

INSPECTION REPORT

BEECH HILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 131089

Acting headteacher: Mr J. Williams

Reporting inspector: Mrs M.E. Cooper
15175

Dates of inspection: 2nd - 6th June 2003

Inspection number: 248823

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Dunstable Road
Luton

Postcode: LU4 8BW

Telephone number: 01582 429403

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Miss B. Bond

Date of previous inspection: 19th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15175	Margaret Cooper	Registered inspector	History Music Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
11096	Margaret Davie	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
6169	Melvyn Bradshaw	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
22967	Muriel Griffiths	Team inspector	English Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30144	Edgar Hastings	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Special educational needs	
30266	Hilma Rask	Team inspector	Art and design Geography Foundation Stage	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a much larger than average primary school located in an urban district of Luton. There are 454 boys and girls aged from four to eleven on roll. Almost all pupils are from Muslim families and for the vast majority (99.6 per cent) English is an additional language. The predominant first languages are Sylhetti, Pahari, Urdu and Panjabi. Almost all children have very limited skills in speaking English when they join reception, and nearly half of the pupils in the school are at an early stage of learning English. When children enter reception they are attaining well below average standards in the areas of learning for children of their age. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (44 per cent) is well above average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (23.1 per cent) is similar to that found nationally. Special educational needs are predominantly moderate learning, and speech and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils who are subjects of statements of special educational need (0.6 per cent) is below average. The school has recently undergone a turbulent period. During this time there was a high turnover of staff, the proportion of pupils who left at times other than the normal time of transfer was above average, and the headteacher left during the autumn term. The school has experienced difficulties in recruiting and retaining suitably experienced teachers. For the past six months the school has been managed on a temporary basis by the headteacher and senior staff of a nearby beacon¹ school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress but, despite satisfactory teaching, standards overall remain well below average at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils currently in Year 6 have not achieved as well as they should in mathematics or science since they entered the school, although learning in these subjects is now satisfactory. The school is managed satisfactorily. Leadership of the beacon school team is very good and has played a key role in recent months in achieving good relationships at all levels and improving the climate for learning within the school. As a result, pupils now learn at a better rate, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Pupils also demonstrate positive attitudes, values and personal development, which are a significant strength. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well
- Parents have positive views of the school as the result of good efforts to improve links
- Appropriate areas for development are identified and there is a strong commitment to school improvement
- Relationships with partner institutions are very constructive, particularly with the beacon school

What could be improved

- Achievement in mathematics and science
- Consistency of progress between classes and year groups in areas of learning and subjects
- Use of assessment information to guide planning and teaching
- Effectiveness of the governors
- Pupils' rate of attendance and punctuality

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection in 1998. This is seen, for example, in lower standards in some subjects, particularly science. Additionally, some of the priorities identified for improvement have not been addressed successfully, including the governors' role in monitoring the school's performance. This lack of improvement is related to the period of turbulence during which there was a decline in aspects of the school's work, including standards in national test

¹ Beacon schools are recognised for their excellence and receive additional funding to share their good practice with other schools

results, pupils' behaviour, and the quality of teaching. However, there has been substantial improvement in the last six months. This is seen, for example, in better standards of pupil behaviour and improved teaching. Staff turnover has been reduced and provision in many subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science, has improved. There has been good development also in school policies and procedures and in the management of subjects. There have also been improvements in involving the community and parents in pupils' learning, as well as in financial management. As a result, the school is well placed to continue improving at a good rate.

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

Pupils make sound overall gains in their attainment whilst they are in the school, although standards remain well below average at the end of Year 6. Where the grade is E*, their performance is in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. The rate of improvement in test results at the age of eleven has been broadly in line with the national trend over the last five years, although they have declined somewhat since 2000. The school did not achieve its targets for English and mathematics although these were suitably challenging. In the 2002 national tests at seven, standards were well below average in writing, and very low in reading and mathematics. In all three tests standards were below average when compared to similar schools.

