

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **HIGHGATE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sileby, Leicestershire

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120049

Headteacher: Mr D Godfrey

Reporting inspector: Mr A Calderbank  
7979

Dates of inspection: 16 – 19 September 2002

Inspection number: 248080

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 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Heathcote Drive  
Sileby  
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE12 7ND

Telephone number: 01509 813 968

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C O'Leary

Date of previous inspection: January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7979	A V Calderbank	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements What should the school do to improve further?
9334	J Mynett	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2465	G Yates	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11922	J M Watkins	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Highgate Community Primary School is an average sized primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven years. It is situated in Sileby, a small town midway between Leicester and Loughborough in an area of mixed private and public housing. There are currently 218 pupils on roll. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are organised in classes containing children from two year groups. Twenty-one children (about 10 per cent) are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Twenty-five pupils are on the special needs register. At around 12 per cent, this is below the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. This is below average for the size of school. There are no children from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. When children start in the reception class, the attainment of most is what is expected for their age.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Highgate Community Primary School is a caring school and standards in English and mathematics are above average by the time pupils leave. It is justifiably well respected in the local community. Teaching is good overall. Social and moral education makes a significant contribution to pupils' development. The school is effective in sustaining good standards of pupil behaviour. It is well led and gives good value for money.

#### What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their speaking and listening skills.
- The headteacher shows good leadership.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and as a result pupils are interested in learning, enjoy school and behave well.
- Attendance is very good. Pupils are keen to come to school.
- The relationships between adults and pupils are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

#### What could be improved

- The provision for pupils to use their good writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Assessment procedures and the use made of the information to improve the quality of teaching and learning in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The involvement of curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- The quantity of computers including software throughout the school and the range of outdoor play equipment in the Foundation Stage (the reception class).

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

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

Good improvements have been made since the school was last inspected in January 1998. The school has undertaken a full review of teachers' planning and adopted a common and consistent approach. All subjects now have schemes of work. A whole-school approach to assessment has been put in place in English and mathematics. Teachers now use this information well to help decide what the children should learn next in both subjects. As a result, standards have risen, not only in the percentage of children who reach the level expected for their age, but also in the percentage who do better. Development planning is now good and gives the school a clear direction for the next few years. Though co-ordinators monitor standards in their subjects, most are not sufficiently involved in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. The school takes care that when children are withdrawn from lessons to receive extra help they do not miss the same subject every week. The school is well placed to move forward even further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	B	C	C
Mathematics	E	C	C	C
Science	D	B	D	E

**Key**

well above average      A

above average          B

average                    C

below average          D

well below average      E

The results of national testing in 2001 showed that the pupils' attainment was generally average. Inspection evidence, however, shows that standards in English and mathematics have improved and are now above average. Pupils' attainment in science is also better and is similar to that found in most schools. The school's targets in English and mathematics for the 2003 national tests are realistic and appropriately challenging. Above average standards are achieved throughout the school in speaking and listening. Pupils have good writing skills but are not provided with sufficient opportunities to use them in other subjects. Though pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is average, the quality of learning is not as good as it could be because of the lack of computers and some resources.

The majority of children in the foundation stage (reception class) make good progress in personal and social development, reading, writing and number. Most will attain the expected early learning goals by the end of the reception year and a significant minority will exceed them. However, the lack of suitable outdoor play equipment limits children's physical development. Very good progress is made in creative development.

Inspection findings show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. Standards of attainment in reading, writing, mathematics, science and all other subjects inspected by the end of Year 2 are at least similar to those found in most schools. The percentage of pupils working at Level 3 in mathematics and reading rose significantly last year. The school has worked hard to improve writing and in the current Year 2 an above average proportion of children are on track to attain Level 3.

It was not possible to make an overall judgement about standards in physical education and music by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils sing well and their games skills are similar to those found in most schools. In all other subjects inspected pupils' achievements are average by the end of Years 2 and 6.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are happy in school and are keen to learn. They work hard and give their full attention to lessons. They become really involved when activities catch their interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils follow the rules and play very well together in the playground. They work co-operatively during lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good. Children of all ages get on very well with and care about each other. When given the opportunity, they carry out jobs in school responsibly and sensibly but more could be done to develop this aspect of school life.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are keen to come to school.

The pupils are enthusiastic about school and take a pride in what they do.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Foundation Stage	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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 overall and a strength of the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have fully incorporated the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies into their planning, and teach the basic skills of reading, writing, spelling, and handwriting thoroughly. They place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of number and mathematical procedures. In Years 3 to 6, the setting of pupils by attainment in English and mathematics enables teachers to meet pupils' needs, including those with special needs. Information and communication technology skills are taught effectively but the lack of resources limits the opportunities for pupils to practise and use their skills on a regular basis.

The major strengths in the teaching seen were effective planning, teachers' good subject knowledge and the high expectations they have that pupils will listen, explain their reasoning and carry out instructions. The quality of learning is good throughout the school. In most lessons, pupils show interest, concentrate carefully and try hard.

Good teaching in the reception class includes good opportunities for children to explore and learn for themselves. The teacher makes effective use of assessment information to ensure that work is matched to children's ability. The quality of learning is good in most areas of the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because work is matched to their ability. Teaching assistants support pupils well. A statemented pupil receives very good support and is well integrated into the life of the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets national requirements and is well planned and organised. A satisfactory programme of extra sporting activities and a good range of visits adds to the quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are identified at an early stage and achieve well. They are provided with appropriate support to reach the targets in their individual education plans. Working individually and in small groups helps them to grow in self confidence.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good attention overall is paid to fostering pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff expect pupils to show good manners, to do the right thing and to consider others at all times. Moments of reflection contribute well to pupils' spiritual development and to the ethos of the school. There is good provision to develop pupils' self-esteem and a sense of their own skills and talents. The major strengths in social and moral development are offset by the limited provision to prepare the children for life in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the staff know each child very well and show care and concern for their well-being and safety. However, in subjects other than English and mathematics teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment information to decide the next steps in the pupils' learning. Pupils' personal development is well supported and monitored effectively. The school analyses test results in English

	and mathematics and uses the information well to set targets for improvement.
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The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. However, the reports parents receive about the progress children make do not provide them with the full range of information for all subjects.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives a clear sense of purpose and direction to the work of the school. The senior management team supports him well. Co-ordinators have been given additional responsibilities but they are insufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil most of their legal responsibilities and have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. As a result, they deal efficiently with school matters and are effectively involved in setting targets for improvement. However, the school prospectus does not contain all the required information.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; governors review progress regularly. The school has identified appropriate priorities for development and put in place effective systems for evaluating teaching and learning throughout the school in English and mathematics. The action taken has improved standards in both subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good; funds are used effectively to support the school's priorities. The strategic use of resources is good, overall. However, pupils do not make sufficient use of the library in order to research for information. Budget decisions are linked well to the school's educational priorities contained in a good school development plan. Monies allocated to special educational needs are used well.

Staffing levels are adequate for the school's needs. There are satisfactory resources for most subjects but the lack of ICT equipment limits the time pupils are able to spend on computers practising their skills. In the foundation stage a wider range of outdoor play equipment is needed to implement the latest curriculum guidelines for this age group fully. Three junior classes are being taught in demountable classrooms, all of which are in a poor state of repair and lack a supply of hot water. In addition, one of these classrooms is limited in size and has no toilet or cloakroom facilities.

#### 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>The teaching is good.</li> <li>Their children are happy and like school.</li> <li>They would feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems.</li> <li>Children are expected to work hard and as a result make good progress.</li> <li>Children behave well and the school helps them to become mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The range of activities offered outside of lessons.</li> <li>The work that pupils are expected to do at home.</li> <li>Better links between school and families.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. However, when school visits to places of interest are taken into account, the team thinks that older children are provided with a suitable range of activities outside lessons. Though the amount of work that pupils are expected to do at home is similar to that given by most other schools, it could be made clearer to parents what has to be done and when it has to be handed in. The school tries hard to keep parents informed about events and what children are going to learn next at school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The results of national testing in 2001 showed that the pupils' attainment was generally average. Inspection evidence, however, shows that standards in English and mathematics have improved and are now above average.
- 2 The attainment levels of children entering the reception class are average. Despite the fact that the children had only just started school, they have settled quickly into the school's routines and are engaged in a suitable range of activities which cater well for their needs. By the time that they are ready to start in Year 1, most children are expected to make good progress overall and reach the standards expected. A significant minority should exceed them. These judgements are based on a scrutiny of the work completed last year.
- 3 In the reception class, children's personal, social and emotional development is good as they learn to be independent and to work with others. They develop their literacy and numeracy skills well and the majority will achieve the expected standard. Children make a good start recognising letter sounds. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 most can read simple texts and form their letters correctly. In mathematical development, children's number skills and their understanding of concepts such as lighter and heavier are being developed effectively. They make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are interested in their surroundings and can use computers confidently. Attainment levels are in line with expectations in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Satisfactory progress is made in the development of children's physical skills. The school hall is used well for dance lessons but the lack of outside play resources limits the progress children can make. In creative development, the children are making good progress as they make use of a variety of materials to make models and pictures. In music they enjoy singing rhymes and songs. By the time they move up to Year 1, children's attainment is broadly in line with that found in most schools.
- 4 Over the three years 1999 to 2001 pupils have under performed slightly against the national averages in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2 but their performance in writing has been above the national average. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was close to the national average and above it in writing. The school's performance was below average in reading, above in writing and average in mathematics when compared to similar schools. However, the results in 2002 show improvement in reading and mathematics at the higher Level 3. Standards in writing remain about the same. Teacher assessments for science showed that attainment was above average at Level 2 and above but below average at Level 3 and above. In 2002 the percentage of pupils assessed as working at the higher level fell significantly.
- 5 The school's results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science showed a decline when compared to the previous year. This was mainly due to the long term absence of a key member of staff who also taught some of the Year 6 pupils. In addition the age group contained an above average number of pupils with behaviour problems. Pupils' performance in English and mathematics was close to the national average and to the average for similar schools. In science it was below the national average and well below that

found in similar schools. However, the school's results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests show a significant improvement especially in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in all three subjects.

