

INSPECTION REPORT

DRAYTON PARK COMBINED SCHOOL

Bletchley, Milton Keynes

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 130254

Headteacher: Sue Naylor

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge
17454

Dates of inspection: 11th to 14th November 2002

Inspection number: 248789

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Combined
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bala Way Drayton Road Bletchley Milton Keynes
Postcode:	MK2 3HJ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Megan Crawford
Date of previous inspection:	04/07/2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology English as an additional language Modern languages	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
22248	Glesni Thomas	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
20891	Sean O'Toole	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Physical education Religious education	
2818	Graham Warner	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Drayton Park Combined School in Bletchley is a larger than average primary school which educates 302 pupils (153 boys and 149 girls) of between four and twelve years old. The school has a reception group of 38 children, which makes up the school's Foundation Stage. Poverty and issues such as frequent minor illness affect pupils disproportionately in this school; unemployment is high and crime statistics and other social indicators show the school's locality to be one of the most deprived in the country. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average. There are 53 pupils of minority ethnic heritage, 48 of whose home language is not English, and 26 pupils have support to learn English as an additional language. These proportions have risen since the last inspection. Of the 100 pupils with special educational needs, four have a statement. The first of these proportions is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties and an above average proportion have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Other pupils have speech, communication, specific learning and physical difficulties. Eighty per cent of the children have no pre-school experience and the others have relatively little prior learning. As a consequence many lack the preparation to take full advantage of the school's learning opportunities. Their learning skills are generally very low on entry. An extremely high proportion of the pupils, almost four in every ten, join or leave the school each year; this is particularly marked in Years 3 to 6. During the inspection there were two temporary teachers, three supply teachers and a teacher seconded from a local Beacon school, working in classes. The school experiences great difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers. Since July 2000 there have been a very large number of changes in the teaching staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Despite the extremely high turnover of both pupils and staff, the school provides a satisfactory standard of education overall. Generally leadership and management are good; the headteacher has led the school very well to improve the Foundation Stage and Years 1, 2 and 7, where teaching is good. Children and pupils achieve well in these parts of the school but not in Years 3 to 6 where teaching is unsatisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children's achievement, the quality of teaching and the curriculum in the reception year
- Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2.
- The care of pupils, especially the way the school promotes good behaviour
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors

What could be improved

- Standards and the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6
- The rate of attendance
- The safety of outdoor play areas

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has maintained a satisfactory rate of improvement since the last inspection in July 2000. Some elements of the school's work which have improved well; for example, children's and pupils' achievements in the reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. The school's management and organisation have also improved and the impact of these developments is particularly noticeable in the classes for the youngest children in the school. The school has attempted to make these improvements in Years 3 to 6 but has been hampered by its inability to retain teachers. As a consequence of high staff turnover issues such as poor handwriting and unsatisfactory presentation of work remain to be tackled. Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school has improved and the very good leadership of the

headteacher and governors are indicative of the school's capacity to make further improvements, if permanent staff can be appointed.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	E*	E*	E
mathematics	E*	E*	E*	E
science	E*	E	E*	E

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

Great care should be exercised when interpreting these results as an extremely high proportion of pupils change schools each year. In the 2002 Year 6 National Curriculum tests the school's performance was in the lowest five per cent of the country's schools in English, mathematics and science. When the school's results were compared to those of similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils who receive free school meals, performance was well below average. In the Year 2 tests performance in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. When compared to similar schools performance in reading and writing was below average and in mathematics was average. Although the school's trend for Year 6 pupils is below the national trend, the Year 2 results show a steady and substantial year-on-year improvement. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is not good enough because teaching has not consistently built on what pupils know, understand and can do. The school did not achieve its targets set for the end of Year 6.

Children enter the reception class attaining very low standards. Children in the reception classes make good progress and they achieve below the expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they are ready to join Year 1. They achieve particularly well in their social development. They make good progress in this class and in the classes in Years 1 and 2 by which time they achieve at the expected levels in all subjects with the exception of science, information and communication technology, and speaking and listening where they are below the expected levels. In Years 3 to 6 standards are below average in all subjects with the exception of science and religious education where they are well below average and in art and design, geography and music where they are average. When discussions are held with pupils and in lessons, they show they understand and know more than their tests scores might indicate. This is because of the good teaching in lessons in these year groups. There is a similar picture in Year 7 except that standards in science and religious education are below average. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good rates of progress and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The school tracks pupils' progress well and of the very small proportion of pupils who stayed for all four years between Years 3 to 6 almost all made at least satisfactory progress. However, much remains to be done to raise the rate of achievement in Years 3 to 6 to the level of the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory with younger pupils establishing good work habits and many pupils find their lessons interesting. At times older pupils lack concentration and application.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good generally and the staff members work very hard to help pupils see that everyone gains if they work hard together.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall with lots of examples of older pupils helping younger pupils but not enough independent work is expected of pupils in Years 3 to 6.

Attendance	Poor because too many families and pupils choose not to come to school.
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Many pupils arrive late for the start of school and some families take holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching seen in lessons is consistent and generally good; it has improved since the last inspection. However, the analysis of pupils' books shows the quality of learning in Years 3 to 6 to be variable because pupils have not received consistent teaching of good quality. In these year groups, the quality of teaching is therefore unsatisfactory. At times lessons in Years 3 to 6 are not based on a thorough understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do. They do not challenge pupils to do their best and not enough opportunities are planned for pupils to investigate or apply their learning. Teaching in the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes does not share these faults and children and pupils learn well and achieve well. In Year 7 pupils' learning is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 7 pupils do not know what to do to improve their work because marking and day-to-day assessment procedures do not are not sharp enough to help teachers set specific targets for pupils. Overall, teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory and pupils' learning in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number is sound. The teaching of these skills has improved in Years 1 and 2 are there are promising signs that the generally satisfactory teaching in lessons in Years 3 to 6 is helping to raise achievement in these skills. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is good in the reception, Years 1, 2 and 7 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. For pupils with English is an additional language learning is very good in the reception class, good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 7.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good in the reception class, satisfactory in Years 1, 2 and 7 and unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Too few opportunities are provided in Years 3 to 6 for pupils to investigate and apply their learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; learning support assistants are not used extensively enough in Years 3 to 7.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Children in the reception class are supported very well and in Years 1 and 2 well. This stands pupils in good stead for their work in later years.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall with the provision for social development being good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for with many good procedures for helping and supporting pupils academically and personally. Although adults take good care of pupils at playtimes, the play surfaces and proximity to the car turning circles are a health and safety issues that must be dealt with urgently.

The school tries very hard to involve parents but many choose not to take up the opportunities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has led the improvements very well and is well supported by the key stage managers, interim deputy headteacher and core subject leaders.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school governors fulfil their responsibilities well and represent the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but improvements have been too slow to take effect in Years 3 to 6.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its available funds well.

Improvements are being made in the accommodation and resources but from a very low base. They remain unsatisfactory; especially outdoor play provision and science resources for Year 7. Although the school does all it can to appoint permanent teachers, staffing remains unsatisfactory. Consequently, leadership in some of the non-core subjects is unsatisfactory. The school works hard to ensure that finances are targeted carefully; the principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school and their behaviour is good Children receive the right amount of work, are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature Teaching is good and children make good progress. The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents think they were not well informed and think the school should work more closely with them Some parents wanted more activities after school and homework.

Very few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. Inspectors largely agree with parents' positive comments. However, the information parents receive is good and covers the school's work well. Inspectors judge extra-curricular activities and homework to be adequate .

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results and pupils' achievements are adversely affected by a range of factors:
 - Most importantly, the proportion of pupils who join and leave the school is very high. Overall almost four out of every ten pupils changed schools last year. When each stage of learning is considered the proportion of pupils who change school is extremely high and this disrupts pupils' progress and makes tracking pupils' progress more difficult
 - Despite its best efforts the school is unable to attract and retain a stable staff of teachers to an unattractive physical environment with high levels of crime and social deprivation. As a consequence pupils are often taught by a number of teachers in the course of a single academic year. The school's failure to attract and retain teachers also adversely affects the efficiency of a range of management functions, such as subject leadership.
 - One in six pupils are learning English as an additional language and one in ten is at an early stage of English acquisition
 - An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs; at times it rises to well above average, as in the current Year6
2. The school has developed good assessment systems to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils over time, including pupils who learn English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and those who stay, or change schools frequently. In some subjects judgements about improvement could not be made as the last inspection report did not cover all of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
3. Children start school with very poor skills, knowledge and understanding and they have particularly weak communication and mathematical skills. Very few have had any pre-school educational experience. Because of good teaching and very good support for different groups of children, including those with English as an additional language, the children make good and sometimes very good progress. Children with special educational needs make good progress. By the end of the reception year, few pupils attain the expected goals for their age in the six areas of learning. In most aspects of their personal, social and emotional development the children make very good gains and most attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Despite good support and teaching, the children's very limited language skills, limited vocabulary and lack of experience of the wider world hamper their attainment. By the end of the reception year, standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are below the expected levels. The development of physical skills is hampered by shortages of equipment and an unsuitable and uneven outdoor play surface.
4. Last year the school's results for Year 2 pupils showed that the performance in reading, writing and mathematics was well below average compared to all schools. When compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils taking free school meals, the results in reading and writing were below average and for mathematics were average. The Year 2 results show a steady increase as permanent teachers introduce a settled learning atmosphere into classes. Observations and analysis by inspectors show the school is successful in promoting pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in these classes learn well in lessons and make good rates of progress over time.