Inspection evidence shows that children make satisfactory progress in reception although standards remain well below average when they enter Year 1. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards remain well below average in English, mathematics and science. They are below average in geography, history and information and communication technology (ICT) and broadly average in all other subjects. Pupils at an early stage of learning English make sound progress although their needs are not met well in all lessons. When account is taken of the proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English, pupils achieve satisfactorily to attain the standards they do in English. However, standards in mathematics and science could be higher and underachievement in these subjects is linked to shortcomings in planning and in teachers' expectations in the past. As the result of recent improvements in planning and teaching, pupils now make satisfactory progress in mathematics and science lessons. Because of shortcomings in planning, there are variations in progress between classes and year groups in areas of learning and some subjects. Very low attendance and poor punctuality also limit the progress of some pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are interested in lessons and try hard in their tasks
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond to the school's high expectations of them and behave well both in lessons and around the school
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to others. They are friendly and respectful to adults and to each other. Boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic

	groups work in harmony together
Attendance	Poor compared to other schools. This is partly linked to extended visits to countries of family origin. There are also a number of pupils who regularly arrive late in the morning

Pupils' positive attitudes to their school activities and their good relationships have a beneficial effect on their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	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 both teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school and promotes sound progress. Teachers have secure subject expertise. They plan lessons to help pupils make gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding but expectations of what pupils can achieve could be higher. In some lessons, tasks are not matched closely to the needs of all groups including higher attainers and pupils at an early stage of learning English. Teachers manage pupils well and establish good relationships in classes. As a result, pupils develop confidence and show interest in their lessons. They work conscientiously to carry out their tasks correctly. Classroom assistants are used effectively and their support makes a positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly where they are able to support pupils at an early stage of learning English by giving explanations in community languages.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides an appropriate quality and range of learning experiences for pupils throughout the school. Planning does not ensure pupils in all classes and year groups make consistent progress in areas of learning and subjects
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress towards the targets on their individual education plans (IEPs) and in their learning across the curriculum
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Appropriate account is taken of the needs of pupils whose mother tongue is not English, so they are able to make similar progress to others. In some lessons, the needs of pupils at an early stage of learning English are not met effectively
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school promotes each of these areas of development well, and this shows some improvement since the previous inspection
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a safe and secure environment. Teaching and support staff know their pupils well and provide a level of care that promotes the confidence and positive attitudes of pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups to their experiences. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory, but insufficient use is made of assessment information to guide planning and teaching

Pupils benefit from experiences that enrich the curriculum such as visits to places of educational interest and opportunities to take part in performances. There are good arrangements for personal, social and health education (PSHE), as well as the contribution of the community to pupils' learning. Relationships with partner institutions have a positive impact on the work of the school, particularly

through the beacon school support in recent months. The good number of staff who speak community languages helps promote equality of opportunities for pupils. There are good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour but procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. The school is making significant efforts to develop its links with parents who hold positive views of the school. There are shortcomings in the quality of information provided for parents, including written information about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The very good leadership of the acting headteacher and his team has resulted in the significant improvements achieved in recent months
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are supportive of the acting headteacher and staff, but they have not monitored the work of the school effectively and do not fulfil their statutory responsibilities
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established sound arrangements for monitoring teaching, standards and progress although they are not yet fully in place in all subjects. Analysis of test results is used to identify strengths and areas for development within English, mathematics and science but not to monitor the progress of different groups
The strategic use of resources	As a result of recent improvements, the school now makes satisfactory use of its resources to improve the quality of education provided

The roles of subject co-ordinators and other posts of responsibility within the school show recent improvement and plans are in hand for further development. Teaching and other staff demonstrate a strong commitment to school improvement and a good capacity to succeed. The school is well provided with teaching and support staff to meet the needs of its curriculum and pupils. In some cases, however, the allocation of support staff to groups does not meet pupils' needs effectively.

Although there is no outdoor grassed area for physical education (PE), the school is well-maintained and provides spacious accommodation, including ICT suites, music rooms and libraries. There is a sound quantity and range of learning resources. The school gives due attention to seeking value for money when making spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school and the experiences they are given • Teaching is good • Behaviour is good • Children make good progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work to do at home • Information about how their children are getting on • The extent to which the school works with parents • The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection agrees with parents' views about their children's positive attitudes towards school and good behaviour but finds teaching and progress to be satisfactory rather than good. Inspection finds the amount of homework and range of extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory. However, the inspection agrees there are shortcomings in the information provided in pupils' written reports although the school is making improvements in this year's reports. The school has made greater efforts recently to work