- 6 Based on test results for the past five years, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with the national trend. Over the three years 1999 to 2001, there has been no significant difference in the performance of boys or girls but last year girls performed significantly better than boys at level 5 in writing. Inspection findings show no significant difference between them. Boys and girls in Years 3 to 6 applied themselves equally and with interest in lessons. However, the school intends to monitor closely boys' performance in writing.
- 7 The improvements in pupils achievements by the end of Years 2 and 6 are due in no small measure to teachers' better planning, based on national strategies, and the good use now being made of assessment information in English and mathematics to track and target groups and individual pupils.
- 8 Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils are attaining at least the expected levels for their ages in English and mathematics and standards are above average in these subjects by the end of Year 6. These judgements are an improvement on those made at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' progress is improving in English and mathematics and science because of good teaching.
- 9 By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils are expected to reach the expected standard in writing, reading, speaking and listening by the age of seven and the proportion working at the higher levels is above average in writing. Pupils are confident speakers and listen well to others. They enjoy reading and use picture clues as well as their knowledge of phonics to help them tackle new words. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the text. They make good progress developing their writing skills and most pupils can write independently. The school has worked hard to improve standards in writing.
- 10 Pupils make good progress overall in Years 3 to 6 in English and achieve well. Speaking and listening continues to be a significant strength of the school. Pupils develop increasing fluency and become confident conversationalists. They read well and with good expression. Older pupils are able to talk in depth about different authors and discuss a range of genres including poetry. Writing standards are good and pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences in English.
- 11 Pupils are given ample time in most lessons to discuss ideas and to read for information. However, the good quality of writing found in their English exercise books is not replicated in the range of work in other subjects. In geography, history and science, for example, opportunities are missed for pupils to use their writing skills.
- 12 Pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved and is better than that found in most schools by the end of Year 2. In 2002 over forty per cent of the pupils achieved Level 3. Attainment in mathematics is above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils have good computational skills and can solve problems involving numbers and quantities. However, though pupils throughout the school are good at explaining the mathematical process they have carried out, a significant minority do not have instant recall of basic number facts. Numeracy skills are developed soundly in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in science pupils present their findings using graphs.

- 13 In English and mathematics pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in groups according to prior attainment and this is benefiting them because work is well matched to their ability.
- 14 There is evidence that standards are improving in science throughout the school and are now similar to those found in most schools. By the end of Year 2, pupils can record their observations and findings appropriately and have a sound knowledge of the topics they have covered. Standards are not as low as teacher assessment would appear to indicate. Satisfactory progress is being made in Years 3 to 6 but higher attainers are not given the opportunity to set up an investigation for themselves.
- 15 Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection, because of new facilities and increasing teacher skills. Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is similar to those found in most schools. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology in most other subjects but insufficient computers and the lack of suitable software for control and modelling hamper the progress that pupils make.
- 16 Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- 17 In all other subjects inspected pupils' achievements are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. No overall judgement could be made about standards in physical education because the full range of activities was not seen. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in all aspects of music. However, standards in singing and in games are similar to those found in most schools.
- 18 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set out clearly in their individual education plans. The range of provision available, including withdrawal for small group teaching and support in classrooms, contributes effectively to the progress which pupils make.

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

- 19 Pupils' attitudes both to school and their learning are good. They are happy and enjoy school. They feel that *'everybody is welcoming, friendly... they look after new people... they cheer you up and help you when you're down'*. Pupils are well motivated, concentrate hard, and are keen to contribute in lessons and participate in their different tasks and activities. They become particularly involved when things catch their interest, and are enthusiastic about the various sports and out of school activities. Comments from older pupils included; *'work can be challenging... all the teachers are fun... they can be strict if necessary but are fair... they listen to you and are very helpful'*. The youngest children in the reception class are beginning to show a confident and mature approach both to work and within their relationships with each other after just three weeks in school. They listen attentively concentrating well, and are developing good social skills as they engage in their tasks and activities. The children work and play very well together, happily sharing their toys and resources. Parents are particularly pleased at the consistently high expectations of all members of staff, which encourages Pupils to work hard and behave well. They feel this is helping their children to become mature and responsible. They value the good teaching and commitment of staff.
- 20 The standards of behaviour in and around the school are good and have been well maintained since the last inspection. Parents commented on the high standards set and the emphasis from teachers on what is acceptable, so that pupils know what is

expected. The school has an orderly atmosphere and pupils are well aware of the school's rules, some of which they have helped devise. Pupils value the merit system of stars and stickers. Whilst some commented *'that it encourages you to improve and do well'*, others replied that, *'I work hard because I like to'*. Pupils are very friendly, happy to talk about what they are doing and willing to show their work to visitors. Pupils report that the school is a happy and secure place with little bullying. If they have a problem they know who to go to, and are confident it would be dealt with properly. There are few incidents of oppressive behaviour and a high degree of harmony exists between pupils. There have been no exclusions in the school during the last twelve months.

- 21 Relationships in the school are very good, both between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. The school works hard to promote tolerance and kindness and ensure pupils do not feel excluded. The 'big friends/little friends' system set up between older and younger pupils helps to provide a support structure to deal with any problems and difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well integrated into school activities. Social development is good. There are frequent chances for pupils to work together in pairs, however opportunities for larger groupings are less evident. Pupils co-operate well and this promotes a good working environment making a positive impact on learning. Pupils were observed working well together on the computers or whilst preparing joint notes on their white boards in a literacy lesson. They frequently raise funds for charity. Year 6 also worked well together running a fund raising cake stall to generate money for new books in the library.
- 22 The personal, social and health education programme identifies many opportunities for pupils to talk about important issues. This promotes a very good moral code, enabling pupils to share their views and feelings, values and beliefs. During one lesson pupils were discussing how to improve things in the playground and how to co-operate better as a way of promoting positive relationships. The care and encouragement shown by pupils for those with special educational needs is very good. The school promotes a value and respect for each other, which is reinforced by the good role models of the staff.
- 23 Opportunities to develop pupils' personal development are sound. Where pupils are given tasks that they can undertake independently, such as reading and following instructions, or undertaking their own research and investigations, this works well, helping them to take responsibility for their own learning, and develop their initiative. This was particularly effective in a Year 4/5 geography lesson, where pupils were researching different climatic zones to identify ideal holiday destinations for different characters. Pupils willingly undertake roles of responsibility around the school such as acting as class monitors or librarians. Whilst Year 6 pupils act as lunchtime monitors and help to set up for assembly, more opportunities could be provided for them to take on responsibilities. They did not think that they were treated any differently from the Year 5 pupils in the same class. The Year 6 pupils did not feel they had more responsibility only *'more things to do'*. Whilst there is no school council pupils felt that they did have an opportunity to air their views but could not remember any decisions or changes they had influenced.
- 24 Attendance levels in the school have improved since the last inspection and are now very good. Pupils are generally prompt into school in the mornings. Registers are kept correctly, and the registration process offers an orderly start to the day.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 25 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. In the lessons seen, all of the teaching was satisfactory or better. Almost 70 per cent was good or better and just over 20 per cent was very good. Since the previous inspection strengths have been maintained, and the weaknesses identified are no longer in evidence. Teachers' planning is now of a good quality and challenging work is being set for higher attaining pupils. As a result the quality of learning is much better and standards have risen. Good use is made of teachers with specialist subject knowledge in Years 5 and 6 particularly in the teaching of science and history.
- 26 Teaching is good in the reception class with some very good features. The teacher and nursery nurse work well together. Adults provide good role models and their approach is warm and friendly. Although it is early in the school year, routines have been carefully established and are already well known. As a result, children feel secure and grow in confidence. Teachers' good use of questions really encourages children to explore and to be inquisitive. Classroom management is effective and pupils display very good levels of behaviour. Literacy and mathematical skills are being taught well. Teachers' planning contains due account of information gathered about what pupils know, understand and can do. At the moment there are not enough outdoor resources to extend pupils' learning and teacher's planning does not make reference to the use of the outdoors in other areas of learning.
- 27 The good quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is underpinned by the very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Teaching is consistently of a good quality and ensures that the pupils make good progress especially in English and mathematics. Where there is sometimes immature pupil behaviour in Year 2 it is dealt with well. Common strengths are the teacher's use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and clear explanations when introducing new concepts to the classes. The good quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has a positive effect upon pupils' attitudes and their learning.
- 28 Teachers in Years 3 to 6 build successfully on the effective teaching in the earlier years. Teaching is of a good quality and often better. They plan lessons well and usually achieve a good balance between talking to the whole class, group work and individual tasks. However, one teaching group contains over 40 pupils and this places severe restrictions on the opportunities for class discussions. A strength of teaching in history is the very good use made of drama to make the subject 'come alive' for the pupils.
- 29 In Years 1 to 6, teachers are secure in their knowledge of the National Curriculum. Also, in English and mathematics, specific developments have taken place to introduce the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is now a systematic approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school. This is working well and teaching is good in both subjects. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to read and a significant strength of teaching is the provision for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills. A feature of many lessons is the time created for pupils to discuss their ideas with a partner. As a result the quality of question and answer sessions is improved. However, more needs to be done to provide opportunities for pupils' to use their writing skills across all subjects.
- 30 Throughout the school lessons are well organised. In Years 3 to 6 all classes contain pupils from two age groups. In English and mathematics good use is made of grouping pupils in classes based on prior attainment to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should. Teachers introduce lessons well ensuring that pupils are clear about the overall purpose of the lesson. For example, they usually write the learning



objectives on the board and draw pupils' attention to them.

