities is good, but there is scope to increase the opportunities for children to experiment independently with materials and to develop their own ideas. An appropriate range of skills is taught, and children in both classes printed and painted fruit, and used dough to model fruit. Some skilful teaching was observed, for example, when the nursery nurse encouraged children to look carefully through red cellophane before they painted some lips for a display. Role-play areas are provided in both classrooms, and children particularly enjoyed developing play around the story of 'The Three Bears.' Children in the nursery room do not have enough access to a wider range of resources, dressing-up clothes. No music teaching was observed during the inspection. However, the reception class has a weekly music lesson and children attend assemblies where they sing with the whole school. The nursery children enjoy singing a suitable range of action songs and rhymes, and performed confidently in their assembly.

## **ENGLISH**

64. **Current attainment** in Year 2 is in line with national averages, and has improved in recent years. Current attainment in Year 6 is below average, especially in writing. This reflects the unusually high proportion of pupils in the class who have special educational needs. Over the years eleven pupils have joined the class and eleven left, but those who took the National Curriculum tests in the school at the age of seven have made satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language make good progress, especially when the work is set at the correct level of difficulty or they are working in a small

group with a skilled adult. Standards in Year 2 are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but are currently lower than were seen previously in Year 6.

65. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have satisfactory social **speaking** skills, and talk confidently with their friends. Many older pupils find it harder to express themselves in more formal situations. Oral skills are mainly encouraged during question and answer sessions at the beginning and ends of lessons. Occasionally pupils use incorrect grammar in their answers, as when one Year 3 pupil reported that 'The Romans comed after the Stone Age' and a Year 6 pupil said that; 'The word is spelt wrong.' These two examples were not corrected by the teachers, and important opportunities to raise standards informally were missed. Pupils are generally good **listeners** and pay careful attention to their teachers. Instructions seldom have to be repeated. Pupils of all ages enjoy hearing stories read well, and can concentrate for significant periods of time.
66. Overall standards of **reading** are in line with expected standards in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards vary in other classes but pupils generally make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. They benefit from opportunities to read silently or with a teacher during the early morning activities. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of letter sounds, and use them effectively when they meet unfamiliar words. Good examples seen during the inspection included 'decided' and 'aphids.' The quality of teaching reading in Year 2 is good. Pupils' books are at the correct level of difficulty and reading diaries often contain helpful comments for the next 'listener' so that pupils' skills can be developed systematically. Reading groups are different from literacy groups, and pupils make greater progress because the skills teaching has a sharper focus.
67. Pupils in Year 6 are generally enthusiastic readers and enjoy a range of popular authors and 'any story with a cliff-hanger.' Phonics are used effectively with new vocabulary, good examples being 'blister' and 'disgusting' read successfully in a previously unseen text by Roald Dahl. Teachers allow pupils to choose their own books. Titles and occasional comments are recorded in a reading diary, but pupils are not required to reflect on what they have read and formally record it, for example, as a book review. Higher attaining readers do not have enough regular opportunities to discuss their texts with an adult or receive guidance on a wider range of books which might interest them.
68. Standards in **writing** are in line with national averages in Year 2. Higher attaining pupils have a secure understanding of written narrative and use an interesting range of words to enliven their stories and factual writing. Standards of spelling are satisfactory, and handwriting is legible but unjoined. Pupils of average ability develop their ideas in sentences and have a good grasp of the basic spelling rules. Their use of capital letters and full stops is less accurate, and often gets left out when the pupil is writing unaided. Handwriting is satisfactory. The writing completed by pupils of lower attainment shows that they have plenty of ideas but not the grammatical skills needed to reach expected standards. All pupils' books indicate that they have made at least satisfactory progress during the term.
69. Standards in writing are below average in Year 6. The pupils are in groups or 'sets' drawn from Years 5 and 6. This allows the more able pupils to be taught together, but teachers do not take sufficient account of the wide range of ability found within the 'set.' Most pupils are working hard but at levels lower than those expected nationally. Vocabulary choices are seldom adventurous and very little use was seen of grammatically complex sentences or paragraphs. Common words are usually spelt correctly. Handwriting is legible and joined. Pupils with special educational needs work with teaching assistants in small groups under a teacher's direction, and make good progress because of the high level of one-to-one teaching this ensures.
70. Pupils with **English as an additional language** make good progress. The school receives very good support from the local authority. A new pupil recently arrived from Bangladesh was welcomed to the school during the inspection. The support teacher assessed her language needs sensitively and gained a clear picture on which to base her recommendations to the teacher for the pupil's successful inclusion into lessons. This was later seen in practice and was working well. Other pupils receive similar levels of support and make generally good progress.