closely with parents and these links are now satisfactory. Some parents expressed their appreciation of the improvements they have noticed in recent months.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment when they enter the reception year is well below average, particularly in their communication, language and literacy, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The vast majority are at an early stage of speaking English. They make sound progress whilst in reception although standards are still well below average by the time they enter Year 1. However, standards are slightly higher in both their personal, social and emotional development and in physical development.
2. Results in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in writing and very low in reading and mathematics. Standards in all three tests were below average when compared to similar schools. Teachers' assessment of science also shows very low standards in this subject. The trend in performance has been weakest in reading and boys have performed somewhat better than girls.
3. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, results were very low in English, mathematics and science compared to schools nationally. When compared to similar schools, however, standards in English and mathematics are below average although science results are still well below average. Despite these low standards, a small proportion of pupils attained above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Taken over three years, boys have performed better than girls, particularly in mathematics. The rate of improvement in test results over the past five years has been broadly in line with the national trend but with some decline in the past two years.
4. The evidence from inspection shows a similar but improving picture. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average at the ages of seven and eleven and pupils have not achieved as well as they should in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. However, as the result of improved teaching, pupils now make consistently satisfactory progress in these subjects and better progress in some lessons. These improvements have been too recent to make a marked impact on standards attained by pupils currently in Years 2 and 6. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects. By the ages of seven and eleven they attain below average standards in geography, history and ICT. However, they attain the standards expected in art and design, design and technology (DT), music, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE).
5. The achievement of all groups is satisfactory overall. Assessment information is not used effectively to match learning and support to pupils' needs to ensure all groups achieve well. There are also differences in the rate of progress between classes and year groups in areas of learning and subjects because of shortcomings in planning. This is seen, for example, in geography and history where pupils make better progress in some classes than in others. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. They are often helped individually or in small groups by learning support staff and this enables them to make sound and sometimes good progress. This is because they are provided with work that is matched to their needs and targets in IEPs. Inspection evidence does not show any significant difference in the relative achievement of boys and girls although boys are allowed to dominate

discussions in some lessons. The LEA² provides assessment information about the relative achievement of boys and girls from the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities. Although the school carries out an analysis of this information, it is not used effectively to compare, monitor and improve the progress of these groups within the school. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make sound progress in developing their knowledge and skills in speaking, reading and writing in English and also in their learning across the curriculum. Higher, average and lower attaining pupils all achieve equally well because teachers take account of their differing needs when planning lessons. The school is in the early stages of compiling a register of gifted and talented pupils in order to monitor the extent to which their needs are met.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. The high standards found at the time of the last inspection have been successfully maintained, although behaviour deteriorated during a recent period of high staff turnover. It has improved significantly in the last six months because of more stable staffing, consistent methods of dealing with poor behaviour and early involvement of parents.
7. Pupils' good attitudes to the school are a significant strength. Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and *would come at the weekend if they could!* Pupils are keen to do well in lessons and enthusiastic about activities the school offers. They are dedicated to doing well in sporting competitions, having recently won a cricket match played against another local team. Most understand how important it is to work hard in lessons and put considerable effort into all they do. This was clearly shown in a Year 6 PE lesson in which pupils practised their cricket skills. They enjoyed the activity and thought carefully about what they needed to do to improve their ball skills.
8. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are friendly and generally very polite as seen, for example, when they hold doors open for adults and each other. They are particularly friendly to visitors, keen to talk about school and their interests and a pleasure to spend time with. There was no evidence to suggest that relationships between pupils of different backgrounds are anything other than extremely harmonious. In lessons, their good behaviour means that they listen carefully to their teachers and try hard to do what they are asked. A minority, however, do find it very difficult to get on with their work without adult intervention, sometimes because of their individual learning needs and sometimes because their understanding of English is not sufficient to allow them to work independently. Pupils behave well in the dining hall and on the playground. Boys and girls mix well when paired for activities by their teachers. Instances of bullying are rare and pupils feel secure that procedures are in place to deal with any that occur. There have been no recent exclusions.
9. Personal development and relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils respond positively to the jobs and responsibilities they are given, for example for delivering milk and registers and the many opportunities they have in their classrooms to be managers for their table groups, books or other resources. They are enthusiastic about the opportunities the school council gives them to have a say in day to day procedures and are currently following up their own excellent idea of setting up a snack shop to sell drinks to children during the hot weather.