- 31 The quality of teaching in science is good, overall, and has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Planning is now of a good quality. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to share their ideas. Teachers explain tasks clearly but do not provide higher attaining pupils with enough opportunities to set up their own experiments. A strength of science teaching is the use made of a teacher with specialist skills in Years 5 and 6. The quality of learning in the lessons taken by this teacher is good because pupils have the benefit of being taught scientific skills by a good practitioner. For example, they extend their scientific vocabulary to include words such as 'gravitational attraction'.
- 32 The teaching of information and communication technology has improved significantly since the previous inspection and during the week of the inspection was good, overall. In-service training has raised staff expertise in the subject. Teachers introduce new skills well. However, the lack of equipment has a detrimental effect on the progress pupils make because they are not given sufficient opportunities to use and practise their newly taught skills.
- 33 There is close link between the teaching and rate of learning. In all the lessons where the teaching was good or better, the pupils showed interest and made good progress. In these lessons teachers' clear explanation of what is required and an insistence of work being well presented had a positive effect.
- 34 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils make progress because work is set that is matched to their prior attainment. Support staff play a vital role in managing the pupils and guiding them in activities. This is especially so with regard to the help given to a child with a statement of special educational need. All staff have very good relationships with the pupils and offer unobtrusive support for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. For example, in Year 2 the support assistant has her own 'Big Book' to help and support pupils. This enables her to explain any words to the children without it interrupting the lesson for the rest of the class. Support staff are well briefed and ensure that the pupils stay focused on their learning. The school is aware of the need to ensure that when pupils are withdrawn from classes for extra tuition they do not miss the same lesson each week.
- 35 Teachers set homework that makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress. However, parents need more information about the amount of homework expected and when it should be completed. Marking is good. Teachers' comments are usually supportive and effective in making sure that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Resources are satisfactory in most subjects, teachers make good use of them to support learning. Visits out of the school are also used well to stimulate interest and improve the quality of learning, especially in history and geography.

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

- 36 The quality and range of the curriculum are good. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical, social and personal development and they are well prepared for the next stage of education. The school successfully fulfils its aims to provide a caring, interesting and motivating environment. It provides pupils with a wide range of experiences and a variety of learning opportunities in order to encourage enquiring minds. Visits and visitors add significantly to the richness of pupils' experiences.

- 37 The previous inspection report recommended a review of the planning arrangements and to ensure a consistent approach by preparing a common format for schemes of work. This has been successfully addressed. Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage has been successfully implemented since the previous inspection. Care is now taken to ensure that when children are withdrawn from class to receive extra help they do not miss the same lesson every time. A policy for educational inclusion, exists in draft form but has not yet been ratified by the governing body.
- 38 The quality and range of opportunities in the Foundation Stage compare well with other schools and there are some significant strengths. Good structured programmes are in place for literacy and numeracy. The provision for creative development is very good but that for physical development is relatively weak because of the lack of suitable outdoor play equipment. The six areas of learning recommended for the age group provide a successful basis for transition to the National Curriculum.
- 39 The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6. The curriculum includes all the expected subjects and complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, which is currently under review. All subjects have a policy and scheme of work, which provide good guidance for teachers' planning. In many subjects the school incorporates the latest national guidance and learning objectives are integral to lesson plans. Sex education and drug awareness are incorporated into the science curriculum and there are appropriate programmes for personal and social and health education and citizenship.
- 40 The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is good overall. Good progress has been made in the teaching of reading and writing, but there is still a need for pupils to be provided with more opportunities to use their good writing skills in other curriculum areas. There is a good provision made for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills.
- 41 The National Numeracy Strategy is well implemented. A particular strength of the teaching is the common and consistent expectation that pupils will explain their reasoning. Good emphasis is given to numeracy as a subject in its own right, but despite teachers' best efforts some pupils do not have quick recall of basic number facts. Appropriate opportunities are created to use mathematics in other subject areas, sometimes using information and communication technology resources.
- 42 The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The requirements of the revised Code of Practice are fully met. Pupils are identified at an early stage and achieve well. They are provided with the necessary support to reach the targets in their individual education plans. Good support from non-teaching assistants, well planned programmes of work which match pupils attainment levels and opportunities to work individually and in small groups are all factors which help them to grow in confidence and develop academically.
- 43 Satisfactory provision is made for all pupils to progress and to have equal access to most aspects of school life. Lessons in literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6 are organised in 'sets', which take account of the needs of all pupils, including those higher attainers who need additional challenge in order to fulfil their potential. For lower attainers, 'booster' classes and other additional support, is provided where necessary. Good use is made of particular teacher expertise by the use of 'specialist' teaching in some subjects in Years 5 and 6. However, the lack of computers and suitable software for control and modelling limits the amount of progress pupils can make in developing their skills in information and communication technology. Swimming is available for pupils in all age groups from Year 1 onwards in termly

groups throughout the year. However, parents are expected to make a contribution towards the cost of transport and tuition. As a result not all pupils take part in swimming lessons.

- 44 The range of activities which takes place outside lessons is satisfactory although no activities are available for younger children. There are opportunities for pupils to join after school clubs, but these are confined to older children. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the good option to attend a residential course on two occasions during their time in the juniors.
- 45 Satisfactory links exist between the school and the local community. They include links with the local playgroups and other educational establishments such as a middle school, a community college and a nearby university. There are also links with the local church and pupils engage in village studies. The local council presented momentoes to commemorate the millennium. There is good liaison with the railway police. The local policeman visits the school and cycling proficiency courses for pupils are run as part of a road safety initiative.
- 46 Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection.
- 47 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Some opportunities for pupils to reflect are provided during collective worship and during "Thought for the Day", which often focuses on environmental and social issues. Older pupils regularly listen to and read poetry specifically chosen for enjoyment and reflection. Religious education lessons and personal, social and health education lessons encourage pupils to consider their own and other people's lives. Informal recording of pupils' own reflected responses to paintings such as 'On Malvern Hills' by John Brunsden, are made on a white board, which is provided for this purpose.
- 48 Provision for moral development is very good. Standards of behaviour are good overall and relationships are very good. Most pupils have a very clear sense of right and wrong. There is a well established and consistent approach to pupil management which is shared by all teachers who act as good role models. In Years 1 and 2 acts of kindness and friendship are noted and rewarded. Acts of collective worship fulfil statutory requirements and often have a strong moral message which is well couched in story form.
- 49 Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils of all ages undertake helpful tasks. There is a high expectation for them to organise their own work. Transfer to different classrooms for lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6 is carried out with the minimum of disruption. The 'setting' arrangements for older pupils in English and mathematics mean that they are expected to relate to a range of different groups. Throughout the school there are opportunities to work co-operatively in pairs on a frequent basis and occasionally in larger groups. Older pupils take on additional activities to help younger ones. They organise equipment and set up fund raising activities. There is scope to develop their responsibilities still further. The school encourages pupils to consider those less fortunate than themselves by participating in charitable activities such as The Blue Peter Appeal and Red Nose Day. Participation in residential visits and school performances have a valuable social dimension.
- 50 Provision for cultural education is satisfactory. Good opportunities exist for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures in history and geography. They are taught about major world faiths in religious education and sometimes encounter other cultural traditions through art and music. However, conversations with pupils indicate that they have little understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society today.

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

- 51 The school provides a caring and supportive environment. Its provision for pupils' health, welfare and guidance is sound, and makes a satisfactory contribution to their personal and academic development. Parents feel that teachers are helpful and provide a listening ear when their children have problems or concerns. The school has an appropriate focus on the issues of inclusion to ensure pupils have equal opportunities. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers and their support staff know the pupils very well. They effectively monitor pupils' personal development and will act quickly when they see a need. Pupils are also involved in identifying their own targets for improvement. There are appropriate systems in place to support the academic and personal development needs of pupils with special educational needs, and pupils make good progress.
- 52 The school is more concerned with procedures rather than formal policies. Whilst the school has no formal behaviour policy, procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour, and eliminating any oppressive behaviour are good. This is reflected in the good behaviour and orderly atmosphere in the school. However, the lack of formal policies reporting the balance of rewards and sanctions mean that parents are uncertain about the school's approach and what is expected. There is a bullying policy, which provides clear guidelines and procedures for dealing with any incidents. However again, parents are not always aware that this exists.
- 53 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are sound. However, the fact that registration sheets are kept in classrooms means there is little cross checking of absences until later in the week. The school also does not follow up absences immediately if parents do not contact the school in the morning to say their child will be away. Parents are informed about their responsibilities regarding the need to ensure their children attend school regularly and promptly both in the prospectus and through updating letters.
- 54 The school has satisfactory systems in place for child protection and ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. The school has appropriate procedures and guidelines for child protection. The headteacher has designated responsibilities for child protection. He has undertaken recent updating training, and other members of staff are similarly updated on changes to the legislation, receiving appropriate in-service training. All staff are qualified to provide basic first aid treatment. Well-established systems are in place to take care of pupils who have minor accidents or fall ill during the day, and there are effective procedures to meet the medical needs of pupils. The school has appropriate links with the external agencies such as the school nurse, who has a 'drop in' session in the school each week.
- 55 There has a health, safety and welfare policy, and suitable procedures in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in and around the school. The headteacher is the health and safety representative. Both he and the health and safety governor undertake regular health and safety checks and risk assessments reporting back to the governing body. The recent installation of fencing around the grounds has improved the security of the school. However, during the inspection some fire exits were obstructed. Other issues relating to health and safety concerns were verbally reported to the school during the inspection.

- 56 The school assesses each pupils' attainment on entry and the progress of pupils in each area of learning is well monitored during the Foundation Stage. The local authority's Baseline Assessment (an assessment made of children's abilities when they start school) is currently under review to take account of its new policies for the admission of 'rising' five- year-olds.
- 57 The systems are in place for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance in English and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. These encompass statutory and non-statutory tests, reading tests, topic 'check ups' in mathematics and other informal testing by teachers at appropriate times. Results are analysed and effective action taken to improve standards. Reading and spelling records are maintained conscientiously. The school's policy for marking of pupils' written work is clear and used well. Pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are recorded and the information is used very effectively to predict and monitor their progress. Information from this comprehensive 'tracker' system has been used successfully to group pupils, to provide additional support and 'booster' classes as necessary. It has also enabled teachers to set individual targets which meet the specific needs of pupils more accurately. This has resulted in the provision of sufficient challenges for high attainers in particular.
- 58 In information and communication technology pupils' skills are being assessed and recorded. In science a commercially produced system is used satisfactorily as a prediction of future attainment in Years 3 to 6. However, in both subjects the information about what pupils know and can do is not being used well enough to find out what is working well and what needs to be done to improve standards.
- 59 Arrangements for assessment all other subjects are less well developed. Teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons conscientiously and assess individual pupil progress against the stated key objectives. However, there is no overall whole school system about how these assessments are to be recorded and the use to be made of the information to inform future planning and to target individual pupils and groups more specifically. Teachers know pupils well and use their knowledge informally to take account of their personal progress. Reports to parents give pupils a good opportunity to assess their own performance and response to school. However, in their present format the reports do not conform to legal requirements because they do not report progress in all subjects.
- 60 Good systems are in place to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Individual education plans address their specific needs. These are regularly up-dated. They contain challenging targets, which are informed by specific assessment of pupils' difficulty. The information is used effectively to plan appropriate work and has a positive effect on the pupils' progress. They are well supported and their self esteem and self confidence is raised at every opportunity.