Inspectors found that standards in speaking, listening, science and information and communication technology are below average. In all other subjects standards are at the expected levels. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

5. Overall this improvement in the rates of achievement in the reception and Years 1 and 2 classes reflects the growing strengths of teaching, curriculum planning and assessment procedures.
6. The results for Year 6 pupils last year were in the lowest five per cent of all schools nationally and were well below the average of those schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. When an analysis is made comparing the results of pupils who stay at the school with those who change schools frequently a more varied pattern is apparent. Only a quarter of the pupils of the whole year group remained at the school for all of Years 3 to 6 who did not have special educational needs. Almost all of these pupils made at least satisfactory progress and some made good progress in English, mathematics and science. Inspectors judge standards to be well below the expected levels in science and religious education, in line in art and design, geography and music and below the expected levels in all of the other subjects, including English, mathematics and ICT. Pupils' learning in lessons is better than tests indicate in Years 3 to 6. This is because they are beginning to benefit from higher quality teaching in Years 3 to 6 and because pupils find it difficult in tests to show their best work. However, the National Curriculum test results are below what pupils could achieve and pupils do not make enough progress in Years 3 to 6. In Year 7 class work shows average standards in speaking, listening and writing, and reading is below average. Standards in mathematics and art and design are average. In science, ICT, religious education, design and technology and geography are below average. Standards could not be judged in music and physical education.
7. The rate of achievement is dependent upon many factors but of these, the quality of teaching is the most important. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and much of the teaching seen was good. Inspectors found the same proportion of good and satisfactory teaching in all year groups, with the exception that the unsatisfactory lessons were in Years 3 to 6. However, the analysis of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 shows that learning over time is poor and that teachers have not consistently demanded the best work pupils can achieve. There are a number of factors arising from the lack of a consistent team of teachers which contribute to this slow rate of learning:
 - Pupils find the constant changes of teacher unsettling. They are aware of the changes and know when temporary teachers are leaving. In the majority of classes where teachers are permanent pupils make at least satisfactory rates of progress.
 - In Years 3 to 6, teams of teachers do not have sufficient opportunity to form cohesive groups in comparison to the team of teachers in Years 1 and 2 who work and plan together well. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' work is planned in the correct order and teachers share the same high expectations of pupils.
 - The systems, which operate so well in Years 1 and 2 have not had time to settle in Years 3 to 6 because, although the headteacher has moved teachers who have been successful in Years 1 and 2 into Years 3 to 6, they have not had time to make a substantial impact. In addition, illness has caused absence amongst these key teachers.
8. Generally pupils learn well and progress is at least satisfactory where the same teacher teaches them continuously over a substantial period of time. As the teacher becomes well acquainted with both pupils and the curriculum learning of a progressively challenging kind is planned based on the basis of an increasing

awareness of what pupils know, understand and can do. Additionally, over time teachers work increasingly well together and are able to establish effective systems for consolidating and evaluating their work. This shows in the challenges given to higher attaining pupils. In the lessons observed pupils with special educational needs, those who are learning English as an additional language and brighter pupils were given work that suited their needs. At times the learning of pupils in the middle ability groups was unsatisfactory. This was because teachers did not take sufficient account of the mixed year groups.

9. Pupils with special needs have their needs clearly identified once they have moved from the reception class where needs are identified more informally. Needs are met through the action taken to meet the targets that are set in the pupils' individual education plans. Targets are both manageable and achievable. They are further well supported by the school's procedures that ensure careful tracking of targets and regular reviews. This means that although the special needs pupils are not working to the same level as their peers they are working to their capacity and are making satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' behaviour is good; attitudes to school and personal development are satisfactory. Standards are similar to and, in the case of behaviour, higher than those reported at the previous inspection. This improvement is due to the developing impact of the consistent approach to behaviour management adopted over the last three years.
11. Most pupils like coming to school although several older pupils talk with negative attitudes about school and refer to others who are "taking time off". There is a mixed response to extra-curricular activities and numbers attending are small and many pupils fail to keep an interest going. Lack of parental encouragement has an impact on this issue; for example, 16 pupils volunteered for choir but only three pupils attended the first session.
12. Children in the reception year make very good gains in their personal, social and emotional development. They are mostly confident, well motivated and keen to learn. They get on well together, play constructively and co-operate effectively. A particular strength is the way in which the children show respect for each other's beliefs and values. Behaviour is good and the children understand the importance of good manners and care for others. The staff promote these attributes very well through sensitive and caring approaches.
13. In the main pupils with special needs have good attitudes to their work, especially when they are being well supported. This support is sometimes given by learning support assistants. However, because there are a limited number of support assistants the support is sometimes given by class teachers. This support is given through different levels of work prepared in order to meet needs appropriately and sometimes through the extra diligence of teachers in group learning situations. Attitudes are occasionally adversely affected by the disruptive behaviour of a small number of pupils. Nevertheless, because teachers have been involved in writing the pupils' individual education plans they are well prepared to deal with this sort of behaviour.
14. Pupils show good attitudes to learning in many lessons. In the reception class pupils have established good work habits. In the majority of lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 pupils show a good interest in their work and try hard to learn. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson faces shone with delight as they explored the sounds they made with

a range of instruments helping them learn well about loudness and pitch. In Years 3 to 7 attitudes are good in many lessons, especially when teaching is interesting and challenging. For instance, in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson pupils worked quickly and showed good enthusiasm for solving problems helping them to learn well about metric measurements. At times attitudes are unsatisfactory when pupils find tasks boring or they are not involved sufficiently in the lesson, as in a Year 3/4 physical education lesson where pupils did not concentrate while waiting for their turn to kick a football at a target.

15. Behaviour is generally good. There have been 11 temporary and 3 permanent exclusions over the last two years, a figure above the national average. These relate to a small number of pupils with extensive behavioural difficulties who behave in a very challenging and aggressive manner. Some have been excluded previously from other schools. Staff have worked very hard to include these pupils and keep an orderly school. Most pupils develop a good sense of fairness and awareness of the impact of their actions on others. This is very noticeable in the classes for younger pupils. In a Year 1/2 class when discussing “the time to do the right thing” pupils speak very well about how to behave in a range of situations such as “not to push people” or “if someone is on their own ask if they want someone to play with” at playtime. Some older pupils who have not benefited from the school’s current approach, show insufficient consideration to others as they move around the school.
16. Behaviour in assemblies and in the dining hall is generally good. Some boisterous behaviour was seen at playtimes and many bumps and scrapes occur especially at lunchtimes. No direct bullying was observed during the inspection but incidents are recorded and some pupils say they prefer to stay indoors at lunchtimes. Pupils and parents have very few worries about racist or sexist attitudes or behaviour.
17. Pupils’ personal development is satisfactory. Older pupils, especially in Year 7, undertake a good range of duties and responsibilities, for example, acting as librarians and lunchtime monitors. Pupils’ independence and self-confidence is developed adequately, for example, through the provision of residential visits in Years 5 and 6. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their experiences on these visits. Pupils show pride in their achievements, especially when receiving rewards for good attitudes or effort.
18. Most pupils aspire to learn and develop expressive and creative skills although in lessons seen their attitude to physical effort in sport is less than wholehearted. They examine moral and social issues, such as respect, pride and citizenship, well through assemblies and PSHE and other lessons. For example, in Years 5 and 6 they discuss issues relating to improving the playground environment in a sensible and mature manner. They develop team working skills and are prepared to take responsibility for decisions and their consequences. Their appreciation of a diverse range of art, music and culture is developing adequately with satisfactory stimulation from the school.
19. Relationships are satisfactory throughout the school but are better in the reception year and Years 1 and 2. Pupils are friendly and chatty. Several older pupils show a lack of respect for adults and their fellow pupils. Others are helpful, for example, when they play with younger ones.
20. Overall attendance levels are poor and are well below the national average. The level of unauthorised absences is higher than average. Attendance is poor throughout the school. Many pupils are regularly late. The main reasons for absence are:
 - High levels of minor childhood sickness
 - Parents condone their children’s unauthorised absence
 - Families taking holidays in term time

- Pupils who have left the school are kept on the registers in order to track their moves from school to school

Poor attendance has a significant detrimental influence on achievement for many pupils throughout the school, as they miss lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

21. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there has been a significant improvement since the last inspection. At that time in 25 of the 32 lessons seen the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better. In this inspection the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 61 of the 64 lessons seen. In almost three-quarters of the lessons seen the quality of teaching was good or better. Good and very good quality teaching was observed in all year groups. The excellent teaching seen was concentrated in Years 1 and 7. The unsatisfactory teaching in lessons was observed in Years 3 to 6. Overall, the teaching in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2 is good. However, analysis of the work in the books of pupils in Years 3 to 6 indicates that quality of learning and teaching has been poor and the overall quality of teaching in these year groups has not been sufficiently effective to satisfactorily promote pupils' progress.
22. Teaching in the reception classes is good and is enhanced through the very good provision for children with English as an additional language. As a result the children learn successfully and are keen participants in all activities and lessons. The school correctly identifies children with special educational needs; they are well cared for and supported through thoughtful planning. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is very good as the staff have a strong awareness of individual's needs and encourage the children to co-operate, work independently and use their initiative in selecting resources. Basic skills in communication, language and literacy are taught well and there is regular practice of reading and writing at appropriate levels for the children. Insufficient attention is given to developing the children's speaking skills through imaginative play. Mathematical development is taught well as there is good use of apparatus and consistent practice of counting, sorting and matching. Teachers and support staff work effectively with the children and contribute much to the good teaching of creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world through well-focused questioning, thorough planning and a suitable balance of activities. Although the teaching of physical development is good in indoor lessons, the lack of suitable resources and the poor surface of the outdoor play hamper opportunities for successful learning. Other strengths in the teaching include the very good relationships between staff and children, good provision for the more able in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and effective monitoring of children's progress.
23. The slow rate of achievement in Years 3 to 6 is due in large measure to the frequent changes of teachers in these year groups. During this inspection there were five members of staff teaching in the school on a temporary basis and half of the teachers in Years 3 to 6 were temporary staff. Some of the pupils in this stage of the school have had eight teachers in the last few years because the school has found it difficult to appoint and retain teachers. Some of the temporary and supply teachers have chosen to stay and this is having a settling effect on pupils' learning. There are now useful guidelines for all teachers. There is good marking policy but because of the changes to teaching staff, the quality of marking is inconsistent and some pupils are not given sufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. They lack clear personal targets. Nevertheless, the learning of many pupils is reinforced by work they do at home because teachers set appropriate work to be completed at home.

24.

Teaching weaknesses in Years 3 to 6 which result in ineffective learning

- Expectations of pupils are not high enough → Pupils do not develop an understanding of how good their work should be and they complete work that is substandard and because pupils do not practise skills such as handwriting and the general presentation of their work, learning is affected adversely. This also affects those classes in Years 3 to 6 that are made up of pupils of two year groups.
- Marking and day-to-day assessments are not used to build on what pupils know and can do → Pupils lack an understanding of how well they have done, what needs to be achieved beyond the scope of the current lesson and what they need to do to improve
- In some lessons the pace of learning is too slow → Pupils are not as productive as they should be because they do not work hard enough
- Teachers use written work as a method of managing behaviour → Pupils do not develop their skills of investigation, experimenting or using their learning in 'real life' situations

25. Where teaching is consistently good and learning is successful, in the reception, Years 1 and 2 and some classes in Years 3 to 7, there are several aspects that support pupils' achievement.

Teaching strengths which result in effective learning

- Knowledge of subjects is good → Children in the reception classes learn well in all areas of the early learning goals and very well in their social development. Pupils in other years make good progress in most subjects where standards are at the expected levels.
- Teaching reading, writing and number is good → Pupils use their skills in other subjects such as geography and history.
- Teachers are clear about what pupils should learn → As lessons build well on each other, pupils know what they have to learn and knowledge, skills and understanding are developed well.
- Teachers have a sharp idea about what pupils should achieve → Whether pupils have special educational needs, learn English as an additional language or learn quickly they work hard, complete their tasks and produce enough work to sharpen their skills.
- Teachers set work which requires pupils to investigate and apply their skills → Pupils think hard, are curious and interested in the world around them. This helps pupils to come to imaginative solutions and keep trying if they find the work difficult.
- Behaviour is managed well → Pupils behave well in those lessons that have

practical tasks as part of the work.