² Local education authority

10. Staff are very good role models in the way they deal with children and each other. Pupils respond well to their efforts to help them learn to concentrate and persevere with their tasks, in order to help their learning. In a small number of classes girls are very quiet and hardly participate in question and answer sessions, although most teachers are aware of the need to draw them out to ensure their full participation. Pupils with special educational needs feel comfortable and valued in school and are developing positive attitudes because of the quality of the support they receive. Pupils in Year 2 are very sensitive to the needs of a pupil who visits regularly from a nearby special school, eagerly welcoming him into their midst and helping him to participate fully in all activities.
11. Attendance is very low in comparison to other schools and unauthorised absence is well above the national average. Whilst a good proportion of absence is attributable to illness, a significant factor is the many families who take their children on extended visits abroad. This is despite the school's efforts to make parents aware of the impact this has on their children's achievements. Additionally, too many pupils arrive late in the morning, particularly by five or ten minutes, which means they do not make a good start to their day. Strict guidelines are followed for authorising absences. However, too many parents keep their children away from school for reasons that cannot be sanctioned, for example to go to the airport to pick up or drop off visitors.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. The great majority of lessons are at least satisfactory and almost half are good. The small proportion of lessons in which teaching is unsatisfactory has been reduced since the previous inspection. There has been significant development in many aspects of teaching in recent months as the result of further training and support for teachers. This is seen, for example, in the teaching of literacy and numeracy.
13. Teaching in the reception year is satisfactory and promotes sound progress. During the inspection period two reception classes were taught by temporary staff owing to the absence of permanent teachers. All staff are hard working and relationships are good. In too many lessons, however, the work children are given does not fully take account of what they can already do. This hinders the rate of progress.
14. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 with no significant variation between subjects. Teachers plan lessons carefully and explain to pupils what they are expected to achieve during the lesson so they understand the purpose of their tasks. Teachers provide work at different levels of difficulty for higher and lower attainers. However, assessment information is not used effectively to ensure work is matched well to the needs of all groups. Teachers manage pupils skilfully and establish good relationships in classes. As a result, no time is wasted by poor behaviour, and pupils work confidently and productively. Classroom support staff also relate well to pupils and work closely with class teachers. Their support has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Although most teachers take care to ensure girls answer questions and contribute their ideas in class, some allow boys to dominate class discussions and this limits girls' progress.
15. There has been recent training in teaching pupils whose mother tongue is not English. As a result, teaching meets their needs. Careful attention is given to helping them learn specific subject vocabulary. In a good example, the story of *The Three Little Pigs* was brought to life very effectively for Year 1 pupils by the use of toy animals and puppets and by the involvement of the classroom assistant and pupils in role-play. As

a result pupils thoroughly understood and enjoyed the characters and plot. In a minority of lessons, teaching does not meet the needs of pupils at an early stage of learning English. For instance, pupils spend too long listening or work is inappropriate for pupils' current competence in speaking and reading English.

16. The overall quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, although there are occasions in small groups or individual work when teaching is good. In the great majority of cases, IEPs are appropriate and used well to ensure work is matched to individual needs and that satisfactory levels of support are provided. Occasionally work in withdrawal groups is not equally appropriate for all members of the group.

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

17. Overall the school provides a sound range of learning opportunities for its pupils, enriched by visits, special events and extra curricular activities. The curriculum for reception children is broadly satisfactory and takes appropriate account of the areas of learning for children at this stage. There is an appropriate emphasis on personal and social development, literacy and numeracy. The school provides a broad curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 that meets statutory requirements. Provision for RE meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school allocates a considerable amount of time to English in the drive to raise standards.
18. Curriculum planning is based largely on national guidance but does not provide sufficient guidance to ensure pupils build steadily on what they have already learned as they move through the school.
19. The national numeracy strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. The literacy strategy is in place and, as a result of recent additional training, is now beginning to have an impact on pupils' rate of progress. The curriculum takes due account of the ethnic minority groups within the school community as seen, for example, when pupils hear music and learn about instruments from the Indian sub-continent. Additionally, the curriculum meets the needs of pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue.
20. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for pupils with special educational needs that meets their requirements as set out in IEPs and statements of special educational need. Targets are specific to their needs, achievable and regularly reviewed.
21. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). It promotes understanding of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and gives them the knowledge and skills to make healthy and informed choices now and in their later lives. As part of the PSHE curriculum, there was a visit from a 'Health' bus that promoted education about drugs. Pupils' awareness of keeping safe was enhanced by a visit from the 'Road Safety' theatre.
22. The school has made good links with the community. School celebrations reflect community interests such as the party held to celebrate Eid and also activities at Diwali and Christmas. Harvest thanksgiving gives opportunities for involvement in the community and visitors from a number of churches visit the school, which gives pupils firsthand experience of different faiths.