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

- 61 The school's partnership with parents has been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection.
- 62 The quality of information provided for parents is sound. Good induction information is provided for parents of children in the reception class. Information regarding the school and its activities is detailed in the school prospectus, along with information relating to the governors' annual report to parents. However, since the school has combined both documents there are a number of important items missing and the current prospectus is not meeting statutory requirements. This includes the national

comparisons for the results of the standard attainment tests and information regarding disability access. Regular contact with parents is maintained through homework diaries or updating letters, informing them of forthcoming activities or events. Curriculum information including details of projects and topics to be covered is circulated to parents at the beginning of the year.

- 63 Parents think that there are good links with the school, and feel comfortable approaching the school with any issues. They appreciate the open door policy and the fact that the school encourages suggestions, and takes any concerns they have seriously, handling them sensitively. They feel that the teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. The parents' questionnaires identified a few concerns. Seventeen per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire made comments about the amount of homework provided and over fifty per cent expressed concerns relating to the range of activities offered after school. This may relate to the fact that whilst there are a number of sporting activities little is offered to pupils in Years 1 and 2. About 18 per cent of the parents who replied to the questionnaire did not think that the school worked closely with them, and a small number of parents reported that they did not feel that they were kept well informed about the progress their children were making.
- 64 The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. However, when school visits to places of interest are taken into account, older children are provided with a suitable range of activities outside of lessons. Though the amount of work that pupils are expected to do at home is similar to that given by most other schools, it could be made clearer to parents what has to be done and when it has to be handed in. The school tries hard to keep parents informed about events and what children are going to learn next at school.
- 65 Parents have frequent opportunities to speak with staff, to ask questions or discuss any concerns they may have. The termly consultation evenings are well attended. The annual reports to parents are very detailed in respect of English and mathematics. They describe in some detail pupil's progress and attainment, and include targets for improvement in these subjects. However, they do not meet statutory requirements in relation to the other subjects. There is a chart identifying attainment and effort, but they do not identify what the pupil knows, understands and can do in these other subjects. Pupils appropriately have the opportunity each year to assess their own progress and identify targets for improvement. Parents are regularly consulted about different issues and the results of a recent questionnaire are published in the school prospectus. Details concerning the numeracy and literacy strategies have been made clear to parents through workshop sessions. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept appropriately informed and are invited to the review meetings.
- 66 The satisfactory contribution of parents to their children's learning is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The school warmly encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning by helping out in the school. A small number of adults are helping out by listening to reading, working with groups for sewing, helping in the library or providing assistance on school trips. Parents appear to be regularly listening to their children read at home, and this is contributing to the good standards of reading. The Friends of Highgate Association is very effectively run by a committed group of parents. It successfully runs a number of fund-raising and social events each year. These are well attended and generate additional funds to help acquire resources for the school. These have included purchasing curtains, computers, calculators and other items identified each year on teachers 'wish lists'.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 67 The overall quality of leadership shown by the headteacher is good. He has ensured that standards of attainment have continued to rise since the previous inspection. A key strength is the headteacher's concern and care for others. He knows his staff and pupils very well and is sensitive to personal situations. He has created an orderly and purposeful school community, in which the school's stated aims are clearly reflected in its work. Children come to school to work, and are confident learners. The school's senior management team has been reorganised and is effective in supporting school improvement. The governors have made the decision not to have a deputy and have appointed two key stage managers instead. Both support the headteacher well.
- 68 The school's policy of ensuring that all pupils are fully involved in all aspects of school life is effective. There is a draft policy in place for promoting racial harmony in line with recent legislation. This policy is due to go to the governing body for ratification. The school promotes racial harmony positively in all aspects of its life.
- 69 Good progress has been made in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection report. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. School development planning is now much stronger. Schemes of work are in place in all subject areas and teachers' planning has improved. Pupils of all attainment levels are suitably challenged and the percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in National Curriculum tests is gradually increasing.
- 70 The school is managed soundly. The smooth day-to-day running of the school owes much to the good working partnership of the headteacher and the two key stage managers. They draw on each other's skills and expertise to sustain and develop everyday routines and to maintain very good team relationships.
- 71 The role of co-ordinators in the monitoring of standards in their areas has improved in some subjects since the last inspection. For example, the English co-ordinator has carried out classroom observations. Some other co-ordinators check teachers' half-termly planning to ensure the curriculum is being planned in line with the agreed schemes of work. However, there is still some way to go to ensure that co-ordinators are fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in their curriculum areas. This is an aspect that the school has identified as a priority for development. All members of staff are dedicated and work effectively as a team. For example, some teachers share their specialist subject skills effectively by changing classes to teach specified subjects such as history and science.
- 72 As at the time of the last report, governors are highly supportive of the school and are involved effectively in school life. The governing body fulfils most of its legal requirements. However, the school's prospectus does not contain all the legally required information. The links between individual governors and some subjects such as English and history have been useful in ensuring that the governing body is kept updated on what initiatives the school is implementing in these areas. This involvement is a fairly new innovation. Governors appreciate greatly the commitment of the headteacher and all staff. The chair is a regular visitor in school and has a good awareness of what is happening and what needs to be done.
- 73 The school's plan for improvement is appropriately focused on the raising of standards. It is based upon a thorough review of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance. All staff and governors have had the opportunity to contribute ideas. The structure of the plan is much better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. It now includes specific targets that have deadlines for completion. Criteria by which to measure success are provided but are not stated

clearly enough.

- 74 Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory and take due account of teachers' personal needs and the objectives identified in the school's plan for improvement. Aspects for development are appropriately discussed during the performance management process. There are good procedures for the induction of staff new to the school. They ensure that they are fully briefed on routines, curriculum planning and resources.
- 75 Financial planning and management are good. The school has a very small contingency amount, which makes it keen to ensure that good value for money is provided on all purchases. The headteacher, bursar and governors conscientiously follow clear financial procedures. There are clear systems in place for ordering materials and handling monies. All the recommendations made in the last audit report have been put into practice. The school does not receive any additional grants from local or national initiatives.
- 76 The management of special educational needs is good. The school's approach is well organised and designated funds supplemented from the school's own budget are used appropriately. The special needs policy has been updated to take into account the revised Code of Practice. Support staff are well deployed to meet pupils' special educational needs and all teachers work closely with the co-ordinator who ensures that they are made aware of all procedures. Parents are kept well informed and invited to all reviews. Good records are kept. One governor is designated as a responsible person who oversees this aspect. However, the co-ordinator for special educational needs does not have time allocated to her to carry out her duties.
- 77 The school has a sufficient number of teaching staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the Foundation Stage. The school benefits from a staff with a range of experience and length of service. They work very well together as a team despite the difficulties associated with some classes being housed in separate demountable classrooms. Classroom assistants and lunchtime welfare assistants support teachers effectively and ensure the well being of the pupils. The long serving school bursar ensures that things run smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- 78 The main accommodation, despite the potential problems of being built on different levels provides a satisfactory environment for learning to take place. However, this is in stark contrast to that found in the demountable classrooms situated in the school playground for older pupils. This accommodation is in a poor state of repair and the rooms do not have access to a hot water supply. One of the classrooms has no toilet or cloakroom facilities. Another key area for concern is the lack of disabled access to some areas of the school. This issue is being addressed in readiness for the new regulations that come into force in the coming year.
- 79 The playground and surrounding areas make for an attractive environment. A separate, safe outdoor play area for children in the foundation stage is being built in order to extend the opportunities for their physical, social and creative development.
- 80 Resources have improved since the last inspection. They are now satisfactory in most subjects and used well. However, there is a lack of resources in information and communication technology and for outside play in the Foundation Stage. As at the time of the previous inspection the library is not adequate in size and not well used.

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



81 As it continues to strive for further improvements the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. increase the number of opportunities that pupils are given to use their good writing skills in subjects other than English by;
  - ensuring that planning in subjects such as geography and history clearly identifies appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills;
  - monitoring pupils' work to ensure consistency in practice across the school.

(See paragraphs 11, 29, 40, 100, 117 and 135 in the main report)

2. improve the provision for finding out what pupils know and can do in subjects other than English and mathematics, and make good use of the information to improve the quality of teaching and learning by;
  - putting in place manageable systems to record pupils' progress;
  - making sure that the results from assessments are analysed to set clear targets for future learning for individuals and year groups.

(See paragraphs 56-60, 121, 129, 138, 144, 149, 155 and 161 in the main report)

3. provide opportunities for all co-ordinators to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects by;
  - using the good practice that already exists in the school;
  - providing training for co-ordinators in the skills of how to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects;
  - giving them the time to carry out their duties.

(See paragraphs 71, 102, 121, 129, 138, 144, 149, 155 and 161 in the main report)

4. provide more computers for use throughout the school and improve the range of outdoor play equipment for children in the reception class.

(See paragraphs 3, 15, 26, 32, 38, 43, 80, 87, 98, 117 and 143 in the main report)

Other weaknesses that should be considered by the school:

- the lack of opportunities for higher attainers in Year 6 to set up their own investigations in science and the speed at which a minority of pupils recall basic number facts.