26. The school has developed good procedures to ensure that its commitment to provide well-targeted teaching support to pupils with special needs is achieved. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs and work well in lessons to support pupils with special educational needs. There are good levels of support from the special educational needs co-ordinator and external agencies and consequently, pupils receive appropriate levels of support. At times this can take the form of different types and levels of support and sometimes by giving extra support either by class teachers or support assistants.
27. Learning support is invariably effective and delivered by a hard working team of assistants who work in close cooperation with teachers. The assistants are well informed and involved in the planning for provision. They are fully aware of the contents of individual education plans. Pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties are taught well and there is a good level of behaviour management for the small number of pupils whose behaviour patterns can occasionally be disruptive.
28. Pupils who learn English as an additional language learn very well in the reception class, well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in other year groups. The school has rightly focused the support for these pupils in the early years of the school and this is having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. The work of language support assistants is very good in the reception classes and good elsewhere. They are careful to use both English and Bengali and this reinforces home languages as well as encourages children and pupils to learn new words in English.
29. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Further improvement in the quality of teaching depends largely on the school's capacity to make permanent appointments.

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

30. Overall, a sound curriculum is provided and in the reception class the curriculum is good. Effective arrangements promote pupils' social development and this has led to improved behaviour and more positive attitudes to learning. There are now schemes of work for all subjects, an improvement on the previous inspection. Overall, the school organises a learning programme that is broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' needs. However, there are weaknesses in the curriculum followed in Years 3 to 6.
31. The school makes good curricular provision for children in the reception classes and staff work effectively to make lessons stimulating, interesting and relevant to the needs of all. There is good planning which is linked to the stepping-stones for learning and the early learning goals. Staff take good account of the children's backgrounds and previous experiences to make the activities challenging and interesting. The staff also promote the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are very good opportunities to learn about the children's cultures through visits to a Bengali restaurant and to learn and value each other's languages. The staff consistently promote positive attitudes and good behaviour through praise and encouragement. The Golden Brick assemblies are highly thought of by pupils. They consider tea with the headteacher to be a considerable reward and work many work hard to achieve this recognition of their efforts. Through the good opportunities to work in groups of different sizes the staff help the children to relate to one another and to share and take turns.

32. The sound policies for all subjects reflect the school's desire to ensure that all pupils have access to the full range of learning opportunities. In the reception class the curriculum is well linked to national guidance for the Foundation Stage and provides well for pupils emotional, social and intellectual development. Provision for their physical development is sound. In Years 1 to 7, all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. A curriculum plan identifies when units of work in science and non-core subjects are to be taught and incorporates some good opportunities for links between different subjects, for example, a history topic on Ancient Greeks is taught at the same time as a geography unit on contemporary Greece. The school has scheduled a review of non-core subjects for spring 2003. This is timely because, at present, a clear, shared understanding of the work pupils are expected to cover each year in Years 3 to 6 is not well enough established and this has an adverse effect on the quality of teaching and learning. The current organisation of learning does not sufficiently take into account the needs of pupils in mixed age classes.
33. Arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy are well aligned to the national literacy and numeracy strategies and, in Years 1 and 2, have contributed well to improving standards in literacy and numeracy. Despite this, in Years 3 to 6, lessons are not always challenging enough to extend the skills and increase the knowledge of the older year groups in mixed age classes.
34. Pupils with special educational needs pupils are fully involved in all of the school's activities. They are completely involved in the classroom curriculum because their individual education plans are carefully drawn up to ensure their needs are thoughtfully met. Teachers, supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator, draw up good quality plans which consist of well defined targets. These targets that are clear, precise and few in number are readily managed and achievable. Pupils receive good levels of support from both class teachers and support assistants. This level of support is further enhanced by the involvement of outside agency support of the educational psychologists and local authority support service personnel.
35. Pupils who learn English as an additional language are supported well by class teachers and support staff and given appropriate opportunities to learn effectively across the range of the curriculum. The skills of language support assistants in the early years of the school are well targeted and help children and young pupils make at least good rates of progress.
36. The curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of interest including the nearby Blue Lagoon environmental centre. Visits are well used to inspire learning. For instance, during inspection week, older pupils reported on their visit to a residential centre and, following a visit to an Indian restaurant, reception children cooked samosas. Each year, a group of artists pays a three-day visit to the school to lead workshops in music, art and drama, culminating in a performance for parents. History lessons are brought alive by visiting actors who adopt the roles of people from the past. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, including football skills training, led by a local team, a gardening club and a recently formed school choir.
37. There are good links with partner institutions including local primary schools. Members of staff from the local secondary school support the curriculum and pupils from Drayton Park have swimming lessons at the secondary school's pool. Constructive links have been established with the local community including the police whose officers visit regularly to promote safety education.

38. Personal and social education is a significant component of the school curriculum and has contributed well to improvements in behaviour since the last inspection. Overall, there are sound arrangements to foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for social development is good and includes paired work in mathematics for younger pupils and residential visits for Years 5 to 7. The school council is a good example of the ways in which the school encourages pupils to solve problems constructively and co-operatively. Thought provoking assemblies and class sessions, including circle times, provide good opportunities for exploring social and moral issues. For instance, in a very good assembly for Years 1 and 2, pupils were very effectively led to reflect on their role in making new and bewildered pupils feel welcome in school. Music and physical education lessons make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development is nurtured by their growing awareness of a range of faiths and religious practices and by the climate of respect promoted in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

39. The welfare and care of children and pupils is managed well and they feel secure and cared for.
40. Health and safety procedures and monitoring are good. The school has adopted a good policy and has procedures to identify potential issues. The school has correctly identified the dangerous condition of the surface of part of the playground and the danger of this area being exposed to vehicles. Child protection procedures and awareness are very good. The headteacher handles potential issues with a very sensitive approach. First aid arrangements are good with adequate members of staff receiving training. Pupils' personal development is monitored very well and staff provide very good personal support enabling most pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. Each pupil is seen and treated as important by all staff. The school is very successful in including and welcoming all pupils especially those excluded by other schools. Pupils new to the school are treated very well enabling them to settle quickly. The school has a very good range of strategies to support this, for example the very effective support of the home/school teacher. These strategies include tracking very carefully pupils' attendance and their reasons for absence, pupils' personal development as well as providing a drop-in meeting place with a counsellor from NSPCC.
41. The staff in the reception classes are very caring and know the children well. The induction process works effectively, enhanced by the very good support of the home visitor and the children make a smooth and confident start. Staff assess the children carefully on admission and are particularly sensitive in meeting the physical and language needs of the children with special educational needs. The support for children with English as an additional language is very good and the children of all backgrounds benefit much from learning some things in English and Bengali. Staff members keep accurate records of progress and use the information to plan well focused and sufficiently challenging work.
42. The school takes very thoughtful care of its special needs pupils. Although there is a high percentage of these pupils, much energy is expended on ensuring needs are being met appropriately. The special educational needs co-ordinator is non-class based and does not have a regular teaching commitment. Much of the special educational needs coordinator's time is spent on the care and welfare of children and pupils. As the need for this work decreases, however slightly, the skills and expertise of the special educational needs co-ordinator are not used sufficiently in classrooms. This is an area for the school to consider in improving its provision. Careful

assessments of pupils' needs are made and the school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice in assessing needs.

43. Good quality systems give extra support to pupils with special educational needs. A learning mentor and special educational needs co-ordinator are involved at times in giving this support as well as the headteacher. Pupils with special needs value this support and subsequently develop well in a personal sense. They often help one another and are carefully involved by many staff in the whole class discussions at points where they are successful in their responses. This helps to give them some self-esteem and confidence to enter into the whole class activities as well as participating fully in group work.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. The behaviour policy with an emphasis on the use of rewards and praise is having a very positive impact on improving most pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The high priority given to the role of all support staff in providing a consistent approach especially given the high turnover of teachers has been very successful. The pupils value their constant support. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are very good and any potential incidents are monitored and recorded rigorously.
45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. Registers are very well maintained, allowing the school to identify the reasons for non-attendance and to take quick action to follow up absences. The school takes great care to track pupils who may have moved from the school even though keeping them on register increases the overall absence percentage. This is an excellent example of how the school always puts the needs of the children first.
46. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and appropriate use is being made of assessment information for curriculum planning. Teachers are now using assessment information more effectively than they did at the time of the last inspection but there are still shortcomings in the guidance given to pupils on how they can improve their performance. The school has successfully concentrated its efforts on ensuring that procedures to assess and track performance in English, mathematics and science work well and to note personal development. The assessment co-ordinator and key subject leaders have worked effectively to devise manageable systems to enable teachers to assess and track progress in literacy and numeracy. Careful records are kept.
47. A school progress framework for each subject is gradually being introduced starting with the core subjects. However, a weakness is the lack of benchmarks indicating what pupils are expected to achieve each year. Clear guidance for teachers on half-termly assessment procedures is given, including by the mathematics leader who monitors numeracy assessment information on a half termly basis. As a result, teachers now make satisfactory use of assessment information for medium term curriculum planning. Weaker areas are short-term assessments and guidance given to pupils on how they can improve their performance and in particular the setting of targets. Therefore not enough is done to ensure that all pupils, including those of average ability and those in mixed age classes are helped sufficiently to improve their skills and this has an adverse effect on the standards pupils achieve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

48. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Although this was not evaluated in the last inspection, evidence suggests the school has worked very hard to improve this relationship.
49. The involvement of a proportion of parents in their children's education and the life of the school is poor in spite of the good efforts of the school and a small core of very supportive parents. The lack of support and overall attitudes to education from some parents seriously affect their children's attitudes to school. These parents do not value the importance of regular, prompt attendance despite the efforts of the school.
50. Parents speak highly of the work in the reception classes and are very pleased with the new opportunities for children to have nursery education. Staff members encourage the parents to become involved in their children's learning by providing some homework in early reading. The visits provide helpful information to the school and help to build a suitable rapport between staff and parents and ensure a good start is made to school life. The staff keep parents suitably informed of their children's progress through regular informal and formal contacts and also provide satisfactory written reports at the end of the school year.
51. The school makes every effort to involve parents at every stage in meeting the special needs of its pupils. This is often met with initial success. However, the support that it receives after this initial stage is more limited. Most parents do attend the reviews but a sizeable proportion does not. The school continues to make efforts to improve this by setting different times for the reviews and trying to make them less formal. The school recognises that this an area of provision that needs regular review and reconsideration of its effectiveness.
52. There is limited evidence of parents' views of the school because of the very low attendance at the parents' meeting, the very poor response to the pre-inspection survey and their reluctance to express their views during the inspection. This limited evidence suggests that they feel teaching is good and the school helps the children to make good progress and to work hard. The evidence does not support parents' few concerns.
53. Parents are not much involved in the work of the school with very few helping in classes, supporting reading at home or contributing to reading diaries. There is no parent teacher association. They do support events organised by the staff and school productions. The school is making good efforts to involve parents further in the school and their children's education. Newsletters are attractively presented and give good information on school life and also on how parents may help in their child's learning. Curriculum consultation sessions, although not well attended, are a further example of how the school tries to involve parents. The school makes positive efforts to consult with parents, a good example of which is the consultation about whether parents wish to receive information about the curriculum covered in each year group. The home school link teacher provides a key service in bridging the gap especially through home visits and encouraging parents to come into school to use facilities such as the computer suite.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

54. At the last inspection the leadership and management of the headteacher were judged to be good. Governors at that time did not monitor the school's work but were supportive. Teachers, some of whom were newly appointed, shared the leader's

commitment to the school. Since then the most difficult and continuing issues facing the school have been the recruitment and retention of teachers and the number of pupils who join and leave the school. While the latter of these is managed effectively by using good quality assessment systems, maintaining a team of permanent teaching staff is proving very difficult.