23. Relationships between the school and partner institutions are very good. The constructive relationship with the beacon school is having a positive impact on many aspects of the school's work. There are also good links with other schools including specialist drama teachers from a local school who visit weekly and help pupils put on a production of *Oliver*.
24. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes a significant contribution to their personal development. This remains a strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual awareness is promoted well in many lessons. For example, reception children looked in wonder as their teacher brought in a 'special visitor', a teddy bear almost as big as them, to take part in their 'circle'³ time.
25. A clear moral code remains evident in the life and work of the school. Rules are displayed in classrooms and many of the pupils have been involved in deciding what they will be. They have a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils in Year 2 discuss why fairness is important and pupils in Year 6 explore the moral dilemma of whether a lie is really a lie if it is just a thought in your head.
26. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to collaborate in lessons to encourage their social development. Visits from a pupil who attends a nearby special school help them gain an understanding of life confined to a wheelchair. They also take part in charitable activities and are keen fundraisers. They participate in non-uniform days to raise money for Children in Need, McMillan Cancer Research and Red Nose Day. Extra-curricular clubs give them a similar opportunity to mix with pupils of different ages in the school. The school's involvement in drama workshops with staff from a neighbouring school is giving a group of Year 4 pupils the opportunity to take part in a public performance in a small local theatre.
27. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to celebrate their own and other cultures in lessons and other activities. In RE for example pupils learn about Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and in assembly celebrate many major religious festivals such as Eid and Christmas. The annual Eid party is very well supported by parents and pupils and often includes a fashion show of traditional clothing. The whole school community is given a holiday at Eid.
28. Pupils experience music from around the world, for example listening to African drummers and Indian music. The words to many familiar songs and hymns are changed into Urdu and Bengali, particularly to help the younger children remember them, but also to remove Christian references where these are inappropriate. Many resources reflect pupils' cultural diversity. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson the teacher used a magnificently decorated Asian shadow puppet to show them how a rod puppet works. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about both their own and British culture, for example by visits to places such as a Victorian school, a local Mosque and a museum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. All staff take the care of pupils seriously. Teaching and support staff know their pupils very well and the school's ethos provides a supportive environment. Pupils' academic and personal support is satisfactory. Any worries or concerns are shared and dealt with speedily. Most policies are in place, but recent staff turbulence has

³ Times when pupils sit in a circle and share their ideas and feelings

meant that a number of required policies are missing including, for example, policies for dealing with drug related incidents and promoting racial equality.

30. There are weaknesses in child protection procedures because not all staff are trained. The building and grounds are regularly checked to ensure a safe environment and are maintained to the highest standards by the site managers. Lunchtimes are well organised and pleasant. There is a very high number of fully qualified first aiders in the school.
31. Procedures to ensure that pupils behave well are good. Teachers are usually adept at creating a good learning environment in their lessons and this, combined with pupils' natural self-discipline means that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are rare. The more settled staffing situation which now exists has had a very positive effect on pupils' behaviour.
32. Procedures to promote good attendance are unsatisfactory and standards have fallen over the past year. Although attendance figures are regularly monitored not enough is being done to analyse whole school attendance and report the outcomes to staff, parents and governors. Attendance rates are reported in an unhelpful manner in both the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. Some procedures previously in place, such as using the family support workers to make home visits, have fallen by the wayside. Procedures do not include first day contact with parents who have not notified the school about their children's absence. Good efforts are being made to discourage parents from taking their children on extended visits abroad. The school provides information produced by the LEA in community languages and has meetings with all parents who are planning a long holiday to remind them of the impact this will have on their child's education.
33. The school has appropriate arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs and monitoring their progress. Regular reviews are carried out and progress is carefully monitored. The school has good arrangements with external agencies and makes good use of external specialist advice. The school provides a good level of support to parents to enable their children's needs to be met, including pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
34. The school has sound procedures for monitoring pupils' developing competence in speaking, reading and writing in English. The newly appointed co-ordinator for pupils who speak English as an additional language has plans to introduce individual language plans for those in the early stages of learning English to achieve greater consistency in meeting individual needs.
35. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessing the attainment of pupils throughout the school. Arrangements for tracking progress are not yet effective although there has been significant recent improvement. Target setting is beginning to be used. Assessment information is not yet being used to plan what children will learn next. There is insufficient analysis and use made of all the available data, including information on gender and ethnicity, to ensure that all groups of pupils benefit from what the school offers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Only a small number of parents attended the meeting prior to the inspection and returned the questionnaire. Their views of the school are good. They are pleased with the recent improvements made by the acting headteacher and feel confident that the new headteacher will provide much needed stability and continue with improvements.