(See paragraphs 12, 14, 31, 41, 109 and 114 in the main report)

- the need to provide all the required information in the school's prospectus.

(See paragraphs 62 and 72 in the main report)

- the school's annual written reports to parents about pupils' progress do not give the required information in all subjects.

(See paragraph 65 in the main report)

- the need to provide more information for parents about homework.  
(See paragraphs 35 and 64 in the main report)
- continue to work with the local education authority for improvements to be made to the accommodation especially the inadequate and unsatisfactory provision for the three junior classes currently taught in demountable classrooms.  
(See paragraph 78 in the main report)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	25	16	0	0	0
Percentage	0	21	48	31	0	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 almost two percentage points.*

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	21

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	11	13	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	22	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (97)	96 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (91)	92 (89)	96 (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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	18	19	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	16	13	16
	Total	29	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (86)	70 (75)	78 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	30	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (78)	84 (75)	86 (92)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	188
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	27.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-02
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	£
Total income	471,441
Total expenditure	470,554
Expenditure per pupil	1,890
Balance brought forward from previous year	-
Balance carried forward to next year	-3,640

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	218
Number of questionnaires returned	91

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	29	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	36	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	47	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	43	13	3	1
The teaching is good.	69	29	0	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	35	5	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	14	1	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	36	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	43	11	4	3
The school is well led and managed.	68	19	2	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	40	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	38	15	10	18

## **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**

- 82 Since the previous inspection new and beneficial arrangements for the admission of children to the reception class have been introduced. Children now start school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. As a result all children will spend three terms in the reception class before entering Year 1, providing an equal opportunity for the younger children. Most children have attended a playgroup before they come to Highgate. The various providers liaise with each other usefully and exchange what records they have kept about children's progress. The children enter the reception class with a variety of competencies, which are within the average range. By the time they start Year 1 almost all are expected to achieve all the Early Learning Goals for the age group and many will reach attainment levels beyond these. This represents good progress overall and relates directly to the good teaching. The class teacher is well supported by a qualified non-teaching assistant and the two form a successful team. They provide a learning environment of good quality, despite the fact that builders remain on site after the start of the school term in order to work on unfinished tasks.

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

- 83 This area of learning is a significant strength. Great care is taken to ensure that children have a good start to their school life. During the earliest weeks they attend part-time as part of a small group. This enables them to feel secure and to develop good relationships both with their peers and with the adults who work with them. At the time of the inspection, which took place very early in the school year, all were very well settled. Most had developed the confidence to choose their own activities and persevered with tasks until finished to their satisfaction. They showed an ability to adapt their behaviour to the different situations and changes in routine. Children have already learnt that cleaning up at the end of each activity is part of everyone's responsibility. Most listen attentively and are learning that others have a right to be heard. The majority demonstrate a willingness to share equipment with others, take turns and observe the rules of the classroom. For example, almost all know that it is necessary to wear overalls when playing with water and that they are expected to put these on for themselves. They understand that only a few children can engage in activities in the water play area at any one time.

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

- 84 The majority of children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area, particularly in respect of reading. Assessment of the previous year group showed that they entered the reception class with little knowledge of letter sounds but by the end of the year most could recognise 48 key words and sometimes more. This represents good progress. An improvement in children's ability to recognise letter sounds has been observed this year and during the inspection the highest attaining pupil was already a 'beginning reader'. Literature is well promoted. Children were seen to enjoy identifying with the characters in the story 'Peace At Last' and there were good opportunities for them to listen to stories independently using headphones and a tape-recorder. Examination of work from the previous school year indicates children learn to form letters correctly and by the time they start Year 1 many are able to write at least one sentence independently. Several achieve more and show some knowledge of punctuation such as the full stop, and in the case of one child the use of an exclamation mark. The quality of teaching is good with some very good features. Particular strengths include lessons that are well planned and take good account of the National Literacy Strategy. Jointly planned activities are well

thought out and appropriately matched to the various needs of very young children. Both members of staff note and record observations of children's responses and progress. The information is being used well to adjust future activities if necessary in order to take learning further. The needs of all children are met and the systems in place for identifying those who have special needs are good.

#### **Mathematical development.**

- 85 Children enter the school with a range of play experiences in counting and comparing objects and recognising and analysing shapes. By the end of the reception year most will achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning and higher attaining pupils will exceed them. Mathematical development is well promoted. An effective lesson was observed during the inspection. The use of a puppet in a 'make believe' situation made everyone laugh with pleasure. It made the concept of learning to count accurately fun for the children. They were keen to learn and the activity provided the teacher with a very good opportunity to assess what each child could do. The work that followed gave additional counting practice in a variety of contexts, including the use of information and communication technology. The quality of teaching is good and the classroom provides a numerate environment. A number corner, posters, number words, counting lines, magnetic numbers, abacus and number line activities are readily available. There are sufficient resources for children to investigate plane and solid shapes. A scrutiny of work from the previous year shows that children arrange shapes in the course of their art work and that they are involved in making mathematical comparisons such as lighter and heavier, and longer and shorter.

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

- 86 An effective topic approach contributes positively to children's sense of time, place and understanding of the culture and beliefs of others. They make good progress in this area. A wide range of activities together with well focussed questions posed by the adults encourage children to explore and ask questions. This is good quality teaching. Photographic evidence from the previous school year shows that Harvest, Christmas and Easter are celebrated. Children made ceramic pots for Divali and learned much about life in other times when a theatre group came to school and they were introduced to a world of castles, knights and damsels. During the inspection the school grounds were used successfully to find out more about the immediate locality as part of a 'sound' walk. Technical resources are sufficiently available and in particular the use of the computer, is well promoted. Many children have already acquired good 'mouse skills' to 'click' and 'drag'.

#### **Physical development.**

- 87 Provision in this area is a relative weakness. At the time of the inspection the outdoor play area facilities were still under construction. Because future plans do not include the purchase of large climbing equipment, the full range of activities to promote physical development cannot be delivered. This will limit the progress pupils are able to make in their physical development. Regular dance lessons are provided in the hall when health and bodily awareness are well promoted. Large wheeled and other toys are available in regular sessions for the children to engage in vigorous activities and to develop increasing control. The provision of additional small equipment such as bats, balls, hoops, beanbags, and ropes is planned. Within the classroom, good opportunities are created to develop pupils' manipulative skills, using a wide range of tools, equipment and materials, most of which are provided by grant funding from a local university. Teaching is satisfactory overall.



### **Creative development.**

- 88 Children in the reception class use materials such as clay, constructional toys, fabric, paint and crayons to make models and pictures, both individually and as part of a group. During the inspection children successfully painted observational pictures of apples using colour mixing techniques. Sharing of the objective 'We are going to paint apples', was an important step in the language and communication development of one child who took the instruction literally! Photographic evidence from the previous year shows that printing, the use of stencils, collage, wax resist, junk modelling and the use of fine brushes were all well promoted. During the inspection children were amazed to hear a recording of their own voices during a musical activity, which included the use of instruments which they had made for themselves. Songs, rhymes, poetry and role play make an ongoing and valuable contribution to children's creative development. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is very good.
- 89 Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. Much hard work has gone into the establishment of the new class. Information for parents prior to their children starting school is helpful and informative. The arrangements for reporting children's progress have been revised, and teachers' assessment on initial progress will be given orally at the first parents' evening.

### **ENGLISH**

- 90 Inspection findings show that pupils make good progress through the school resulting in above average standards in English by the end of Year 6. This shows an improvement in standards since the time of the previous inspection and is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the teachers plan better. For example, good planning ensures that opportunities are provided for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills well. As a result they learn from one another as well as from their teachers. Secondly, they are taught all aspects of literacy in a more structured way because the National Literacy Strategy is firmly established and taught effectively. This gives pupils a good understanding of basic skills in English, especially in reading. Thirdly, better use is made of assessment information for planning. As a result, work is suitably matched to the needs of all pupils, including those, with special educational needs and provides sufficient challenge.
- 91 In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds the school's overall performance in reading was close to the national average but below average for similar schools. However, the school's results in writing were above both the national average and the average for similar schools. In the 2001 English tests for eleven-year-olds the school's results were close to the national average. Compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils, results were average. The school's target for English was met. The 2002 test results show reading standards to have improved by the end of Year 2 with more pupils attaining the higher level 3. Standards in writing were about the same as the previous year. At the end of Year 6 standards are also higher with an increased percentage of pupils attaining level 5. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls except in writing where almost fifty per cent of girls attained level 5 but no boys achieved this level.
- 92 Inspection evidence shows that the performance of pupils in English is above average by the end of Year 6. The school is on line to meet this year's target. Although last year's test results in writing showed that girls performed better than boys at level 5, this is not borne out by inspection findings, which show no significant difference between them. Boys and girls in Years 3 to 6 apply themselves equally and with interest in lessons. However, at the time of the inspection very little work was available for scrutiny as the inspection was carried out early in the school year.

Because it monitors its own results, the school is very aware of the need to keep boys' performance at the higher level in writing under scrutiny. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress towards the objectives set down in their individual educational plans. This is especially true with regard to the statemented pupil, who receives very good help from a classroom assistant.