55. The headteacher has led the improvements in the school very well. Her work rate is formidable and she has developed a very good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school's work. She has tackled tasks without shrinking from difficult decisions and has designed and put in place good quality systems. Her decision to carry the improvements begun in the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes through to Years 3 to 7 is correct but has been derailed by the current absence of two of the school's senior management team and the lack of a consistent team of teachers. The inspection team judge that the headteacher and governors have done all they can to appoint and maintain teachers in the school. Some of the methods used to attract teachers to the school are innovative. Nevertheless the lack of a consistent, high quality team of teachers in Years 3 to 6 is the single most important block to pupils achieving the standards they should. Not only does this affect pupils' progress on a daily basis but it also makes the retention of subject coordinators, and therefore the management of subjects, difficult. The current leaders have made a positive impact on the tasks set out in the school improvement plan, for example, the science leader and the information and communication technology leader. However, leadership in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum is unsatisfactory overall. Other subjects and aspects, such as English, mathematics and special educational needs, are led well.
56. The provision for the Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection and is managed well by the experienced and well-focused co-ordinator. She successfully manages her team who work together effectively and have a good impact on the children's progress. There is good internal accommodation and a suitable and satisfactory range of resources to support the teaching. However, the outdoor area is poor and the playground surface is uneven and hazardous. There is no climbing equipment and a limited range of large outdoor toys.
57. The special educational needs co-ordinator has set up effective procedures since her appointment just over a year ago. Since that then she has also taken on the role of interim deputy headteacher. Good special educational needs procedures ensure that pupils' needs are now met effectively. There is now a clear structure of support. Support staff members are well trained and closely involved in meeting pupils' needs effectively. The co-ordinator has initiated appropriate training for the Code of Practice requirements. There are an inadequate number of support assistants to meet all special needs pupils' needs on a consistent basis. The accommodation does not lend itself well to withdrawal but there is too little of this, particularly for some of the small number of disruptive pupils who would benefit from being withdrawn on occasion. There is a good level of support from outside agencies that is thoughtfully arranged by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Resources are adequate to meet needs although insufficient attention has been given to supplementing the programmes of work with information and communication technology.
58. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well, and gives a very good account of the performance of the school. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses intimately and are very good advocates for the school and its members of staff. They monitor the school's work and the information thus gathered. The very good reports they receive from members of staff, notably the headteacher, help them to question the direction the school takes. They are willing participants in planning to

meet the school's needs and offer good support to the headteacher by questioning systems and results. Included in these reports are the very high quality reports from the bursar, detailing the school budget.

59. In the past the school has had difficulty in managing its finances. This has improved since the last inspection. This caused a lack of resources, particularly in ICT, science and resources for subjects such as physical education. This has also affected the maintenance and development of the building and the school's external environment. Some work has begun; the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes and other areas of the school have been refurbished and are the better for this work. However, there are some subjects in which pupils' progress is adversely affected by the lack of resources. For example, there are not enough library books and computer programs to support subjects such as mathematics and science. However, progress in ICT is now rapid because of the good quality computers and laptops recently made available. The outdoor play space is unsatisfactory and constitutes a health and safety risk to children and pupils who have to play on a paved surface in very close proximity to a vehicle turning circle. Although teachers and supervisory staff take very good care when vans or cars use this roadway, it is an unsatisfactory provision and should be improved as a matter of urgency.
60. The headteacher and governors now have a clear grasp of finances and funding issues especially in relation to the fluctuation in pupil numbers. They have managed a budget shortfall very effectively. School-based management and administrative systems are very good, enabling the school to plan and monitor its finances on a day-to-day basis. Annual budget allocations are linked well to overall school priorities. The school has no longer-term financial plan and the lack of funds especially due to the high level of expenditure required for building maintenance has limited allocations for resources for subjects. No financial audit has been carried out since the previous inspection but day-to-day financial administration is of a very high standard. The expert support provided by the school bursar keeps the administrative burden on the headteacher and other staff to a minimum. Particular funds available to the school, especially those designated for pupils with special educational needs, are used effectively.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

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

- 1) *Raise standards and accelerate the rate of progress in Years 3 to 6 by improving teaching and learning in the following ways;
 - a. Pay particular attention to the development of skills in all subjects, including the standards of handwriting;
 - b. Set out clearly the expectations of the quality of work each year group is expected to complete
 - c. Increase the pace of lessons so that pupils produce more work.
 - d. Plan interesting and challenging learning opportunities which require pupils to think, investigate and apply their learning.
 - e. Improve the quality and frequency of assessment, particularly target setting and marking
 - f. Ensure subject leaders set tight time limits for improvements and make regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning
(Paragraphs 6-8, 21, 23, 24, 29, 30, 32, 33, 47, 73, 79, 85, 88, 90, 91, 93, 95, 105, 109, 112, 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138)
- 2) *Improve the rate of attendance
(Paragraphs 11, 20, 49)
- 3) *As a matter of urgency improve the safety of the outdoor play space available to children and pupils.
(Paragraphs 3, 40, 59, 63, 128)

*** Issues already identified by governors and staff and in the process of development.**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	13	31	14	2	1	0
Percentage	4%	21%	48%	22%	3%	2%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		300
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		95

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		100

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	48
Number of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition	26

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	65
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	50

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.6

School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	24	21	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	21
	Girls	15	13	20
	Total	31	30	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (48)	67 (55)	91 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	21	19
	Girls	14	20	17
	Total	30	41	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (55)	91 (77)	80 (87)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	18	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	5	7
	Girls	8	5	7
	Total	11	10	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	28 (27)	26 (27)	36 (41)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	7	11
	Girls	10	8	8
	Total	15	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (22)	38 (35)	49 (41)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	239	10	2
White – Irish	6		
White – any other White background	2		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	37		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African	10		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2		
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR-Y7

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	242

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	740,507
Total expenditure	736,841
Expenditure per pupil	2,641
Balance brought forward from previous year	-33,503
Balance carried forward to next year	-29,837

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
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	300
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	35	9	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	42	2	5	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	47	16	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	40	23	9	5
The teaching is good.	37	51	0	5	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	30	19	21	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	35	7	7	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	49	7	2	7
The school works closely with parents.	26	33	30	7	5
The school is well led and managed.	28	51	14	5	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	23	53	12	2	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	47	5	14	12

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

62. The school has continued to improve its provision, curriculum and teaching since the previous inspection and all of these elements are good. Currently 38 children attend the reception classes. Fifteen have been in school for two terms and five for one term. The remainder started school in September. The local authority has changed the admission policy this year and now all children will start in September of the year in which they are five. The school is undergoing a period of development, as a nursery class will open in the new year. The school is well prepared for these changes and the temporary part-time arrangements for these children are working well and resulting in the children being prepared effectively for their start to school in January. The staff have identified 10 children with special educational needs and provide good support for them. Children come from a wide range of backgrounds and nine have English as an additional language most of whom are at an early stage of English acquisition. These children are given very good support. There is also a weekly group for ethnic minority families with young children. Overall attainment on admission to the reception year is very low with few children of average ability. Most children have very limited language skills. Only about a fifth have any form of pre-school educational experience.
63. The curriculum is well organised and effective and promotes the children's academic, personal, social and emotional skills well. The teachers are supported effectively by classroom assistants, who have well-developed skills and experience. The accommodation is good and spacious although the outdoor area is poor and hampers the children's physical development. Although there have been recent staff changes the continuity in developing children's skills, knowledge and understanding has not been impaired because of the effective leadership provided by the reception co-ordinator.
64. The quality of teaching is good and has a beneficial impact on children's learning. The staff work successfully to meet the needs of all children and makes very good provision for those with English as an additional language through bi-lingual support. Children with special educational needs are taught well and receive good support. The staff track their progress and monitor performance, using the information to plan the next step in learning. Staff attach much importance to personal, social and emotional development and activities are planned well to include opportunities for the children to gain in independence and also to work collaboratively in projects such as creating large pictures and models. Much is expected of the children and they work hard sticking to tasks and persevering even when they find the work difficult. This positive approach equips them well for the next stage of their education. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good and staff are knowledgeable and effective in planning sessions to include a variety of opportunities for the children to learn to read and write. There is good individual support and encouragement to read at home. Good records are kept and frequent discussions about individual's progress helps to ensure that work is set at an appropriate level to move learning on at a good pace. Basic skills such as handwriting and forming letters are practised regularly. The teaching of the mathematical area of learning is good as the staff make effective use of resources so that children learn through practical activities.
65. Children bring little general knowledge and the staff compensate for this by enlivening the curriculum through good teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world. The teaching of geography is very good as it enables the children to appreciate simple maps by working on three-dimensional models and relating them to simple plans. Staff reinforce subject vocabulary and the children make good gains in understanding

technical terms, although questioning of children when they play with sand and water is not as sharp as it could be. Creative skills are taught well and the children enjoy learning how to paint, draw and make models. Staff guide the children well in mixing paints and in developing manipulative skills using a variety of tools. The teaching of design and technology is very good as staff encourage the children to make a variety of foods. The staff use Bengali and English words for the ingredients and this helps children appreciate each other's language, foods and traditions. The teaching of physical development is satisfactory overall and there is good teaching in the hall of music and movement skills. Learning and teaching in the outdoor area are unsatisfactory because of the shortage of equipment and suitable play surface.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