They are aware that the standards are low and would like to be able to give their children more help at home. A number of parents have justifiable concerns about how well they are kept informed about their children's progress and how closely the school works with them.

37. Good efforts are being made by the school to improve parents' confidence in supporting their children's learning. A welcoming family room has been created and has had a positive impact on involving parents in the life of the school. A group of family workers and assistants who have high levels of commitment to the local community are providing an extensive programme of activities in order to promote pupils' learning. There are regular parent toddler groups, a 'drop-in' centre and talks by various professionals such as the local health visitor. Staff who speak children's home languages visit them in their homes during their first term in school so they can be assessed in their own environment. Before children start in reception, parents are invited to take part in the 'Flying Start' transition programme either in school or in their homes. This useful introduction to learning helps familiarise parents and their children with the school. The community rooms are used for a variety of popular classes such as sewing, computing, childcare and English language. The school is aware, however, that these good efforts are only benefiting a small number of parents and that it needs to find ways to involve parents who are harder to reach, particularly as pupils get older.
38. Interpreters are always on hand at parent consultation evenings as well as for any other meetings for parents. The quality of written information that is sent home is unsatisfactory. Last year's annual written reports did not give parents enough detail to help them understand how well their children are doing, did not communicate targets for future learning nor gave a record of attendance which is required. However, plans are underway to improve the pupils' written reports to be given to parents this term. The prospectus does not provide information about the full range of school and national results in national tests. The governors' annual report is also missing this information as well as other required detail. Too little information is available in community languages and insufficient information is made available to parents who find written communications difficult, particularly about what their children are learning.
39. The school provides a good level of support to parents whose children have special educational needs through links with the local support services. Parents are well briefed with information for annual reviews. All parents are invited to contribute to their children's IEPs and they receive copies when they are completed. The school is quick to alert parents to any concerns they may have and takes parents' views into account.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The school is satisfactorily led and managed under the current temporary arrangements. The quality of leadership provided by the acting headteacher and his team is very good. His immediate assessment of the school's weaknesses and subsequent vigorous action to bring about improvement has resulted in significant progress over the past six months. Notable successes have been the improvement in staff morale, team spirit and the desire to see the school succeed. These have resulted in improved teaching and learning. The management of key staff, in particular subject co-ordinators, is satisfactory and improving. The improvement is evident in the number of new policies now in place. The school's aims relate mainly to

pastoral and personal aspects of children's education and are reflected well in its work. The aims do not focus sufficiently on helping children to achieve the highest possible standards.

41. The acting headteacher is receiving energetic support from staff as he attempts to improve management throughout the school. Delegation of responsibilities to senior managers and co-ordinators has been clarified, and much of their work is now satisfactory. The management of provision for special educational needs has improved and plans are in hand to improve the co-ordination of help for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
42. The governing body is keen to see the school improve and, under the direction of the acting headteacher, has set up relevant committees to monitor its work. Governors are enthusiastic and now understand some of the areas in which they must improve. At the present time, not all statutory requirements are met. In the past, governors have had too little involvement in helping to set a clear educational direction for improvement. This weakness, identified at the time of the previous inspection, remains. Governors have been insufficiently well informed to help them become effective in their role within the school. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths but is much less clear about the depth and range of weaknesses.
43. The school's procedures for strategic planning are only now being placed on a secure footing. Arrangements for the appraisal and performance management of staff have been recently put in place and have led to good improvements in both teaching and pupils' learning. Consistent expectations have led to improved behaviour of pupils. In a short time, the school has identified relevant priorities for improvement. Action taken to meet the school's targets has improved and is now satisfactory. Overall, the scale of the changes in recent months demonstrates a good, and shared commitment on the part of the staff to improve the school.
44. Up until very recently, financial control within the school has been weak. Significant amounts of money have been received to support the education of many different groups in the school. Much of this money has been used to employ new staff, but without a clear strategic purpose, or consideration of the long-term consequences. Financial planning and the strategic use of resources have been unsatisfactory. The governing body has recently established a finance committee to oversee and monitor the school's finances. It is anticipated that the school will have a secure financial base within the next twelve months. Financial management is now secure. The most recent auditors' report identified a large number of weaknesses in the school's financial control. After a period of limited progress, action is now being taken to deal with the concerns identified.
45. Specific grants, for example those to support special educational needs or pupils whose mother tongue is not English, are used for their designated purpose, but not necessarily to best effect. This is because thought was not given to directing it towards a specific target. Satisfactory account is taken of the principles of best value when making spending decisions although insufficient account is taken of seeking parents' views on school improvement. A start has been made in comparing the school's performance with one with similar intake. The school receives a large budget that was not used strategically to help ensure pupils' progress. The changes put in place, and the improvements made this year, mean that the school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