The rare exceptions occur when pupils are expected to work independently and, as was seen in Year 5, the pupil concerned had to rely too much on the help of friends to complete the work.

71. **The overall quality of teaching** is good, with particular strengths in Years 1 to 4. Teachers plan their work carefully, and have implemented the National Literacy Strategy successfully. Lessons have an understandable structure and usually start with a clear explanation of how the various activities will help pupils achieve the learning target. Good use is made of pupils' ICT skills so that they can write directly to screen, and save their work for future lessons or revision. Teachers are aware of the range of abilities within their classes, but several tend to set the same task for all groups. This limits the pupils' progress because they do not have precise targets based on their ability. Pupils work conscientiously, but try harder in the lessons where the expectations for each group are clearer. They learn particularly effectively in the lessons that have pace and rigour because their interest is maintained and they are actively involved at all stages. Good examples were seen in Years 1, 2 and 4. The quality of marking varies from class to class. In the best examples, in Year 2 for example, there is an appropriate balance between praise and constructive comment that show how the work can be improved. Some work completed by older pupils was unmarked or the marking was limited to comments about handwriting. This is unsatisfactory because pupils do not know how to improve overall standards. The use of homework differs from class to class, but good examples were seen in Year 1, 2, 4 and 6.
72. **The subject is led** effectively by an experienced member of staff. Her recent responsibilities have included ensuring that the three overseas teachers understood the literacy strategy. She makes herself aware of standards by looking at teachers' plans but has not yet had an opportunity to observe lessons at first hand. This makes it harder for her to spread good practice or support colleagues in areas where they feel less secure. She has identified speaking and listening as the next area for improvement, and plans to build on recent successes in raising standards in writing by extended pupils' oral vocabularies through role play. The school has agreed her plans to extend the range of books available for guided reading.

## MATHEMATICS

73. **Standards** in Year 2 are in line with national averages, but are below average in Year 6. The 2002 National Curriculum test results indicated that, although the proportion of Year 2 pupils achieving the expected level 2 was below the national average, this was an improvement on the results achieved in 2001. Evidence seen during the inspection confirms that standards are rising. The proportion of pupils attaining at higher level 3, however, is well below the national average. The National Curriculum test results in Year 6 indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 4 and above was close to the national average. The number of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 6 is below the national average both at level 4 and level 5. The very high percentage of special needs pupils within this group is having a significant impact on the overall standards but the pupils concerned have made satisfactory progress since being in Year 2.
74. **Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2** begin their lessons with practice in mental mathematics. They learn to improve their number writing and to recognise simple number patterns. Many can count correctly and use simple addition, but some find this hard to work out in their heads. They enjoy practical work and using non-standard measures, estimating and measuring each other and objects within the classroom. While the majority are successful, some pupils have difficulty when they have to provide written answers. Pupils in Year 2 are generally more confident with number and many can explain the mental strategies used to arrive at an answer. Most can write simple sentences in addition and subtraction, while higher attainers make calculations in number and money using two-digit numbers. They also enjoy practical work and were observed in one lesson naming two-dimensional shapes and sorting them successfully according to their properties.
75. Although most **pupils in Year 6** are developing sound skills in mental work, many find the work hard and the pace of their work is slower than that usually seen in other schools. Pupils have a

secure grasp of place value and the basic mathematical rules. The majority work confidently with large numbers. They complete written calculations accurately, including those involving multiplication and division of three digit numbers by one and two digit numbers. Pupils find a fraction of quantities and relate fractions to division, and understand the link between equivalent fractions and decimals, placing them correctly in ascending order. Pupils work well together on investigative tasks, share resources and ideas, and help each other to complete the assignments. Those with poorly developed skills in reading and writing as well as a lack of mental mathematics make less progress.

76. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are taught in **mathematic 'sets.'** There are two large sets, which contain average and above average pupils, and two smaller sets for pupils who require additional support. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 has an impact on the make up of the groups and their attainment. Teachers set work at different levels of difficulty for the pupils within these sets and meet the needs of the majority successfully. The small number of higher attaining pupils do not always have enough additional challenge in their work. The two smaller sets, which are supervised by the learning support assistants, are well organised. The pupils, because of the small numbers within the group, are monitored individually during the lessons and work very hard. There are no current plans to evaluate the effectiveness of setting, especially the impact on the more able pupils in Year 5.
77. **The quality of teaching** in Year 1 and 2 is good. In Year 2, for example, there is a constant interactive dialogue between the teacher and class that challenges the pupils' mathematical knowledge and enables the teacher to evaluate their replies to make sure that they have understood before further work is undertaken. Teachers use the final parts of the lessons effectively to bring pupils together to discuss common difficulties and to evaluate how far they have grasped the main teaching points. The slowest member of the class governed the pace of questioning in some mental activities, and more able pupils were therefore not always fully challenged.
78. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory with some good features. Three of the four teaching staff are from overseas and have only had a short period to familiarise themselves with the National Numeracy Strategy. They use the national guidance effectively to plan their lessons and set work that is generally well matched to pupils' learning needs. This was seen in Year 4, for example, when higher attaining pupils worked hard to define the difference between hexagons and polygons. In one lesson, where some unsatisfactory teaching was noted, the work planned for the pupils was too difficult and some did not make enough progress. Teachers use an appropriate mathematical vocabulary and make sure that pupils use the correct words in their answers. Marking is mainly ticks and does not contain enough written feedback to help pupils improve. Pupils' mental skills are underdeveloped and some of the mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of lessons are too slow with insufficient interaction between teacher and pupils. Teachers handled the few incidents of misbehaviour very effectively with good support from classroom assistants. ICT is used effectively in lessons in all parts of the school. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs are provided with assignments that meet their needs, receive encouragement and praise, and persevere well when the work is demanding. The learning support assistants provide valuable support especially to the pupils who have identified needs.
79. National Curriculum test results are analysed and the outcomes are shared throughout the school so that areas of weakness can be identified and addressed. No targets are set currently for individual pupils. The headteacher has only recently taken responsibility as **co-ordinator** but recognises the need to continue to develop teachers' professional skills through a planned programme of monitoring, evaluation and professional support.

## SCIENCE

80. **Standards** are below average in Year 2. Reported standards in the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were well below those expected nationally and in similar schools. Results in 2002 are likely to be similar. Although more seven-year-old pupils achieved the expected standard, none achieved the above average level 3. This compares unfavourably with the school's results in English and mathematics where some pupils achieve at the higher level.

Although pupils are being taught thoroughly and achieve average standards, those capable of higher attainment are not reaching the higher levels. Standards in the present Year 6 class are also below average, and reflect the above average proportion of this class with special educational needs. In the most recently reported national tests in 2001, standards at the end of Year 6 were similar to those found nationally and in similar schools. The confirmed results of the 2002 national tests are likely to be similar.