66. The children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development because of the very effective teaching which ensures that all children have a wide range of opportunities to develop positive attitudes, good behaviour and helpful and constructive relationships with adults and other children. By the end of the reception year most children attain most of the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development. Children with English as an additional language make very good progress because their language and cultures are celebrated and there is very good bi-lingual support. These children soon settle into school life and they make a valuable contribution to promoting positive attitudes about race, belief and tradition among their classmates aided by skilful and highly effective teaching and support from all staff. Children with special educational needs make very good gains in their personal, social and emotional skills because of the individual support they receive. Parachute games are used well to develop the children's skills in working together.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

67. By the end of the reception year few children attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy in spite of their good progress. Children of all abilities and backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language, make good progress in almost all aspects of communication, language and literacy although the development of speaking skills through imaginative play is an area for further extension. A good example is the Bengali restaurant where children excitedly pretend to be customers, cooks and waitresses, following a well-organised visit. The children are making good progress in early reading and writing and many now form letters correctly and attempt to write their own name. The more able write short phrases and clearly understand the link between reading and writing. The teaching is good. Basic skills are taught well and there is regular practice of early reading and writing. The staff carefully assesses how well the children are improving and use the information to plan lessons which meet the needs of children of different abilities. Staff are very sure of their roles and receive good guidance from the co-ordinator who carefully monitors the children's progress and how well they are being taught. The work of the support staff for children with English as an additional language has been instrumental in enabling new entrants to settle quickly, take a full part in lessons and to grow in confidence and competence in using English effectively. The willingness of other staff to learn Bengali and to use it in lessons has contributed very well to all of the children's progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

68. Progress in mathematical development is good for all pupils because of good teaching that provides opportunities for the children to learn through practical experiences. By the end of the reception year most children have achieved well but relatively few attain all of the early learning goals in this aspect of their work. Most children count in correct

sequence to 30 and the more able have a secure understanding of the value of numbers to 5. There is good teaching of mathematical vocabulary and the children have a satisfactory knowledge of *more than* and *less than*. They recognise some shapes and sort and match objects. They learn effectively through reciting number rhymes and songs. However, the children struggle with simple addition and subtraction and in applying basic mathematical knowledge to solving problems. The children correctly sequence the days of the week and the more able understand some aspects of time.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

69. The staff provide a good range of opportunities for the children to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of this area of learning. The children, including those with English as an additional language, make good progress in most aspects although the unsatisfactory computer equipment in the classroom hampers their progress in ICT. This is compensated for by the weekly use of the ICT suite where children learn well. By the end of the reception year, the children attain the early learning goals in geographical and technology skills but have insecure knowledge of science and history where their progress is hampered by limited vocabulary. The children recognise key features on a simple map and talk about their journey to school, identifying key features in their locality. They know that they have changed since being babies and that toys have changed through history. The children are good at making models using a variety of construction toys and carefully follow instructions. A particular success is in food technology where the teaching is very good. The children listen carefully to instructions and follow a recipe under the guidance of staff. They are thrilled with the tastiness of their samosas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

70. The children, including those with English as an additional language, make good progress in creative development. The children achieve well because of good teaching, although few attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. They enjoy playing a variety of musical instruments and the more able successfully keep a beat and play together. Their singing skills are below average as they struggle to keep together although they sing enthusiastically. Children's creative language and imaginative play is developed successfully in some activities such as the restaurant but in general adults are not involved enough in imaginative play activities. The children start with very limited experience and benefit very much from opportunities to experiment with paint, fabrics and materials. They initially daub paint but soon begin to develop control and by the end of reception paint recognisable pictures usually colour effectively. They make satisfactory collages of houses using a variety of materials and the staff use these opportunities to extend the children's vocabulary such as *smooth* and *rough*. The children play together well sharing toys, making roads and building models.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

71. Children's progress in physical development is satisfactory although few attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children with special educational needs participate fully in activities and are often supported by adults so that their physical needs are met well. The staff use a good range of songs and dances to interest the children and this enables those with English as an additional language to take a full part in lessons and to make similar progress to their friends. Poor resources and an unsuitable and unsafe outdoor play area hamper progress. Overall the teaching is satisfactory. Teaching in indoor sessions is often good and links music with movement

so that the children learn to clap, beat time and dance appropriately to a rhythm. Although most still struggle to keep together as they sing they are usually co-ordinated in their movements. The children really enjoy these sessions and the staff join in enthusiastically and this encourages the more inhibited to participate. The staff satisfactorily develop the children's skills such as holding pencils correctly and by providing opportunities to use a variety of tools ensure that the children become proficient in cutting with saws and using scissors. The children have appropriate skills for their age in controlling wheeled vehicles and most are aware of others as they pedal around the playground. Climbing and balancing skills are generally below those expected of children of this age because there is no suitable equipment.

ENGLISH

72. Standards in English in national tests for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were well below the national average. Factors that have affected pupils' rates of achievement include the very high mobility rates of pupils and the lack of a consistent and permanent team of teachers in Years 3 to 6. In the Year 6 group last year only a quarter of the pupils stayed at school for the four years from Year 3 to 6. Of this group three-quarters made the expected rates of progress and almost half of these pupils made good progress in reading.
73. Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils in the Year 1 and 2 classes are reaching average standards in reading and writing but are below average in their speaking and listening skills. However, their teachers are very aware of this and are working effectively to provide activities that will help the pupils to reach better standards. Rates of achievement are rising in these year groups. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have still not benefited from the systems which are proving successful for younger pupils. Their skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening are below average but they are improving upon the levels achieved in the national tests. Reading is below average in Year 7 classes but the work completed in previous classes begins to bear fruit in this year as speaking and listening and writing skills reach average standards.
74. There are a number of reasons why the school is being more successful in Years 1 and 2 classes. There have been fewer changes in the permanent members of staff teaching in these classes. Pupils' progress is tracked more effectively although this work is now beginning to have some impact on Years 3 to 7. This is evident in the high quality marking and assessment procedures in Years 1 and 2. The headteacher and subject leader have begun the process of changing this situation by moving teachers from Years 1 and 2 classes to work with Years 3 to 6. The smaller numbers of pupils in the Year 7 classes are giving good support to developing speaking and listening skills while writing skills are being developed across curriculum areas. Reading is not being paid enough attention in this year group as a significant number of pupils still need more regular practice than is currently being given.
75. Pupils with special needs make up a significant number of pupils in most classes and individual targets are carefully set for them as part of the tracking system. The targets are regularly reviewed and, because there are not too many of them, they are readily achieved by pupils. Teachers manage the provision for special needs pupils effectively because of the small but appropriate number of targets that they have written in the pupils' individual education plans. Pupils who learn English as an additional language make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6.
76. Speaking and listening skills are below average but pupils make good progress from the very low starting point on entry to the reception class. Teachers work hard at

providing group and paired discussion activities in the tasks that they prepare for the pupils. In the Year 1 class the pupils interact well with one another because there is activity in their learning focused on the book, *The train ride together*. They make actions and noises that help their understanding of words in the story. In consequence their understanding is increased effectively and they make good progress. In Year 2 the focus given to small groups, particularly the middle ability pupils, by both teacher and support assistant helps the pupils to talk freely about chain poetry. This is done after hearing their class teacher read *The town fire* poem very expressively and so enthusing the pupils to make spoken responses as well as written ones. Standards are below average in Years 3 to 6 because teachers do not give enough opportunities for pupils to be involved in discussions. In these classes there is too much emphasis upon teachers giving instructions. The skills are beginning to be improved in Year 7 classes because the smaller numbers give more opportunities for pupils to make contributions to well focused discussions. Average standards are being achieved. These classes develop their speaking and listening skills through drama.

77. Standards in reading are average in Years 1 and 2 because there is a regular programme of reading where teachers and support staff hear pupils read daily. They also work well with the homes and do receive support from a number of parents who hear their children read at home. Although pupils in the Years 3 to 7 classes have the home/school diaries they are not supported well at home. There are some pupils who read words and sentences competently but many of the accurate readers lack understanding in their reading. This large group of pupils are not able to talk about past events in stories they read or predict possible outcomes with any accuracy or knowledge. In consequence, some take little enjoyment from reading and their progress is unsatisfactory.
78. Standards in writing are average in Years 1 and 2 in both lessons observed and the sample of the pupils' work. Pupils are encouraged to write independently at the earliest possible time. Thoughtful, helpful marking of the work by teachers gives them encouragement. This was confirmed in lessons observed where writing activities followed work on poetry at levels that matched the pupils' needs. Some pupils compose poems of their own; others were completing poems started for them whilst a final group were helped to understand how poetry is formed. This level of achievement is not consistently sustained in Years 3 to 6. In these classes there is far less thoughtful marking. Targets are not highlighted in the front of books so that the pupils are constantly made aware of what they need to do in order to improve upon their work. Although standards are below average in lessons there were encouraging signs that the rate progress is slowly increasing. The teachers in some classes provide chances for pupils to follow up the more practical aspects of their lessons. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use using whiteboards to record responses to questions about a non-fiction text. In Years 5 and 6 they study a recipe and then extend their understanding of instructional texts by writing their own versions of an imaginative recipe. However, this was not moving on the pupils in Year 4 and 6 rapidly enough in their learning because it was at the lower year group's level. The standards are improved again in Year 7 classes to an average level. This is mainly because the writing skills are being developed successfully in other curriculum areas such as history and geography as well as in the pupils' English lessons.
79. Standards in handwriting are unsatisfactory. The presentation of work is also unsatisfactory in consequence. In Years 1 and 2 where handwriting is beginning to be taught as a skill, rates of progress are good. There are also pockets of good progress in Years 3 to 6 classes but this rate is inconsistent between classes. The policy for handwriting is not given the status needed to develop handwriting skills on a consistent basis. Spelling is unsatisfactory. Too little attention is paid to ensure accuracy in

spelling. There are not enough dictionaries to support the pupils in developing the skills of seeking support by using dictionaries and other sources of information. There is too little challenge from teachers to pupils to spell with appropriate levels of accuracy for their ages.

80. In most lessons the teaching is good throughout the school; however, team planning, and therefore a consistent approach to teaching and learning is more clearly established in Years 1 and 2 and Year 7 where there are smaller numbers of pupils and permanent members of staff. This is not the case in Years 3 to 6 classes but it is becoming much closer to this better practice. Support staff give good quality support, particularly to those pupils with identified special needs. However, there are too few of them to ensure consistency of support is being given. This is more particularly the case in the Year 3 to 6 classes where support staff have to be shared between classes.
81. The focus given to the literacy hour is well embedded in the school's practice. The rewards of this are more apparent in the Year 7 classes where the pupils use their writing skills in curriculum areas other than English. Although pupils use the Internet and CD-ROMs for research purposes the use of ICT is at an early stage of development. This is an area that is recognised by the school as ripe for development.
82. The subject leader has a very secure understanding of the development needs in the subject. A clearly thought out plan of action has been drawn up to raise standards in the Years 3 to 6 classes particularly but not exclusively. A useful policy has been based upon national guidance but does not highlight clearly enough those areas which the school needs to prioritise. Resources are inadequate. The books in the school are of satisfactory quality but the library has too few books for the number of pupils.