46. The staffing level is good. The improvement in staff morale and teamwork has helped to reduce teacher turnover this year. The school has made a firm decision to employ a high number of staff but has not taken steps to evaluate the value for money of this initiative. Owing to the difficulties of recruitment, several classes are taken by either unqualified teachers employed as instructors or teachers trained overseas. However, recent training and support ensure pupils in these classes are not disadvantaged.
47. Accommodation is very good. Classrooms are of at least a satisfactory size for the current number of pupils. Many rooms are available that enhance the opportunities for teaching in small groups and provide space for parents and the community to use the school. The three halls provide good accommodation for PE, assemblies and drama. Music rooms and computer suites are also available. Although there is no field available, playgrounds can be used for outdoor PE. The secure outdoor area for reception children is adequate although not easily accessible by all relevant classes. The new staff room and covered link between the former infant and junior schools have helped considerably in creating teamwork and improving staff co-operation and morale. The site managers and cleaning staff make a positive and effective contribution to ensuring that children and staff have the benefit of a well-kept and clean learning environment. The school's resources are satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:
- (1) Improve achievement in mathematics and science by:
 - using assessment information to guide planning and teaching to ensure work is matched well to the needs of all pupils
 - setting individual mathematics targets for pupils
 - developing curriculum planning for science, particularly for investigative skills
 - increasing curriculum time for science at Key Stage 1
(Paragraph numbers 4, 14, 18, 35, 67, 71-72, 73, 75-77)
 - (2) Achieve more consistent progress between classes and year groups in areas of learning and subjects by:
 - ensuring medium-term planning gives sufficient guidance to help teachers, including temporary staff, plan lessons that promote consistent progress in the key elements of all areas of learning and subjects over time
 - continuing recently introduced arrangements for co-ordinators to monitor provision and progress in their subjects in order to identify and act upon areas requiring improvement
(Paragraph numbers 5, 13, 18, 41, 77, 90-91, 95)
 - (3) Use assessment information more effectively by:
 - improving arrangements for assessing and recording individual attainment and progress in the areas of learning in reception and in foundation subjects at Key Stages 1 and 2
 - using assessment information to ensure tasks are suitably challenging for pupils at differing stages of learning, to help all groups build on their existing skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate
 - implementing current proposals for individual language plans for pupils at an early stage of learning English to achieve greater consistency in meeting individual needs

- monitoring the relative progress of different groups, including by gender and ethnicity, and targeting the school's resources more closely to identified needs, particularly the use of support staff
(Paragraph numbers 5, 13-14, 34-35, 45, 66, 72, 77, 101)
- (4) Improve the role of the governing body by:
- ensuring all statutory requirements are met
 - establishing systems whereby governors are better informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses
 - increasing governors' involvement in school development planning so they have a clear role in shaping the school's direction and improvement
(Paragraph numbers 29, 38, 42)
- (5) Improve the rate of attendance and punctuality by:
- working closely with the education welfare officer to monitor whole school attendance and report outcomes to parents as required
 - making greater use of family workers to work with families whose children have a poor record of attendance and punctuality
 - continuing the good efforts being made to reduce unauthorised absence, including extended visits abroad
(Paragraph number 33)

Other minor issues which should be considered by the school

- a) Continue current rigorous efforts to remove the budget deficit as soon as possible
- b) Improve information provided for parents

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	40	42	4	0	0
Percentage	0	2	45	48	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll		YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		454
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		201

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs		YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		105

English as an additional language		No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language		452

Pupil mobility in the last school year		No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission		34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving		48

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
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	39	32	71

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	27	32
	Girls	20	22	21
	Total	40	49	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	56 (50)	69 (59)	75 (68)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	26
	Girls	21	22	20
	Total	42	47	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (50)	66 (61)	65 (43)
	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	44	27	71