81. In general the majority of pupils are making satisfactory **progress** over time. Those who are learning English as an additional language are supported well and their progress is good. In a Year 1 lesson, a newly arrived pupil was helped very effectively. While the teacher was talking to the class about the different ways the body can move, such as jumping and walking, the nursery nurse used a picture book to reinforce the vocabulary. The teacher also made effective use of demonstration. All pupils benefit from the high level of adult assistance in some lessons, and those with special educational needs are given good support. As a result they are fully included in all lessons and make good progress.
82. The teachers' planning for the year ensures that the pupils cover all aspects of the curriculum systematically. Lessons are securely based on practical experiences. Teachers manage pupils well and provide interesting resources to stimulate their ideas and to promote discussion. For example, Year 1 pupils were very excited as they watched the different ways in which spiders, wood lice and fish move. In Year 2 the teacher showed pupils a small sapling with its roots exposed, which vividly illustrated the various parts of a plant. Simple investigations are used to develop pupils' scientific enquiry skills, for example, by observing the growth of different plants in Year 2 or comparing the properties of various rocks and soils in Year 3. Correct scientific vocabulary is introduced carefully, although lower attaining pupils often find this hard to remember later.
83. Teaching is thorough, and discussions with pupils reveal that they have a good recall of work covered in previous years. Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials and their properties. Average and higher attaining Year 6 pupils show a secure grasp of their work on magnetism, electricity and the properties of solids and liquids. They know how to set up an experiment, understand why it is important to repeat measurements and record their work clearly. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils explained how their experiment illustrated the upward thrust exerted on various objects when they were placed in water. They described their predictions and the use of a Newton-meter to make their measurements. The subsequent task was varied effectively so that the higher attainers were suitably challenged and less able pupils were given additional guidance. A group of able pupils used computers to write up their investigations, working quickly and sensibly. Pupils with specific special educational needs made good progress because of very focused adult support. A very small minority of pupils made slower progress because of their challenging behaviour.
84. **Teaching** is satisfactory overall. Some good lessons were observed during the inspection. Teachers have secure subject knowledge; their lessons are well organised, interesting and carefully prepared. Little time is wasted in moving from one activity to another, and the support staff are very effectively deployed. A scrutiny of pupils' past work indicates that not enough is being done currently to ensure that the needs of different groups of pupils are fully met in every class. Expectations of written work are not always high enough in Years 4 and 5, particularly of those capable of higher attainment. The quality of marking is inconsistent. While some teachers correct repeated spelling errors, others do not. Some praise is too lavish.
85. Literacy and numeracy skills are used appropriately during science lessons. Pupils record their observations and practical activities, and measure and record their findings in tables and graphs. ICT is used very effectively, for example to record experiments, to research new topics and to look closely at specimens through the digital microscope.
86. **Management of the subject** is good in spite of the post-holder's very heavy workload. The deputy headteacher, as co-ordinator, monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work and has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She has focused successfully on supporting teachers in their planning, increasing investigative work and reducing the use of worksheets. Resources have been increased, but there are still some shortages.

## ART AND DESIGN

87. **Standards of attainment** are above national expectations by the time the pupils reach the end of Year 2 and pupils are achieving well. This is the result of very good teaching. Standards in Year 6 are currently in line with national expectations. Some good teaching was seen during the inspection, but the overall quality of teaching during Years 3 to 6 is not as consistent as it is for younger pupils.
88. Skills and techniques are taught very thoroughly during **Years 1 and 2**. Pupils learn to draw carefully, mix colours and to use a range of materials. In an outstanding lesson in Year 1, pupils were completely absorbed as they watched the teacher demonstrate colour mixing. They compared skin colours by looking at their hands before carefully mixing a variety of skin tones. Other pupils worked hard with the teacher and nursery nurse to observe and draw their faces. They were encouraged to feel the shapes of their eyes, for example, as well as looking in mirrors. A recently arrived pupil learning English as an additional language was fully included in the lesson because of very focused bi-lingual support she received. In most lessons the pupils benefit from a high level of good quality adult support. This was true in a very good lesson in Year 2. Pupils in one group concentrated hard as they looked carefully at pieces of patterned material and then extended the pattern. The teaching assistant gave skilful support, and reinforced the correct subject vocabulary as she encouraged and praised. The lesson was very well organised, and resources were of good quality. Year 2 pupils talk confidently about art, and the visit to the National Gallery at the start of the school year was a major highlight. "It was like a palace," said one boy in awe. Pupils were deeply impressed by the Stubbs painting of 'Whistlejacket', remembering the name of the artist and the painting.
89. Teaching during **Years 3 to 6** is good overall, but occasionally tasks are over-challenging, and photocopied picture resources do not give clear enough examples of what pupils are aiming to achieve. Pupils are introduced to the work of a range of artists and their work, although their knowledge is largely limited to Western influences. Year 6 pupils, for example, are familiar with the styles of Monet and Van Gogh. They have a satisfactory knowledge of different skills and techniques. Pupils are not currently using sketchbooks to record their observations or collect their ideas. They are, however, used to developing their ideas over a number of lessons, and are confident in experimenting with different techniques. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils tried different methods to show movement, experimenting with colour and shade or manipulating images to create a specific effect. The teacher circulated after the initial whole class teaching session, skilfully helping all pupils to improve their work, whatever their level of ability. Pupils with special educational needs were supported very well, and had full access to the lesson as a result. Lessons in art are often linked very effectively with work in other subjects, making learning a more coherent experience.
90. The **management** of the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator is a skilled practitioner and has ensured that teachers have adequate additional guidance to ensure skills are taught systematically. The shortcomings in planning identified in the previous inspection report have been tackled successfully. Funds for resources have recently been devolved to individual classroom teachers, so the co-ordinator has no direct control over art supplies. This limits her influence and does not ensure that pupils will be guaranteed access to an appropriate range of good quality tools and materials. Art and design makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, although there is scope for increased planning to extend pupils' knowledge of cultural diversity. ICT is used very effectively to support learning.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. It was only possible to observe one design and technology lesson during the inspection and very little work was available for scrutiny. Discussions were held with pupils from Year 2 and Year 6, which indicate that pupils have a generally satisfactory range of experiences during their time in school. **Standards** are broadly in line with national expectations by the time pupils reach Year 6. It was not possible to form a secure judgement about attainment in Year 2.
92. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the design process. Year 2 pupils could explain the need to create designs and to identify a list of materials before starting to make a model.