- 93 The school places a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills throughout the school and pupils make good progress. Standards are higher than those found in the majority of schools by the end of Years 2 and 6. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to explain themselves clearly, for example, when explaining a piece of work they have just completed. They participate well in question and answer sessions. In Years 3 to 6 pupils develop increasing fluency in speaking and accuracy in their choice of vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, most are confident conversationalists. They quickly pick up new words and often use good phrases to describe and explain. For example, they use a good range of descriptive phrases when talking about their favourite character in the book they are reading. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their speaking skills well in other subjects. For example, they are often asked to discuss their ideas in pairs when the teacher poses a question. In Years 5 and 6 in history they take on the role of Aztecs and describe what life was like at the time. 'Thought for the day' sessions led by pupils allow them not only to speak to the rest of the class but to develop their listening skills before responding to other pupils ideas.
- 94 Standards in reading are above average by the time they leave school at the age of eleven, and pupils make good progress as a result of the good teaching they receive. This shows an improvement on the previous year. By the age of seven, standards are similar to those found in the majority of schools. Most pupils are working at least at the expected level for their age, with about a third of the age group achieving a higher level. The majority have acquired a good knowledge of how to read unfamiliar words by sounding them out. Other strategies, such as using picture clues or making sense of words by looking at the rest of the sentence, are also used well. Higher attainers read aloud with confidence and appropriate expression. They are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books. Many pupils can explain the difference between fact and fiction books and know, for example, that if they want to locate a topic the contents page is helpful. They take books home regularly and family members hear their children read, writing suitable comments in a reading diary. This has a very positive effect on standards and progress.
- 95 By the end of Year 6, most pupils can read a range of texts with a good degree of fluency and expression. Books are well matched to pupils' attainment and interest level and pupils are enthusiastic readers. Higher attainers express a preference for different authors and choose books because of particular interest, such as adventure stories. They are able to make deductions and inferences from their reading. Most pupils can describe the different characters in the stories they have read and explain the key features of the plot. The library is situated well away from the older pupils and is not well used for research activities. Few classrooms have an attractive reading area to attract pupils and encourage them to read more.
- 96 At the time of the previous inspection pupils made satisfactory progress, overall, in writing in Years 1 to 6, and standards were broadly average by the time they reach the ages of seven and eleven. Inspection evidence shows this still to be the case. However, progress is now better and a significant number of the current Year 2 pupils are set to exceed the expected standards in writing. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can write in a range of styles for a variety of purposes. They produce narrative, description, lists and instructions. From an early age pupils are taught to form letters correctly and develop a style that is legible and well presented. One pupil undertaking

a piece of descriptive writing about a visit to a zoo wrote, ' *I saw a parrot, he was all the colours of a rainbow.*' Many pupils know how to use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly. Higher-attainers include speech and exclamation marks appropriately in their writing. When asked to write their thoughts about what they would like to put into a magic box one child wrote, ' *I will put into the box a wish that will change the world.*'

- 97 Standards in writing are above average by the end of Year 6. For example, when asked to write a version of Macbeth in a modern setting one pupil wrote, ' *She shivered in the bitter coldness.*' Pupils produce their own good quality fiction books for younger pupils and include illustrations. They give them interesting titles such as, ' *The Amazing Animals,*' or ' *Doodles Big Surprise.*' These stories are typified by well-organised writing and imaginative vocabulary to capture the readers' imagination. A poem entitled ' *I met at Eve*' does just this as it begins with the words ' *I met at Eve the queen of the night, her face was still and lonely.*' Most pupils punctuate sentences correctly and write in a clear, legible style by the end of Year 6. Targets for improvement are set by both teachers and pupils and are usually successfully met.
- 98 The school has made satisfactory progress overall in getting pupils to develop and use their information and communication technology skills to word process their writing. However, sometimes opportunities are missed. For example, in one lesson four pupils sat round the computer while the teacher operated the keyboard. The lack of computers limits the amount of time pupils have to practice their skills.
- 99 Behaviour is good and pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning. Most pupils are eager to learn, stay on task and show good levels of concentration.
- 100 The quality of teaching and learning is good in Year 1 to 6. Throughout the school the teaching of phonics, word recognition, spelling, punctuation and grammar is given a high priority. Pupils' good knowledge and understanding of these important basic skills are apparent in their reading and writing. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of subjects such as science, history and geography to develop pupils' writing. Sometimes there is too much reliance on the use of worksheets which are not always demanding enough, particularly when pupils only have to supply one-word answers by filling in a gap. When this happens, the quality of writing is unsatisfactory compared with the good quality of writing pupils produced in English lessons.
- 101 All classes in Years 3 to 6 have pupils from two age groups. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are set in English on the basis of their prior attainment and taught in three groups. This pattern of organisation is successful in ensuring that pupils make the progress they should. Teachers plan conscientiously, following the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy. They make tasks interesting and additional lesson time is devoted to developing important skills. For example, in some classes pupils develop a good understanding and appreciation of poetry by listening to the ' *Poem of the Day*'. Marking of pupils' work is supportive and there are some examples of thoughtful comments being made which are constructive and set targets for development. Most pupils understand the marking policy and respond well to the written suggestions that teachers make.
- 102 The subject is co-ordinated well. Although teachers have been observed in the classroom and a scrutiny of work undertaken, more could be done to evaluate what is working well and what needs to be improved. Some good work has been done by the co-ordinator working with a governor in producing a report of the subject for the governing body. Assessment procedures are good and the information gathered is used effectively to set targets. As at the time of the previous inspection the school library is very small. During the week of the inspection it was not used for reference purposes. Other resources are adequate.

## MATHEMATICS

- 103 When children start school in the reception class, their mathematical ability is within the average range. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 standards are above average. This represents good progress overall. Pupils apply their knowledge and understanding of number to solve problems in mathematics lessons and to handle data related to other subjects, sometimes using information and communication technology for this purpose. The National Numeracy Strategy has been incorporated effectively into the teaching of the subject and good training has ensured that teachers have confident subject knowledge. The quality of teaching is good. Mathematics has been given a high priority in the school's development plan over the last two years and effective procedures are in place to track pupils' progress. Teachers make good use of the information about pupil attainments to plan future learning and to set targets for groups and individual pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, and is reflected in higher standards being achieved at the end of Years 2 and 6. Non-teaching assistants contribute well to support teaching and learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and work is well matched to their ability.
- 104 The most recent National Curriculum results available for the end of Year 6 show a considerable improvement on the previous year. In 2001 standards were average by the end of Years 2 and 6 in comparison with national figures. In 2002, 75 per cent of the age group achieved the expected level 4 or above and 31 per cent achieved the higher level 5. This represents a big improvement on the previous year, with boys doing particularly well. Year 2 results also indicate marked improvement with 91 per cent of pupils achieving the expected level 2 or above and a well above average 43 per cent achieved the higher level 3.
- 105 These good standards have been maintained. The majority of pupils in the current Year 2 and 6 classes are on target to achieve the expected levels by the end of the year, with a significant proportion set to exceed them. Standards compare favourably with other schools. All pupils, including those with special needs, are making good progress. No significant difference between the performance of boys and girls was observed during the inspection.
- 106 Examination of pupils' work from the previous year indicates that by the end of Year 2 pupils develop a good understanding of place value in relation to two digit numbers. They use their knowledge of addition and subtraction to solve problems and understand the relationship between halving and doubling. They estimate, measure and compare lengths using standard measure such as metres and centimetres and can describe the properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils have experienced collecting information, such as favourite foods, and communicate the results using information and communication technology for this purpose. Most pupils are good at explaining the mathematical processes they have carried out in order to get to their answer.
- 107 A scrutiny of pupils' exercise books from last year shows that by the end of Year 6 they have covered a good range and quantity of work. The use of 'practice books' and separate 'jotters' together with frequent use of 'white boards' is effective in giving children a freedom to set out and work in their own preferred manner. Whilst 'practice books' are generally neatly presented, the use of rulers is occasionally ignored by individual pupils. By the end of Year 6 most pupils are able to multiply and divide decimals mentally by 10 or 100 and integers by 1000 and explain the effect. They order numbers to three decimal places and handle fractions, percentages, proportions in problem-solving situations. Pupils can solve problems involving

numbers and quantities and explain their reasoning. They are able to measure accurately. Most can extract and interpret information presented in graphical and tabular form.

- 108 Satisfactory use is made of mathematics in other subject areas, for example, time-lines in history, symmetry in the creation of painted patterns in art and the presentation of findings in science and the use of information and communication technology in handling data. There is scope to develop these good practices further.
- 109 The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Particular strengths are the setting of individual targets for pupils to achieve and the expectation by teachers that pupils will explain their reasoning, which leads to good understanding of the mathematical processes involved. In one lesson observed, very good use was made of information and communication technology in a task requiring pupils to find quickly the rules required to solve a range of numerical problems. Whilst teachers pay good attention to promoting speedy recall of basic number facts, it remains a relative weakness for a significant number of children throughout the school. There is a need to consider how this could be improved.
- 110 Teachers strive to provide interesting, well-presented and challenging activities. Consequently, pupils spend the whole of their lesson engaged on purposeful tasks, so that most pupils enjoy mathematics. Lessons are very social occasions where pupils learn from each other when asked to work orally. They also respond well when asked to work co-operatively in pairs. There is a strong emphasis on the correct use of vocabulary. Lessons are well organised. The setting arrangements and the booster classes work well. Mathematical 'diaries' often contain useful comments, which give pointers to pupils to improve their work. A systematic approach to assessment using statutory and non-statutory test information informal assessment and the school's tracking system, is helping to raise standards. Homework makes a positive contribution to the progress made.
- 111 The subject is well managed by the enthusiastic co-ordinators who monitor teachers' planning. However, they have not been sufficiently involved in evaluating classroom practice. Good links with the local advisory service and a sharing of expertise within the 'Local Development Group', based at a neighbouring middle school, are beneficial. There is a regular audit of resources, which are adequate and accessible.

## SCIENCE

- 112 Standards are broadly similar to those found in most schools by the end of Year 2. The school's performance in the 2001 teacher assessments in science was above the national average at Level 2 and above but below the national average and the average for similar schools at Level 3. The 2002 results show a decline in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3. However, a scrutiny of the work from the previous year and observations made during the inspection indicates that standards are better than the teachers' assessment. The proportion of pupils working at the higher level is about the same as you would find in most schools.