MATHEMATICS

83. In Year 6 and Year 7 standards are below those expected, though in some areas standards in Year 6 are close to the average. These standards compare well to the well below average standards reached in last year's national tests for Year 6 and indicate that standards in the upper part of the school are improving as the school's strategies for improving standards are beginning to have an impact. Higher attainers make good use of their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average and pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress.
84. Pupils in Year 7 understand how to use negative and positive co-ordinates and the majority work confidently using four quadrants. They apply their knowledge of co-ordinates well when plotting the position of a rotating quadrilateral. Pupils use protractors accurately and make sensible deductions about how a reflex angle could be measured or calculated. They calculate percentages and most are successfully learning to work with simple algebraic expressions. Most accurately draw regular polygons. However, progress is uneven and in one class is much more erratic because fewer demands are made on pupils. Overall achievement is generally satisfactory and pupils achieve well in their work on shape and space. Pupils who do not learn as quickly as others are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. Suitable work is planned for them and extra adult help is sometimes available to explain and encourage. As a result, these pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress.
85. In Year 6 pupils learn to measure perimeter and, when they are challenged to do so, make good use of their knowledge of regular polygons and their multiplication skills to calculate perimeter values. Most convert centimetres to millimetres and vice versa. The

majority of Year 5 pupils in the same classes as Year 6 pupils make good progress in these lessons. Number skills are weaker overall and although skills in mental calculation are developing, pupils do not yet have a good enough recall of basic multiplication facts. In Years 3 and 4, progress is slower because not enough is expected of pupils and, for example, they spend too much time on work, such as identifying right angles, that is too easy. In general, achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory because work given to the majority of older pupils in these mixed age classes is too easy.

86. In Years 1 and 2 progress is good because teachers are skilled in assessing what pupils already know and plan what they need to learn next. Pupils achieve well. Most put numbers to 100 in the right order and recognise simple fractions including a half and three-quarters. Most make totals of up to 20p and those Year 2 pupils who learn more quickly than others, combine coins of different value to make 50p. Those who learn more slowly make totals to 10p. The majority recognise two-dimensional shapes and learn to tell the time. They have experience of measuring length and mass and many keep note of the measurements they take. All pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematical skills and knowledge in practical investigations.
87. Throughout the school, pupils' ability to use ICT to develop their mathematical knowledge and skills is not well enough developed. Particularly from Year 3 onwards, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects including geography and science.
88. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory overall and in Years 1, 2 and 7 teaching was consistently good. In other years, teaching lacked consistency but was generally stronger in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. Overall teaching in lessons in Years 3 to 6 was satisfactory. An analysis of pupils' past work confirmed an inconsistent approach across year groups from Year 3 onwards. In Years 1 and 2, the quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good and teachers plan lessons, which build on what pupils already know and set individual learning targets. From Years 3 to 7, the use of ongoing assessments is not well enough developed and marking is not being used well enough to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. Teachers' expectations vary throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2 lessons are challenging and briskly led. Teachers set demanding work, which interests and engages pupils. They expect work in books to be neat and well presented. In general, in Years 3 to 6, expectations are too low and the rate of learning slows down. It picks up again in Year 7 when the level of challenge is raised slightly to an appropriate level.
89. All teachers take their planning from the National Numeracy Strategy. They use the format of the three-part lesson well. In some briskly led lessons the use of a mini plenary maintains the pace of learning very effectively, provides opportunity for clarification and the springboard into further learning. However, the mental starters in most lessons, even when briskly led, generally lack challenge. This lack of challenge in mental calculation exemplifies the fact that the school does not set clear benchmarks for what pupils are expected to learn in each year group. Assessment procedures and the analysis of test results are good and teachers make sound use of assessment information in their medium term planning. Day-to-day assessments are good in Years 1 and 2. This is not the case in Years 3 to 6 and targets are set inconsistently throughout the school.
90. The subject leader provides purposeful management. She monitors planning and medium term assessments plans but has not yet has sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. She has accurately identified what needs to be done to raise standards in Years 3 to 7 but has not yet been in post for long enough to have brought

about all the necessary changes. She has begun to introduce changes and has found staff to be receptive but thus far the pace of change has been too slow. Nevertheless, a satisfactory rate improvement has been made since the last inspection and standards are rising.

SCIENCE

91. Inspectors found that standards in science are below the national average at the end of Year 2 and well below at the end of Years 6 and 7. Standards are improving slowly at the end of Year 2 with more consistent teaching but have not improved sufficiently in Year 6 since the previous inspection. An analysis of the rates of achievement of pupils who stayed at the school for the four years from Years 3 to 6, a quarter of the pupils, was conducted. These pupils did not have special educational needs and almost all made at least the expected rate of progress with a fair proportion making good progress. However, insufficient headway has been made since the previous inspection in accelerating the rate of pupils' progress and levels of attainment at the end of Year 6. When compared with similar schools, standards are average at the end of Year 2 but well below average at the end of Year 6. Even given the high levels of mobility of pupils and staff changes, teachers' expectations have been too low. Inspection evidence shows that there has been some improvement this year due to more effective subject leadership and improved resources but much remains to be done in making use of assessment to plan sufficiently challenging lessons. There is little variation in the performance of boys and girls in national tests.
92. In all of the lessons seen progress was at least satisfactory and in some pupils made good gains in their learning although progress in science is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' progress in Years 3 to 7 is hampered by limited knowledge of subject vocabulary but there is good teaching of vocabulary in Years 1 and 2 and pupils understand such words as *carbohydrate*, *protein* and *vitamin*. Progress for the oldest pupils is unsatisfactory due to limited specialist resources, although the school compensates partly for this by arranging additional lessons in the summer term at the secondary school. Pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and more able pupils are not supported well enough to make satisfactory rates of progress. The exception to this is in Years 3 and 4 where the work includes good opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, to work with brighter pupils to conduct their own investigations.
93. By the end of Years 2, 6 and 7 pupils have a limited understanding of designing experiments and understanding scientific ideas. Although they have satisfactory knowledge of life processes at the end of Year 2 and correctly name the parts of plants and the main food types this knowledge is not extended sufficiently in Years 3 to 6. Pupils struggle to explain relationships between plants and animals in a habitat and to group and classify living things. At the end of Year 7, pupils have a basic understanding of cells but are unable to discuss effectively social and moral issues arising out of scientific developments. At the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory scientific vocabulary. The pupils sort and identify some properties of common materials but some of this work is repeated at insufficient depth further up the school. Pupils in Year 6 find it difficult to explain reversible and irreversible changes although they have a satisfactory knowledge of filtration and evaporation. Throughout the school pupils have limited understanding of physical processes and this is partly due to insufficiently challenging teaching and an undemanding curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were confused about basic electrical circuits and several did not realise that batteries store electricity. Pupils rarely use computers to support their work in science.

94. Pupils enjoy practical opportunities to use scientific equipment but have insufficient opportunities to use computers to further their studies and understanding. Too much of their recorded work is on simple worksheets that require little thought and explanation. This approach does little to provide opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills effectively and there are too few opportunities for the pupils to find out information for themselves. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils make good use of graphs and charts to record their work but numeracy skills are not used well enough in Years 3 to 6. The pupils behave well in lessons and are good at sharing equipment and in co-operating. They listen well to instructions and younger pupils in particular take much pleasure from using correct scientific terms.
95. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were never less than satisfactory and good when pupils were involved in making choices, making their own equipment and carrying out experiments. Teaching is better in Years 1, 2 and 7 than in the rest of the school and is satisfactory. Some of the teaching in Year 1 is excellent as the teacher inspires the pupils, has high expectations and achieves a very effective balance between instruction and opportunities for the pupils to investigate. The teaching of scientific vocabulary is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and manage behaviour effectively through good use of praise and rewards. They usually start lessons with clear explanations and the pupils are given helpful explanations so that they know what to do. In some lessons the teachers make good use of scientific vocabulary and refer to it during the lesson and this aids pupils' understanding. Lessons are planned satisfactorily but the activities are not diverse enough to meet the needs of different abilities and some pupils are not challenged. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 has been unsatisfactory and the pupils' work clearly shows that not enough is expected of them, there is too little focus on good presentation and teachers and pupils are too easily satisfied with substandard work. Marking rarely guides the pupils on how they might improve and homework is used infrequently to develop pupils' research skills. Pupils struggle to learn effectively and few work hard when recording experiments although they apply good effort in practical activities. Teachers have variable subject knowledge ranging in the lessons seen from satisfactory to good. There is now a suitable scheme of work, which has not yet been evaluated to ensure a consistency of approach between year groups. Much of the inconsistent nature of this teaching is due to the school's difficulty in appointing permanent teachers and hence promote the good systems operating in Years 1 and 2 in Years 3 to 7.
96. The subject leader has begun to make a difference and has made good improvements to resources. She monitors planning and advises her colleagues but there has not been a rigorous enough approach to evaluating performance and raising standards and this aspect is underdeveloped. Most success has been achieved in Years 1, 2 and 7 where teaching is more consistent. The school has an appropriate policy and scheme of work but it is not used well enough to identify what needs to be done next and the lack of effective and consistent assessment throughout the school also hampers the teachers in planning sufficiently demanding work. The assessment procedures in Years 1 and 2 are good and are being moved into Years 3 and 6 but this development is too slow. The school's scientific equipment is adequate but there are insufficient computer programs and a limited range of books.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Standards in art and design throughout the school are at the expected levels. Pupils are given a wide range of experiences that allows them to make use of a variety of materials, including clay, paint, different sized pencils and collage materials. This gives them effective opportunities to develop their skills and techniques. Pupils make good progress. The skills of all pupils, including those with special needs, are promoted well. The policy now covers all of the National Curriculum requirements, an improvement since that inspection.
98. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils learn to use paints with materials such as sponges to create images of stones that will enhance their monster's houses that they have built up in their classroom. They are able to do this successfully because of the careful way that teaching has built up the sequence of skills that they need to develop. The variety of experiences are enhanced as the pupils move on to combining their creative skills with designing skills. They do this with care when they find out how to make levers push and pull creatures out of an imaginary cave that they have also created. They draw and colour the background and the creatures using crayons and pencils with satisfactory control.
99. All of these experiences support the further work that the pupils create in Years 3 to 6. The focus on the work is suitably varied. There is colourful work produced on two-dimensional shapes after pupils have carefully studied the examples by Kadinsky. Coloured papers are cut accurately into a variety of shapes in Kadinsky's style. Pupils incorporate their own ideas in to this type of work. Pupils develop their observational work by using a range of different sized pencils to give effective depth and line to drawings of herbs produced from the garden. The pupils control pencils accurately as they put different amounts of pressure on the pencils to produce well-developed shading in their drawings.
100. The skills are further enhanced in Year 7 as pupils work on three-dimensional portraits on a theme that they choose for themselves. They select from a very good range of examples provided for them to stimulate their thinking. Teachers lead thoughtful discussions to help pupils consider which elements of portrait to use when drawing up their own designs. They make very individual sketches that confirm their creative maturity. They are very clear about the materials that they will need to produce their portraits from these sketches.
101. The quality of teaching is good and at times very good. The good progress made by pupils is a result of the enjoyment that they gain from the carefully thought out tasks prepared by their teachers. Teachers plan with imagination. There is good sequential learning in the tasks. Skills are developed carefully so that learning is progressive. The newly appointed subject leader has a sound basis upon which to continue improving standards. He has clear targets to continue the good work in the subject whilst making use of a wider range of media. This includes computers that are currently not used to any advantage throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards are at the expected levels in Year 2 and below average in Years 6 and 7. No lessons were observed in Years 3 to 7 because of the timetable arrangements. Work, displays and teachers' plans were scrutinised and discussions held with pupils. This analysis shows that the development of skills is an area for improvement in Years 3 to 7. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the process of designing and making a

project. They understand that even if the product is successful, they have to compare the finished article with their plans and see if improvements could be made.

103. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make models using their knowledge of sliders, levers and pivots. Eyes in masks swivel and monsters move in and out of caves as they are pulled along sliders. Pupils show that they understand the need to plan their work, mark and cut their work and assemble their components accurately. Pupils worked well in the lesson seen in these year groups. They made good progress in the development of their cutting skills and in their understanding about how the moving parts work together. Teaching in this lesson was good. Pupils were given careful instructions, were supported well and this careful approach helped pupils make good progress in the development of skills and their understanding of the design process.
104. Cutting skills are developed further in Years 3 and 4 when pupils use their skills making Greek theatre masks. In Years 5 and 6 pupils evaluated loaves of bread for taste, consistency and how the ingredients are used to produce the final product. Pupils in Year 7 design and make bird boxes. Materials such as wood and rigid plastic are measured and cut accurately and fixed securely. The designs are varied and pupils understand that the materials need to be protected from the effects of the weather. Pupils also work with food and fabrics to produce a range of projects.
105. The good progress in the development of skills in Years 1 and 2 is not shown in pupils' work in Years 3 to 7 because of the lack of teaching skills on a consistent and regular basis. The difficulties the school has in maintaining a regular teaching complement and current staff absence means that pupils' progress is not as secure as it should be. Resources are adequate. There are lots of tools but a wider variety of materials would make projects more interesting and challenging. Since the last inspection a satisfactory scheme of work has been developed.

GEOGRAPHY

106. Standards in Year 7 are below expectation because pupils have been taught very little geography. In Year 6 standards are average and, through their work on a local planning issue, pupils make good progress in understanding how the local environment can be improved, damaged or protected. In Year 2 standards are average and pupils achieve well in their study of a seaside location.
107. In Year 6 teachers make very good use of a local issue, the proposal to build an incinerator, as a focus for their lessons. As a result, pupils achieve well in their understanding of issues related to environmental change. They compare the advantages and disadvantages of landfill and incineration as methods of waste disposal. Their knowledge and understanding of places is increased through fieldwork at a local wildlife area threatened by the new development and they are able to explain how this location could change. Good links are made with learning about citizenship when pupils track the planning process. Literacy skills are appropriately used as pupils follow local press reports on the issue and they have used the Internet and CD-ROMs for research purposes. In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about present day Greece. They give suitable reasons why holidaymakers would choose to visit Greece or Crete and suggest how people might travel from England to Greece but overall, their attainment is below average because lessons are not challenging enough.
108. No direct teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2, but scrutiny of pupils past work and conversations with staff indicate that standards are average and pupils achieve well. They record seasonal changes and understand that people need to dress in clothing appropriate to the weather. They discuss journeys, including those taken by some

pupils to visit relatives in Bangladesh. Their learning becomes highly relevant as they plan and undertake a journey to the seaside. Their knowledge and understanding of places is well promoted through their observations of coastal features. On their coach journey to the coast their geographical skills are extended as they record features in the environment.

109. Little direct teaching was seen, but teachers' plans and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory and there is some evidence of good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Overall, the curriculum is appropriately organised and there are some good links to other subjects but a programme for Year 7 is not included. The long-term geography framework does not give enough prominence to building geographical skills nor does it reflect the current class organisation in plans. Assessment is not well enough developed. Pupils of different abilities cover much the same work but the style and amount of work they record differs. The scheduled curriculum review in the spring term 2003 will provide a good opportunity to update plans and improve provision. The curriculum leader has been responsible for the subject for a very short time and has yet to develop good quality plans for the subject. This includes upgrading computer programs for the subject.

HISTORY

110. Standards in Year 7 are broadly average and pupils achieve well. In Year 6 standards are below average and pupils make sound progress in understanding how people who lived in the past viewed the world. Standards in Year 2 are satisfactory and pupils are developing insight into the ways in which everyday life in the past differs from that of today. Lessons led by a historian very effectively help to bring the past alive for these pupils and their achievements are good.
111. In Year 7 pupils' work is focused on medieval times and their historical skills are well extended. Prior experience of using primary sources is well built on and pupils learn to identify and use a wide range of sources. Their knowledge about the past is well extended as they learn about William the Conqueror and the feudal system. Specialist teaching has a beneficial impact on the progress they make. Expectations of the quantity and presentation of written work are high and pupils' books reflect this.
112. In Year 5 and 6 pupils interpret information about the past and make simple deductions about Tudor perceptions of the world. They have a growing awareness that aspects of the past are represented in different ways. They talk with enthusiasm and understanding about the life of different groups of people in the Victorian era, a topic previously studied. They confidently explain differences between those times and contemporary life. Nevertheless, this enthusiasm and confidence is not reflected in written work which is somewhat sparse. In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about life in ancient Greece. In a well organised 'Greek afternoon', pupils experience the food, dress and culture of ancient Greece. In lessons, progress is insufficient because not enough is expected of pupils. When using reference books, for instance, they are not challenged to find and share specific information. Only a limited amount of written work has been done and presentation is careless.
113. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have good opportunities to explore changes in people's lives. They look at toys that were used in the past and compare them with their own toys. They gain an insight into everyday life in the past through hearing the reminiscences of a local character. A few Year 2 pupils ask relevant questions, but the majority do not yet have the language skills to frame relevant questions about the past. Despite this, most achieve well.

114. In general, teaching is satisfactory and there is a substantial amount of good teaching. High expectations and good subject knowledge are key features of the good teaching seen in Year 7. Thoughtful questioning and good parallels drawn with contemporary issues help deepen pupils' understanding of differences between past and present approaches to public health and the spread of disease including plague. A Year 5 and 6 lesson opened with a very good exposition by the teacher, clarifying and extending pupils' understanding of the known world of Tudor times. Good questioning led pupil to make accurate deductions and promoted a growing awareness that aspects of the past can be represented in different ways. Learning was good and pupils achieved well. The sensitive approach of the class teacher and the skill of a visiting actor/historian promoted good learning in Year 1 and 2. Pupils were enthralled by the knowledgeable actor/historian's performance and listened intently to his anecdotes of life at the end of the nineteenth century.
115. A notable feature of the curricular provision is the emphasis placed on a practical, experiential approach that brings the past alive for pupils, for example, visits by actor/historians, special events such as the ancient Greek afternoon and effective use of primary sources in Years 5, 6 and 7. As a result pupils are interested in history and talk enthusiastically about their past learning. Pupils have used CD-ROMs and the Internet to carry out research. The sound curriculum indicates units to be covered each year, but this does not reflect the mixed age class organisation. There is no guidance on skills to be built up each year. There is no regular assessment. A review of the history curriculum is scheduled for the Spring Term 2003 and the subject leader sees this as a good opportunity for developing his role. He has an appropriate action plan. There has been adequate improvement since the last inspection and there is growing confidence in teaching history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

116. Standards in ICT are below the expected levels in Years 2, 6 and 7. At the last inspection pupils' skills were considered to be low and in particular standards in data handling skills were adrift. These issues have been addressed well and now pupils are acquiring the basic skills at a good rate, including those for data handling. Pupils are making especially good progress in their weekly sessions in the computer suite. The newly purchased supply of laptop computers is used well to supplement the small number of machines in the suite. Learning opportunities are based on the whole curriculum set out for the subject which is another improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' now see computers as a tool for learning and use computers and the Internet for research. More work is needed before computers are used effectively across the curriculum but there is now a suitable range of software and the subject leader has very good plans to use laptops effectively in classrooms to support learning.
117. Pupils in Years 2, 6 and 7 have a growing knowledge of how to use computers. Keyboards, computer mouse or touch pad are used properly to input data and pupils alter, copy and paste text without difficulty. Young pupils are adept at controlling the cursor; older pupils do not have this well-developed facility as they have had proportionately less time using computers. In all of the lessons pupils knew how to access their programs and complete their planned tasks. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a computer program to plan a sequence of movements. Encouraged to think about their sequence by the subject leader, who taught most of the lessons seen, pupils thought hard about how to structure their series of events. As an extension task pupils were asked to develop a story based on a series of actions from one computer generated character. In Years 3 and 4 pupils answered questions about birds from a prepared database. Pupils managed this task without too much difficulty and used terms such as *record* and *field* with increasing confidence. Pupils' reading skills

slowed progress to some extent but good support helped them to search records and the whole database for information. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 continue database work with more complex searches and using word processing programs to illustrate and write about memories of September 11th, 2001. The standard of this work was at the expected levels for Year 6 pupils although other work is not yet at this level. In Year 7 pupils use spreadsheets to conduct a mathematical investigation. This was a difficult task and required pupils to know how to apply formulae to cells and plan the investigation using their knowledge of sequences and patterns.