Teachers offer pupils suitable opportunities to evaluate commercial products, and to consider the purpose of their designs and the limitations of the available materials while they are developing their designs. For example, Year 4 pupils had looked at different board games and had a realistic approach to their work. They could identify ways of overcoming simple problems, for example, by strengthening paper or card to create a bridge. The teacher questioned pupils effectively, drawing out their ideas and helping them to think ahead and anticipate potential difficulties. Most pupils could identify the materials they would need, although some less able pupils needed prompting and help. Finished cardboard models in Year 6 were accurately measured, cut and joined. In discussion the pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the need to test models and improve them where possible. They have had little or no experience in working with wood.

93. Pupils make satisfactory use of skills learned in literacy and numeracy periods. For example, Year 5 pupils had written the instructions for making a cup of tea, and measuring skills are used in many activities. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop the use of ICT in the subject.
94. The **management** of the subject is satisfactory overall. The deputy headteacher is the co-ordinator and has many other subject responsibilities. Shortcomings related to the curriculum, identified in the previous inspection report, have been addressed successfully by giving teachers additional guidance on planning. The range and quantity of tools has been identified in the school improvement plan as a spending priority. At present class teachers are ordering materials for their own classes. This limits the co-ordinator's direct influence over the range and quality of materials used in different projects.

## GEOGRAPHY

95. It is only possible to observe one geography lesson during the inspection, and there was not enough work available to make a secure judgement about overall **standards**. The one lesson observed was well planned, resources were readily available, and pupils were given clear instructions and guidance. Pupils have positive attitudes and worked enthusiastically, thinking about Kenya and what would attract tourists to the area. Work related noise levels were sometimes too high, but the pupils made good progress. The overall standards within this lesson were in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs took a full part in the lesson.
96. Past work was discussed with a group of pupils from Year 6. They recalled the work that they had undertaken during the previous year clearly. They spoke with enthusiasm about their topics and, in particular, the links they had developed with the Dominican Republic. They described the life led by the children within the Republic and were looking forward to the week following the inspection when a past member of staff, who has taken up a teaching post within that country, was returning to their school.
97. **The co-ordinator** has introduced a new national scheme of work since the previous inspection, which is proving a useful support to teachers when they plan their work. There is an overall curriculum plan that helps to ensure that there is a clear development of skills and a structured programme of work. Pupils' work and progress is assessed in line with the objectives identified at the planning stage. The co-ordinator evaluates planning, and on the rare occasion when she is not required to teach a class, carries out some classroom monitoring and evaluation. The co-ordinator does not have a job description or a delegated budget to help her develop the subject.