- 113 Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average. The school's results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests in science, showed a decline from the previous year and were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. This decline was due mainly to the long-term absence of the co-ordinator who taught science to the Year 6 pupils. The school's results improved significantly in 2002. Nearly all pupils achieved Level 4. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 5 doubled to just over a third. The rise in standards seen last year is attributable to improvements in the quality of the science curriculum and to good teaching that is boosting pupils' learning. A key factor is the teachers' focus on encouraging pupils' oral responses and the use of correct scientific language. This is enhancing pupils' understanding.
- 114 Most pupils, including those who have special needs, make satisfactory progress in carrying out investigations and in developing their knowledge and understanding of life processes, materials and physical processes. However, higher attainers are not provided with the opportunity to plan their own experiments. Throughout the school there is no noticeable difference between the performance of boys and girls.
- 115 By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of what humans and plants need for healthy growth. They are familiar with the main parts of the body and can describe healthy diets by giving examples of food that are good for growth. Analysis of previous work shows that Year 1 pupils found out that 'magnets only stick to some metal things'. Year 2 pupils can use electrical circuits effectively to light up a bulb and know that a push or a pull is needed to change the shape of an object. However, in both classes, pupils do not get enough chance to make simple predictions of what they think they will find before carrying out an investigation or to comment on what they actually saw happen.
- 116 By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory grounding in a range of scientific knowledge and understanding required by the National Curriculum. Work from the previous year shows that they carry out a range of suitable activities that are effective in helping them to develop their understanding of scientific enquiry. Most pupils know how to carry out a fair test. They have a sound understanding of physical processes. For example, during the inspection a class of older pupils learnt that objects are pulled towards the earth because of gravitational attraction and that this causes objects to have weight. They were able to work well with a partner weighing objects using a forcemeter and recording their findings in Newtons. Younger pupils successfully investigated which materials allowed electricity to be passed through them.
- 117 When they are given the opportunity pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in science. They make measurements and can display their findings in graphical form. A group of younger children were observed making appropriate use of computers to design a poster illustrating the dangers of electricity but in general not enough use is made of information and communication technology equipment such as sensors because the school does not have sufficient resources. Though pupils are encouraged to discuss ideas, there is too much dependence on the use of commercially produced worksheets in lessons, which limits opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills.
- 118 Pupils respond well in science lessons. They show curiosity, work co-operatively particularly in pairs and follow their teachers' instructions conscientiously. They are sensible in how they approach the work, how they share and use equipment and how they discuss their findings with one another. Some of the topics they study, for example healthy living, make a good contribution to their moral development.

- 119 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when some weaknesses were identified in planning. It is now good overall throughout the school. The teachers plan and prepare science lessons carefully making sure that pupils have access to what they need. A good feature of the planning seen during the inspection was the identification of objectives, activities and review sessions. Teachers use questioning techniques well, helping pupils to think and apply what they have learnt previously to move them on to new levels of understanding. They use relevant scientific terminology and explain tasks clearly at the beginning of the lesson. This ensures that pupils understand what is expected from them and as a result the quality of learning is good.
- 120 A common strength is the very good relationship between adults and pupils, who are eager to show and share what they have observed and discovered. The teachers make fair provision so that all pupils are involved and they offer good support and guidance during lessons. This was particularly noticeable in Year 2. The classroom assistant had been well briefed so that she was able to support individuals and groups. The teachers use opportunities well to emphasise health and safety issues. In helping younger juniors to find the best conductors, the teacher highlighted the dangers of electricity. Teachers of pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good use of each other's particular skills and strengths. For example, during the week of the inspection two teachers exchanged classes to teach science and history.
- 121 The quality of subject leadership and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinators have not monitored the quality of teaching and learning in science. Assessment procedures are good but insufficient use is being made of the information to find out what needs to be done to improve standards and to track pupils' achievements. The scheme of work takes account of recent statutory changes and draws on national guidance as to what pupils should be learning. As a result skills and knowledge are now being developed in a systematic and progressive way. As at the time of the previous inspection resources are satisfactory overall.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 122 In both subjects, standards reached by pupils when they leave the school at the end of Year 6 are average. This represents satisfactory progress and is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils' achievements by the end of Year 2 were found to be not as high as last time but to be similar to those found in most schools.
- 123 In art, by the end of Year 2, pupils are able to record ideas confidently. During the inspection they worked on sketched and painted portraits. This work demonstrated the sound progress being made in pupils' observational skills using a range of media such as pen, chalk, wax crayon and paint. Evidence taken from wall displays and from the previous year's sketch books indicates that they have satisfactory understanding of shape, pattern and texture. Pupils investigate these elements for themselves, sometimes having first observed the work of famous painters.
- 124 By the end of Year 6, pupils have had further opportunities to explore and develop their ideas. There are good examples of three-dimensional work using clay. Models of ballerinas and sportsmen, constructed by the previous Year 6 pupils, using a combination of materials such as wire, textiles, paper and plaster, are of high quality. They show good technical skills as well as an ability to produce images that convey an effect. By the time they leave the school, pupils have been introduced to the similarities and differences in the work of a range of different artists. Work from the previous year included art from other cultures, such as rangoli patterns. During the inspection younger pupils successfully produced their own paintings in the style of

Monet. Older pupils demonstrated, in their observational drawings, increased awareness of the visual and tactile elements, which contribute to the making of containers for different purposes.

- 125 In design and technology by the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced planning and making a range of products. Evidence in pupils' sketchbooks from the previous year indicates that the design process has been thoroughly carried out, including an evaluation of the finished product. During the inspection Year 2 were designing and making a range of puppet characters. After being made aware of the materials available, they discussed their ideas before drawing and labelling their plan. Next the pupils cut round templates and proceeded to assembly and sew together the different parts of their puppet, prior to decoration on a future occasion. Pupils with special needs achieved particularly well because the project was adapted specifically to their needs.
- 126 By the end of Year 6, pupils' ideas and skills have been further developed. They use a good range of ideas, tools, equipment, materials and components to make quality finished products. Photographic evidence from the previous year indicates that younger pupils made monsters, egg catchers from limited resources, a 'Haunted House', which incorporated electrical circuitry, food technology projects and pop-up books. Older pupils made houses of good quality in Tudor style, which linked well with their studies in history. They also took part in a competition to find the best materials for constructing rollers using an elastic band. No significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls was observed.
- 127 The quality of teaching and learning in both subjects is good. In the lessons seen, teachers' had good subject knowledge, lessons were well prepared and organised. Good use was made of visual examples. For example, in an art lesson older pupils benefited from the very comprehensive and attractive range of containers, some from other cultures, which were available for observation. This stimulus contributed very positively to the pupils' enthusiastic response and the standards achieved.
- 128 Both subjects contribute to pupils' social education since tasks frequently require them to work in pairs or sometimes groups. The standard of behaviour and attitudes to work are very high.
- 129 The curriculum takes good account of national guidance. Both subjects contribute well to literacy through discussion and the use of technical vocabulary. There are good links with mathematics, for example, in art in the use of symmetry and proportions, and in design and technology through accurate measurement and the estimation of materials. A useful portfolio of finished work in design and technology has been put together. It illustrates well the progress made by pupils as they pass through the school. There is a need to formalise assessment procedures in both subjects so that teachers can use the information in order to plan future work which builds on what pupils can already do and enables co-ordinators to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning more closely.



## GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 130 Standards in both subjects by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those found in most schools. A very good feature of history teaching in Years 5 and 6 is the way that drama is incorporated into the subject. As a result the quality of learning is very good. Pupils 're-live' the past by dressing up and acting in, for example, Tudor costumes. Through this experience they gain a very good insight into life in Tudor times and demonstrate an above average knowledge of the period. However, pupils in most classes are not given enough opportunities to use their writing skills in either geography or history. There is too great an emphasis on worksheets which restrict pupils' responses to one word or just a sentence and do not allow pupils to use their good writing skills.
- 131 In both subjects pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. Judgements are based on an examination of pupils' previous work, a small number of lesson observations, conversations with pupils and an examination of teachers' planning. Timetabling arrangements mean that there was insufficient evidence available to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning has improved since the time of the previous inspection, as have the resources for both subjects but co-ordinators have still not been given time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. However, the school's next 'snapshot' review will focus on history and it is intended that time will be provided for the co-ordinator to monitor the subject.
- 132 In geography, pupils in Years 1 and 2 identify the countries in the United Kingdom. In Year 1 they conduct a traffic survey of traffic around the school and use their numeracy skills well in constructing a tally chart. In Year 2 the travels of Barnaby Bear are recorded in a travel diary. A topic linked to the seaside gives pupils a good opportunity to develop their technical vocabulary by finding out the meaning of words such as '*promenade*'. A study of the local village and of a town in Scotland helps pupils to identify similarities and differences between the two places.
- 133 In Years 3 and 6 a survey of previous work shows good coverage of topics in geography. Younger pupils undertake a study of France including the identification of landmarks in Paris. They develop a satisfactory knowledge of the main geographical features. Older pupils have good technical vocabularies and can for example identify mountain ranges. Some good work has been produced as part of a study on the volume of traffic passing along a street in the local town. From the evidence collected pupils were able to discuss sensibly the reasons for and against making the street a pedestrian only precinct. There are some isolated examples of good writing, for example, an account of a town trail in Year 3.
- 134 In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good understanding of life in Victorian times by looking at toys now and then and by comparing a modern kitchen with a Victorian scullery. In Year 2, pupils make good use of their information and communication technology skills to publish an account of the Great Fire of London. They gain a satisfactory knowledge of George Stephenson and of transport through the ages.
- 135 In Years 3 to 6, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their historical knowledge. The local village provides a very appropriate focus for historical study with its links back to Viking times. Good use is made of a village trail to find out the answers to historical questions. For example, pupils investigate the reasons for footprints being incorporated into a mosaic and discovered that they are a reminder of the town's former main industry of shoemaking. Older pupils have a good knowledge of the Aztecs and of the Tudor period of history. The quality of learning is enhanced

when pupils take part in such activities as mock interviews or perform dances of the Tudor period. During the week of the inspection the use of a audio taped interview about the Jarrow March really captured the pupils' imagination and stimulated them to produce their own written accounts of what happened. The writing produced was of a good quality. However, there is very little evidence that writing was used as well as this in other topics.