118. The quality of teaching is good and leads to effective learning. Teachers are growing in confidence and this helps pupils to learn more productively. Proper use is made of technical terms and the teaching of new skills and new programs is systematic. Step by step instruction is given and pupils respond well by listening carefully and then apply their learning when working on the computers. Because teaching is so structured pupils learn effectively and apply their new knowledge well in the lesson. Where teaching is satisfactory pupils are not required to listen carefully and teachers do not give direct instructions to pupils to focus their attention.
119. In the two months since the subject leader took up post there has been a significant improvement in resources and in the rate of development. The subject plans are of good quality and detail the resources required, best value solutions and how to measure success. Although pupils use the Internet and CD-ROMs to research in some subjects, part of the development of the subject includes purchasing new programs to help pupils learn effectively in other subjects, such as English and mathematics.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

120. The school teaches French to pupils in Year 7 for two lessons each week, through the close cooperation of a local secondary school. No lessons were observed during the inspection but discussions were held with pupils and pupils' books were analysed. Pupils show varying levels of interest in French; their books showed that there are no differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Standards are below the expected levels for Year 7 pupils but the work in books is of a higher standard than pupils' oral skills.
121. Pupils counted in French, recited the days of the week and identified in which month their birthdays fell. When asked about the materials and equipment they use in school, pupils reply using single words to name items such as exercise and textbooks and writing implements. All of the pupils readily use the French words for animals, family members and items that might be found in their homes. Pupils count correctly to 20. Pronunciation is limited and, although pupils know the words, they talk about how difficult it is to remember French sounds. All of the pupils in the discussion group attempted French words and some of them replied to simple questions with basic French responses. Most pupils found it difficult to respond to questions posed in French but one or two of the group replied in French when asked their names and how old they were. Pupils found it easier to respond in French when questions were asked in English. Brighter pupils identify which countries use French as a national language and know where these countries are placed around the globe.
122. Learning since September has been good and the work in books shows that lessons are well targeted to meet pupils' needs. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to practise their oral skills and reinforce their learning by writing French vocabulary and simple sentences. They learn French grammar and translate from French to English and vice versa. Pupils are given regular homework and most attempt to complete

these tasks. The standard of handwriting is unsatisfactory and work is not well presented.

123. The school benefits from close links with its partner secondary school to provide French tuition.

MUSIC

124. Standards are at the expected levels in Years 2, 6 and 7 and all pupils, including those with special needs, make good progress. The judgement on standards and progress in Year 6 is based upon discussions with the subject leader and the pupils' instrumental work with a visiting teacher. The policy and scheme of work for music are now satisfactory, an improvement since the last inspection.
125. In lessons pupils show confidence and enthusiasm for their music making. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build thoughtfully upon their previous learning as they keep a steady beat to enhance their understanding of control in pulse and rhythm. The use of long and short sounds in performance skills is reinforced as they use their bodies and voices as instruments as well as a small number of percussion instruments. Their teachers initiate their learning effectively by getting them to repeat rhymes such as "Humpty Dumpty" and "Tick, tock" that they have become familiar with in the Foundation Stage classes. This increases the pupils' enjoyment as well as their skills in performance. Class teachers begin the process of appraising as they get the pupils to listen carefully in order to make appropriate comments upon one another's performance. Pupils with special needs are often given the opportunity to lead when playing instruments. This enhances their self-esteem.
126. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 build on these opportunities in their brass and recorder work with a visiting teacher. In doing this they also confirm the work that is being continued in classroom lessons. They perform with confidence and appraise thoughtfully as they consider the performances of one another. Their composition skills are based around their ability to follow notation accurately and complete successful performances. The teacher reinforces learning at every opportunity as a result of careful planning and use of effective resources.
127. The quality of teaching is good from Year 1 to 6. The recently appointed subject leader is already giving effective leadership as she is well informed and skilled. There is also a clear action plan drawn up in order to develop work successfully. This includes provision for a school choir which was initiated during the inspection week, although the pupils' response is slow to such opportunities. The enthusiasm of the subject leader is matched by a clear understanding of the importance of music making to develop pupils' skills in a number of expressive ways. There is some good use made of different forms of music in assemblies but too little opportunity to develop singing skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Standards in physical education are below average by the end of Year 6 and pupils make insufficient progress. Progress is uneven and inconsistent between classes and year groups and this hampers achievement. The school is short of resources and equipment and there is limited time available for the teaching of swimming. The uneven playground surface, outdated large equipment and lack of suitable apparatus for pupils in Years 1 and 2 significantly reduce the effectiveness of the teaching. Although the school has improved resources and opportunities for the pupils to take part in a wide variety of sports and games in the last two years much remains to be done to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There was insufficient evidence

to make a judgement on standards and teaching in Year 7 although in the lesson seen pupils responded excellently to opportunities to perform dramatically in response to invigorating and excellent teaching.

129. By the end of Year 2, pupils have average skills, knowledge and understanding and thoroughly enjoy the challenging and interesting lessons prepared for them. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good and sometimes very good progress. Pupils move in a variety of ways combining rolling, skipping, jumping and running to create well crafted sequences showing imagination and poise. The pupils work hard and concentrate very effectively. They have good balance and awareness of space. They listen very well and follow instructions showing much pleasure in demonstrating their techniques. Pupils learn well from their classmates' examples and the effective support of the teachers.
130. By the end of Year 6, pupils have limited skills and control in gymnastics. Although they are willing participants in lessons and apply good effort, the lack of previously effective teaching means that they are about a year behind pupils of a similar age. Pupils work well with partners to create sequence of balances and the teachers encourage them with effective guidance on how to improve their control. However, their movements often lack grace and refinement. Standards in swimming are below average; few pupils swim confidently and have a secure grasp of water safety. Although there is a scheme of work which is followed by the teachers the lack of rigorous assessment and consistent development of skills and techniques limits pupils' progress. There have been improvements in recent years in extending opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of games and they achieve good success against other schools in ice hockey, basketball and football. However, lessons in some classes are poorly organised and pupils are left standing around waiting for a turn because of a lack of preparation. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to take part in a residential visit and this contributes to their enjoyment and progress in outdoor pursuits.
131. Most pupils enjoy physical education lessons and work hard, applying physical and creative effort. However, several pupils regularly "forget" to bring a suitable change of clothes and show little interest in participating in lessons. Behaviour in lessons is usually good and the pupils listen well to the teachers and respond to suggestions. They are particularly pleased to demonstrate their successes and others learn from watching them as the teachers often point out good practice. On rare occasions some pupils, usually boys, spoil the activities for others by showing off and refusing to do what they are told. Staff members handle these incidents appropriately.
132. Teaching is mostly satisfactory but overall is too variable. It is often very good and sometimes excellent in Years 1 and 2 and this results in very good progress and in pupils achieving well. There are some good lessons that move at a brisk pace and provide sufficient challenge to encourage the pupils to improve. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is very good and sometimes excellent as lessons have brisk pace, opportunities for pupils to reflect on and improve their performance and high expectations of behaviour. In Years 5 and 6 the teacher gave clear instructions and insisted on the pupils making their own decisions about warming up. He checked on their progress and used pupils to demonstrate good techniques. Most lessons have a suitable time to warm up and to practise skills. In some lessons in Years 3 and 4 there is a slipshod approach and pupils are left unmotivated and bored, resulting in low levels of achievement. Teachers usually control the pupils effectively and some use praise very well to spur the pupils on. The teaching of swimming is unsatisfactory. Learning in lessons is minimal and insufficient records are kept of the pupils' progress in swimming.

133. The subject leader is recently appointed and has yet to take a firm grip on monitoring standards and progress and introducing an effective system to record and check on pupils' progress. The school makes good use of the community to support the teaching of sport and visiting specialists share their expertise. One of the school's successes has been the way in which talented pupils have been encouraged to join sports clubs following these sessions. The limited resources hamper opportunities for pupils to succeed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. Standards are below average and not high enough by the end of Years 6 and 7 as very few pupils attain the standards expected. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The school also uses national guidance for the subject, but often the work set is at too low a level and makes insufficient demands on the pupils. There has been insufficient check on planning and teaching to ensure that the work set is challenging enough. As a result, progress for all groups of pupils is unsatisfactory and not enough is expected of more able pupils. Those with English as an additional language struggle with some religious vocabulary and ideas, and pupils with special educational needs are not given sufficient support to ensure that they understand the work set for them. Two lessons were observed and in these lessons teaching in one lesson was satisfactory and good in the other. However, pupils' work and discussions show that much of the teaching is superficial and undemanding and does little to promote knowledge of world religions and the importance they have in some people's lives.
135. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a satisfactory understanding of some of the stories of Jesus and the Old Testament. More able pupils write short accounts of the story of Zaccheus and make good use of their literacy skills. Most pupils know that different cultures celebrate harvest in a variety of ways. They appreciate that people from a variety of religions worship in different ways. Their understanding of how religions impact on the lives of people and influence their behaviour is limited. Pupils know that there are codes of behaviour often based on religious principles.
136. There is some good work in Years 3 and 4 in empathising with people who have been affected by war. Pupils appreciate the significance of Remembrance Day and the symbolism of the poppy. They know some basic symbols of religion but many are confused about them and do not understand, for example, the importance of the cross to Christians. They have a simple grasp of the festival of Diwali but this work, done by Years 3 and 4, is low level and mainly colouring in pictures. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have very limited knowledge and understanding of world religions and are unsure of the importance of religion to many people. They have an insecure understanding of how different faiths worship and pray. Pupils compare the prayers of the Christian and Islamic traditions but their limited language skills hamper their competence in explaining the meanings in the prayers. Pupils in Year 7 are beginning to explore religious themes and ideas and understand that there may be differences between belief and fact. They know that Britain is a multi-faith society and that religion is significant in some people's lives. Pupils of all ages struggle to articulate their feelings, emotions and beliefs and to express clearly their knowledge of world religions.
137. Pupils in most classes appear indifferent to the subject although in Years 1 and 2 they enjoy hearing the stories of famous people such as Mary Secole and St. Paul. Behaviour in lessons is mostly good. Pupils in a Year 3 and 4 class listened attentively to a discussion about Armistice Day and then joined in a sensitive discussion about their own family bereavements. Issues such as the terrorist attack in America are

discussed and written about in English; these connections between subjects help pupils to tackle sensitive issues.

138. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and although there is an over-reliance on simple worksheets there are opportunities for the pupils to discuss relevant issues and to learn about significant religious personalities. Lessons are planned satisfactorily although the work set for different ages and abilities of pupils is often the same and this results in some lack of challenge for the more able. The impact of teaching on pupils' learning, as seen in pupils' books, in Years 3 to 7 is unsatisfactory as the planning is weak and does not focus strongly enough on meeting the diverse needs of the pupils. Teachers have low expectations and pupils complete very little work and most of it is untidy, poorly presented and unfinished. There are exceptions and in some of the lessons seen the teaching was good as the teachers focused on helping the pupils to understand different forms of praying. However, because pupils have very limited knowledge of the subject and have not been taught consistently well their learning is unsatisfactory. Not enough opportunities are provided for the pupils to share their own beliefs and traditions to help their classmates understand significant religious occasions, festivals and worship. The limited range of resources available also contributes to uneven progress and unsatisfactory learning. Pupils' work is rarely marked and elementary mistakes and misunderstandings are not corrected.
139. The recently appointed subject leader is currently absent from school due to illness. The subject is not monitored and evaluated well enough and although sufficient time is allocated to religious education the lessons are slow paced and teaching is not rigorous enough so that pupils are unproductive. There is no assessment of the subject to guide teachers on planning their work and this results in identical work being set for different ages and abilities in the same classes.