## HISTORY

98. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations. It is only possible to observe history being taught in Year 2, 3 and 4. Judgements are based on these three lessons, teachers' planning, discussion with pupils in Year 6 and by inspecting work on display. The quality of teaching was good in all the lessons seen.

99. **Year 2 pupils** are beginning to realise that information can be obtained from a number of sources. In one lesson, for example, they gathered information from three passages read to them by the teacher, as well as from a medal and from the Armada portrait on display in the classroom. Good use was made of ICT by a group of pupils in their search for information about Elizabeth1 using the Internet. The lesson was well planned and delivered at a good pace. Some very good questioning from the teacher helped to ensure that pupils of all abilities progressed in their learning. The work produced was in line with national expectations.
100. The majority of pupils in Year 3 arranged and placed events in the Celtic and Roman periods in the correct order on a chronological framework. Effective use was made of homework from a previous lesson to allow pupils to share the information that they had gathered relating to these two periods. Higher attaining pupils showed a good understanding of chronology and could explain the counting system (BC and AD) for events before and after the birth of Christ. Good use of questioning helped the lesson to develop. Good questioning was also used in the Year 4 lesson and all pupils were encouraged to contribute to the discussion about life in a camp of Green soldiers. The use of drama within the lesson to focus attention on the life led by Spartan boys and girls was very effective, and pupils become very enthusiastic and keen to write a letter home to their parents describing the life led. This was an effective way for pupils to use the writing skills they had learned in a literacy lesson.
101. **Pupils in Year 6** are studying the Second World War. They are enthusiastic about their work and had the opportunity to experience aspects of that period during the recent visit to the Royal Gun Powder Mills. The school makes good use of educational visits to such places as Kentwell Hall where the pupils have the opportunity to 'live' and experience life in Tudor times. Aspects of history are observed within other curriculum areas such as Tudor portraits in art and design, clay pots in design and technology and songs from the time of the Second World War in music. Attainment in Year 6 is at least in line with national expectations.
102. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic **co-ordinator** who has ensured that the long term curriculum plan will provide a planning structure for the delivery of the programmes of the National Curriculum. She monitors planning and has carried out some limited classroom observations. The post of co-ordinator is not clearly defined because there is no job description.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. **Standards** are in line with the national expectations for Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are keen to learn and make good progress in the lessons in the ICT suite. They work hard to develop their touch typing skills during 'early morning work' and make full use of their computer skills in all subject areas. Pupils with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language also make good progress because they gain immediate success, feel confident about correcting errors on the screen, and enjoy working with a friend as a work partner. No specific mention was made of ICT in the previous report because it was a short inspection, but standards have undoubtedly been boosted by the addition of an ICT suite and the increase in the number of modern classroom computers.
104. **Pupils in Year 2** accept computers as a natural part of their daily lives. They have appropriate skills in handling and communicating information electronically. They use computers confidently to set out text, and change the size, colour and layout of their work using a word-processing program. They are familiar with the Internet, and have used an appropriate website to find portraits of Queen Elizabeth. They know that e-mails are electronic letters sent to friends or family members. Standards are assessed regularly, and all pupils completed an assessment task during the inspection so that teachers could record exactly what pupils could do. This enabled them to plan the next half-term's work with a very good understanding of current levels of achievement.
105. **Pupils in Year 6** also have a good understanding of the role of computers in modern society, giving many examples from their own experiences. Three pupils, for example, described how supermarkets used computers to work out the cost of items at the check-out and to inform the stockroom about sales levels. Computers and the Internet are used every day. Pupils understand how data can be stored electronically, and demonstrated their skills in using search

machines to find information. Standards are close to those expected nationally, which is very pleasing given that many pupils have special educational needs.