- 136 Pupils enjoy their history and geography lessons. They have good attitudes to work and are eager to contribute to class discussions. Pupils are particularly interested in how people lived in past times. They are keen to explore new ideas and exchange these with each other.
- 137 It was not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in history or geography. Teaching in the lessons observed in both subjects was good overall. Since the previous inspection there have been improvements in ensuring that work is suitably matched to pupils' different attainment levels. Teachers' planning is also better and now contains clear learning objectives. Good use is made of visits and local visitors to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical events. In a Year 2 history lesson good use was made of resources such as pictures of seaside towns to stimulate the pupils interest. In Years 5 and 6 teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and provided good discussion points for the pupils.
- 138 The co-ordinators are keen and enthusiastic but are not sufficiently involved in monitoring or evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Both subjects have well written policies and schemes of work. In Years 5 and 6, end of topic assessments in history provide the teachers with good information about what pupils know, understand and can do. However, the school has no formal assessment system in place to judge the attainment of pupils in either subject. A school governor takes a keen interest in history and is a regular visitor to lessons. Overall resources in both subjects are adequate in range and quality and have been improved since the previous inspection. Both subjects contribute positively to pupils' social and cultural development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 139 Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found in most schools. This judgement is based on lesson observations, a survey of pupils' work and discussions held with the co-ordinators and with pupils. Inspection evidence shows that in most aspects of the subject pupils are making satisfactory progress but there is only limited evidence of the use of computers to model and control because of a lack of resources. Special educational needs pupils receive good support and benefit from being taught as members of a small group and as a result make satisfactory progress. These judgements are broadly similar to those made at the time of the last inspection.
- 140 Year 2 pupils have satisfactory word-processing skills and most can manipulate a mouse accurately. They know how to access information. For example, they used a web site to find out about George Stephenson. Year 1 pupils, in a project on transport, collected data about how children in their class got to school. They presented the information accurately in the form of a graph. By the end of Year 6, pupils can type direct to screen and are able to load, save work, print and choose from a menu. Good attention is given to presenting work well. Pupils use desk-top publishing facilities to produce their own book covers or pizza menus. They use data-handling programs to produce charts showing children's favourite drink.

- 141 Pupils' attitudes to the subject are significantly better than they were at the time of the previous inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. They enjoy working on computers and showing what they can do. For example, two Year 6 pupils were highly proficient when asked to demonstrate their skills in using a control program. Throughout the school pupils behave responsibly and are not afraid to experiment and try new functions. They work well in small groups, share ideas, advise each other and discuss alternatives.
- 142 Since the last inspection, the school has improved the range of equipment. Six recently acquired computers have been used to create a mini ICT-suite in the library. The school has wisely used some available funding to employ an ICT specialist to work with groups of children one day a week and to repair equipment. His support has helped pupils to learn new skills. For example, during the inspection, he was observed working with a group of children from Year 1 instructing them in the use of the number and arrow keys.
- 143 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Successful in-service training, particularly by the co-ordinators, has raised the expertise and confidence of the staff. In addition, teachers in Years 3 to 6 are following a new subject scheme of work, which is based on national guidance and promotes a systematic development of skills and knowledge as pupils move through the school. As a result during the week of the inspection teaching was of a good quality. During the taught sessions in the ICT-suite pupils make good progress. This is due to two factors. Firstly, the pupils work in small groups using the most up-to-date equipment and get much individual attention. Secondly, the teachers introduce new programs and skills in a step-by-step manner, taking the pupils through a planned sequence until they have successfully achieved the lesson objectives. A weakness is the lack of opportunity for pupils to repeat, practise and apply their new knowledge and skills because of the lack of sufficient computers. However, sometimes opportunities are missed. For example, in one English lesson four pupils sat round the computer while the teacher operated the keyboard. As a result progress is only satisfactory overall.
- 144 The leadership and management of the subject are good. Both co-ordinators have a good subject knowledge. They have worked hard on developing a new scheme of work for Years 3 to 6, which was successfully introduced last year. Assessment procedures have been reviewed and a tracking system is now in use to record pupils' progress in relation to National Curriculum key skills and knowledge. However, the information is not yet being used effectively to find out what is working well and what needs to be done to improve standards. The co-ordinators have rightly identified the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning.

## **MUSIC**

- 145 There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in music at the end of Years 2 and Year 6. The quality of singing is good, broadly reflecting the findings of the previous inspection. There are opportunities for pupils to learn to play recorder, sometimes performing in public, for example, at the Christmas carol service. When groups of pupils were involved recently in a music project initiated by the local community college the response was enthusiastic. Otherwise, extra-curricular musical activities are very limited.

- 146 In Years 1 and 2, teachers' planning indicates that the required musical elements are covered. Singing to tape accompaniment is an integral part of the act of worship and there are further opportunities to sing with piano accompaniment during a weekly session.
- 147 Video evidence indicates that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have good opportunities to appreciate music of other times. For example, during their 'Tudor Day' they participated in music and dance typical of the period. Recorded evidence indicates that older pupils have improved and developed melodic and rhythmic material in performance and that they have been introduced to the idea of graphical scores. During the inspection pupils in Years 5 and 6 sang well, demonstrating an ability to observe legato, sustain notes and give good attention to phrase and diction. Their repertoire of songs on a World War 2 theme was sung with obvious enjoyment, in anticipation of a performance planned to take place in an air raid shelter in the near future.
- 148 It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching because only two lessons were observed. In one lesson, good musical expertise, a carefully prepared lesson and good pupil management were significant features, which helped to improve the quality of learning. In another lesson, a lack of confidence in teaching the subject was observed to be a relative weakness. A substantial proportion of pupils' musical experiences takes place in very large groups and in these circumstances it is not possible to provide sufficient opportunities for them to develop their individual performance skills fully. Nevertheless the subject makes a good contribution to their social and cultural education.
- 149 The school has identified music as a subject for review. The new co-ordinator has good expertise and has ideas to raise the profile of musical activities within the school. A published scheme of work, compatible with the latest national recommendations, is in place. However, some teachers do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject and would benefit from training to develop their skills and confidence in teaching music. The methods employed by individual teachers to track and monitor progress need to be formalised into a whole school approach to allow the co-ordinator to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 150 The school's planning shows that it offers all aspects of the National Curriculum. During the week of the inspection no lessons in the subject were observed in Year 2 so it is not possible to make any judgements about the standards reached or the progress made by the time pupils leave the infants at the age of seven. Lessons were seen only in the development of games skills. School records show that by the end of Year 6 most of the pupils who attended swimming lessons could swim 25 metres. However, the school asks for a donation of £10 to cover the cost of transport and tuition and last year forty per cent of the age group did not go swimming.
- 151 Pupils in Year 1 achieve average standards the development of their games skills. In the lesson observed they were moved confidently and displayed appropriate control and co-ordination. They made good use of space when working in the school hall. Pupils practised and refined their throwing and catching skills as they worked with a partner.

- 152 By the end of Year 6, standards in games skills are similar to those found in most schools. Younger pupils successfully learnt how to direct a ball towards a partner using a chest pass. Older pupils displayed average skills travelling with ball using a hockey stick. A significant number showed fluency in dribbling. Pupils' skills are better in performance than they are in evaluation. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The statemented pupil was well supported and took a full part in the lesson.
- 153 The quality of learning is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with suitable opportunities to practise and refine their skills. They respond well to instructions and the structured activities. Pupils can work alone, in pairs and small groups. A weakness in the lessons observed during the inspection was the lack of opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own performance or that of others in order to suggest improvements. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including football, cricket, rounders and netball, enhances provision. In addition pupils are provided with opportunities to go on residential trips.
- 154 The quality of teaching during the inspection was satisfactory overall. A good sequence of activities is built into lessons. A satisfactory pace keeps pupils actively involved and there is an appropriate focus on developing specific skills. Lessons are well organised and the management of pupils and equipment is good. The quality of learning is better when teachers use their own or selected pupils' skills to demonstrate new points, so that a clear standard is set. Relationships are consistently very good and those who experience difficulties are always provided with help by their peers as well as teachers.
- 155 The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge but as at the time of the last inspection has not been given the opportunity to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in other age groups. Teachers are provided with satisfactory guidance and resources are adequate. There is no consistent approach to the assessment and recording of pupils' achievements.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 156 Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Teachers' planning has improved since the time of the previous inspection and lesson plans now include clear learning objectives.
- 157 In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and Judaism. In Year 2 they write their own versions of the Ten Commandments. One child wrote, '*You must help people when they fall over.*' They know that the Jewish holy book is the Torah and must be treated with respect. Pupils learn to consider others. For example, a Year 1 pupil's account of the importance of the Harvest Festival, included this observation, '*The food is going to help others. I think that is a good idea.*' However, a survey of last year's work shows that sometimes pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their writing skills and worksheets limit their responses to one word answers.
- 158 By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of Christianity and some of the major religions of the world such as Judaism and Hinduism. They know that people have different beliefs and values and that these can have an effect upon how people lead their lives. During lessons in the week of the inspection pupils in Years 5 and 6 gained a good understanding of the importance of saying 'thank you' from discussing

the significance of the Biblical story of the healing of the ten lepers. Evidence from talking to pupils and looking at previous work shows that there are some examples of good writing in the subject. For example, after listening to the story of David and Goliath one pupil wrote, '*Unfairness is when people are bullied or hurt because they are different in some way.*' However, the school does not provide enough opportunity throughout the year for pupils to undertake reflective writing in order to explore their own ideas and to raise questions.

- 159 Pupils respond well during most lessons. They listen with interest and most are willing to express their views. They show respect for people's beliefs and customs.
- 160 It is not possible to make any overall judgement about the quality of teaching because only a small number of lessons were seen. The quality of teaching in these lessons was good overall. Very good use is made of the subject skills of one teacher who changes classes with a colleague to teach the subject. The quality of learning is good because teachers ensure that the ideas explored in lessons are linked to pupils' personal experiences. For example, in a Year 2 lesson seen during the inspection, the Sukkoth was linked to their own lives when they give thanks for food and water in a prayer before lunch. There is very little evidence of teachers making use of information and communication technology to develop pupils' skills.
- 161 The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has ensured that planning and resources are both of good quality. She has not been involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning throughout the school. The scheme of work is waiting to be reviewed when the local authority produces its revised Agreed Syllabus. As at the time of the previous inspection there is no whole school approach to assessing standards. The subject makes an important contribution to the teaching of other cultures in the school. However, no opportunities have been taken to take pupils to see religious buildings other than those that represent the Christian religion.