106. **The quality of teaching** is generally good. Teachers have a good understanding of the software and the National Curriculum requirements, and use ICT enthusiastically themselves. This gives the pupils confidence they need to make progress and ensures that the learning is planned systematically. Teachers make sure that pupils always use the correct technical vocabulary and that materials are well prepared before the lesson starts. Very good relationships ensure that even the potentially challenging boys in Year 6 are well behaved and remain firmly on task throughout the lesson. Teachers are particularly skilled in seeing how the skills learned in formal ICT lessons can be transferred to other areas of the curriculum, as was seen when Year 6 used the ICT suite for a literacy lesson so that all pupils could complete a language task on screen.
107. ICT lessons are planned for a complete class. As there are only 15 workstations in the ICT suite, some pupils are occasionally required to work in the library or classroom with a teaching assistant while the rest use the computers. This is not always satisfactory, especially when the task away from the computers does little more than keep the pupils quiet and busy, and does not extend or reinforce their ICT skills enough.
108. **The quality of learning** is consistently good because pupils are highly motivated and respond very positively to the confident teaching. The additional opportunities for pupils to practise their touch-typing skills regularly as part of their early morning work brings undoubted benefits. The commercial program is well used, and the progress from single finger 'pecking' in Year 2 to confident keyboard skills using both hands in Year 6 is a considerable achievement. The unusually high number of computers, six in each room as well as the suite, gives all pupils an above average range of opportunities to learn new skills, and to practise and use those they have already gained.
109. The subject is **managed** effectively by the deputy headteacher, who ensures that the curriculum is covered in full and that planning in all subjects includes the appropriate use of ICT skills. E-mail safety is taught from Year 3, and the school uses the local authority 'firewall' to ensure that pupils have no access to unsuitable sections of the Internet. The co-ordinator's many other duties do not give her time currently to monitor or evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. The quality and number of computers is better than is found in many schools, and there is an appropriate range of software, sensors, digital cameras and microscopes to teach the full National Curriculum programme. Many of the workstation stools have been stolen, and pupils have to sit on unsuitable chairs to do their work. This is unsatisfactory because the height levels cannot be adjusted. The school is planning to improve the quality of pupils' learning with the purchase of a projector for the suite so that all pupils can see the 'teaching' monitor more clearly.

## MUSIC

110. **Standards** are close to expected levels in Year 2 and Year 6. The amount of inspection evidence is limited, but discussions with pupils and observation of lessons in Year 4 and Year 5 indicate that pupils are taught the full curriculum and generally have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy singing in lessons and the weekly school hymn practice. They have used a variety of percussion instruments in class lessons, and could name and describe them. Pupils have sound understanding of pulse, and can copy a clapped rhythm accurately. Most pupils in Year 6 sing enthusiastically and enjoy hearing and making music in their weekly lessons. They studied basic composition during a residential visit. Pupils have a good understanding of the various instruments in an orchestra and can name them and the 'families' of instruments, correctly. They enjoy hearing the music written by a range of different composers in assemblies and lessons.
111. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection in Years 3 to 6 was satisfactory. No class teaching was seen in Years 1 or 2. Teachers make appropriate use of a commercial scheme and try to make their lessons as interesting as possible. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils, although some older boys can be testing in lessons. Pupils

respond positively when they sense the teachers' confidence with the materials, as was seen in Year 4 when pupils played percussion instruments very sensibly and listened attentively to the length of sound that each made. Their discussion of the reasons for different lengths of sound was reflective and drew on the knowledge they had of the properties of wood and metal that they had learned in science. Appropriate use is made of taped accompaniments for class singing.

112. Pupils sing enthusiastically in hymn practices, and enjoy the musical aspects of class assemblies. A good example was seen during the inspection when older pupils picked up the tune sung by the youngest children and joined with them at the completion of a class assembly. Hymn practices are effective because new songs and hymns are taught systematically and good use is made of the pianist who visits the school to teach piano lessons on Tuesdays. The quality of singing is generally tuneful and unforced.
113. The subject is managed appropriately by the deputy headteacher. Her time to monitor and evaluate standards and spread good practice is limited because of her several other major curriculum and school responsibilities.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

114. **Standards** in Year 2 are above national expectations, and although no direct teaching was seen in Year 6, evidence supplied by the school indicates that they reach expected levels of attainment. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in Year 1 and Year 2, and sound progress in older classes. They all have a clear understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all lessons and make appropriate progress in line with their abilities.
115. The physical education lessons observed during the week of the inspection were outdoor games, dance and gymnastics. Discussion with pupils and teachers, and a scrutiny of teachers' planning, indicate that the school provides a balanced programme of physical education, which fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, participate in gymnastics activities, and respond to music through dance and movement. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have swimming lessons for one term during the school year.
116. **Pupils in Years 1 and 2** enjoy their physical education lessons and are enthusiastic learners. In Year 1 pupils work hard at bouncing and catching a large ball, working with control and accuracy and using the space available well. Year 2 pupils committed themselves fully to the dance lesson, linking their actions to make short dances. They show a growing control over their own movements and work well with their partners. Good teaching was seen at the end of both lessons when pupils are encouraged to discuss the work they have seen, and suggest possible ways of improving their skills and performances.
117. **The older pupils** are also enthusiastic and try hard in their physical education lessons. Pupils in Year 3 worked well on the floor as well as on the apparatus to design a sequence of actions using travelling movements that included 'bridging.' Once again, good class discussion resulted in pupils working to improve their performance. A progression of skills development was observed in the games lessons in Year 4 and Year 5 when pupils were involved in a series of 'invasion' tactics when they had to move a ball into the other team's territory. Good progress was evident in the way Year 4, who did not use the available space as well as the older pupils, became more skilled and aware of the need to run into spaces and not just to follow the ball. They have learnt to choose and apply skills more consistently in their activities. Pupils in all classes work well in partnership with each other and understand what it means to be in a team. They share apparatus, help each other and are prepared to discuss their work openly with the whole class.
118. **The standard of teaching** observed in Years 1 and 2 was good because the teachers made sure that the pupils followed instructions carefully and were given plenty of opportunities to develop their levels of skills. The overall standard of teaching in older classes is satisfactory. Lessons have a clear structure and pupils are suitably challenged by the activities provided. Occasionally, however, pupils are inactive for too long while they listen to lengthy explanations

by the teachers. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and take a full and active part in the lessons. The learning support assistants are very effective in their work these pupils.

119. The subject is managed by a **co-ordinator** who is new to the school. She is enthusiastic and has a number of ideas for developing the subject. She does not have a job description to define her role and responsibilities. Resources for physical education are satisfactory and suitable for all age ranges throughout the school. They are organised well and readily accessible.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. **Pupils in Year 2** know the basic facts of Christianity, including the story of the birth of Jesus and the events surrounding His death. They knew that Christians regard Jesus as the Son of God, and that He helped people with advice and His skills of healing. Pupils could describe the principal symbols that are linked to major world faiths, and one used the correct Sikh name 'kanda.' **Pupils in Year 6** have studied Christianity in greater depth and have an awareness of Hinduism and Buddhism. They have an appropriate understanding of the life of Jesus, including the importance of the Resurrection to Christians. They could explain that parables had a special meaning, and used the example of the 'Good Samaritan,' knowing that it was linked to an important lesson about racism. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, especially when assisted by an adult. A good example was seen in Year 5 where the assistant and pupil made good progress in compiling a list of 'ten top' rules in a lesson on the importance of religious laws.
121. No teaching was observed in Years 1 or 2. The **standard of teaching** in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Learning is good when teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, and pupils feel confident in asking them questions. This was seen, for example, when Year 3 studied aspects of Islam in developing their understanding of the different ways in which to name God. Good use was made of an appropriate website so that pupils could extend their understanding, and an effective link was made to art where pupils have been studying Islamic symmetrical patterns. Teachers make good use of specialist vocabulary accurately and encourage pupils to use the correct words in their own writing and answers. Written tasks are often not as effective as the direct factual teaching that starts the lesson. Many are limited to very simple exercises that record the main teaching points, and do not provide enough opportunities for higher attaining pupils to increase their knowledge or understanding through research or more challenging activities.
122. The headteacher is the **subject co-ordinator**. She is well informed, and uses her contacts outside school to ensure that pupils understand that there are many living faiths in the wider community. The school has welcomed the new locally Agreed Syllabus, and planning has become more focussed.