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	21	20
	Girls	11	9	9
	Total	28	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (56)	42 (42)	40 (59)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	33	33
	Girls	19	15	16
	Total	48	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (51)	70 (56)	70 (51)
	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	0	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	183	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	239	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	7	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	8	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	28.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	508

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	1505860
Total expenditure	1526773
Expenditure per pupil	3355
Balance brought forward from previous year	7686
Balance carried forward to next year	-13227

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	20.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	19

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
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	454
Number of questionnaires returned	120

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	1	1	2
My child is making good progress in school.	47	43	2	3	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	34	2	2	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	36	15	8	4
The teaching is good.	56	33	0	2	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	31	17	5	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	40	5	2	13
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	39	3	1	8
The school works closely with parents.	43	35	13	3	6
The school is well led and managed.	49	30	3	3	16
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	35	0	2	14
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	26	10	4	18

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by a significant number of parents

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

49. At the time of the last inspection the school provided a nursery offering part-time places for the majority of pupils. The nursery class closed in 2001 when private pre-school provision was established on the site. The majority of children who enter the reception classes have attended either the pre-school on site or another nearby. However, a minority of children have had no pre-school experience before starting school. The school now provides seventy-five full-time places in three reception classes, one of which is a mixed reception and Year 1 grouping. Children enter the reception classes in the autumn term during the year in which they will be five. Although only two of the reception classrooms are located in close proximity to one another in the building, all children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor area and the school plans to further develop this space.
50. Teaching is satisfactory in all areas of learning. Despite sound support for English language learning during lessons, by the end of the reception year overall standards in the important areas of communication, language and literacy, and mathematics are well below expectations for this age. Standards are below in physical development and personal, social and emotional development and well below in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Children with special educational needs are appropriately supported and make the same satisfactory progress during lessons as their classmates.

Personal, social and emotional development

51. Teaching in this area is consistently sound and sometimes good. For example it is good during regular 'circle' times when children are encouraged to take turns and listen to one another. Staff consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviour and emphasise the difference between right and wrong behaviour. As a result children usually behave well in lessons and are eager to take part in activities. However, many children are still learning to share and need much support to share equipment, such as in the sand tray. In the outdoor area, although children co-operate at times, for example whilst using the double tricycles or construction area, most do not engage in more complex play together and many still choose to play alone, alongside their friends. During self-chosen activities in the classroom many children concentrate for an extended time during, for example, exploratory water play. However, the progress of other children is limited by their moving rapidly from one activity to another without maintaining their concentration and this is not sufficiently monitored by the staff, despite some focused child observations by the nursery nurses.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Teaching in this area is satisfactory overall and children gain experience in their use of English through the use of stories, discussion and first hand activities. Despite making satisfactory progress, overall standards are well below the expected level by the end of the reception year. Many of the staff are bi-lingual and this has a positive impact on children's learning in the classroom, as adults explain new concepts and vocabulary in children's community languages. Children gain from their regular opportunities to hear stories in their home languages at school. This positive recognition and use of children's home languages is an improvement since the time

of the last inspection. Staff take care to talk alongside everyday activities to support the children's fluency in English and much visual support is provided in lessons to support understanding. Good use is also made of songs and rhymes with repeating language structures to develop English language learning.

53. Early reading skills are encouraged through the use of a structured reading scheme and children take books home on a regular basis. Children show growing awareness that print carries meaning and develop appropriate early book handling skills. A minority of the most able children start to recognise some of the individual words by sight from their reading books. Although initial sounds of letters are regularly taught, the approach used is not always meaningful for the children who too often record isolated words on worksheets. Staff demonstrate how to write appropriately although many children form their letters incorrectly and need more support in letter formation and handwriting. A small minority of children attempt independent early writing, show awareness of recognisable letters, and write their names with a degree of accuracy. Many other children are still experimenting with mark-making or trace over adult writing and attempt to copy some of this. There is insufficient provision for writing activities.

Mathematical development

54. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some good lessons were observed during the inspection. In one lesson, the teacher made very good use of a large puppet to encourage children to 'quack' numbers. Children also made good gains in learning about simple addition or basic counting matched to their learning needs, through the use of well-structured games that the teacher had brought in and which provided good mathematical language development opportunities. Staff take care to ensure that tasks are appropriate to the children's level of understanding and they provide daily opportunities for the children to count up to twenty together, explore new mathematical vocabulary and to practise recording numerals.
55. Although children match different basic shapes with accuracy, many are uncertain about the correct names of these. Many children are still consolidating their knowledge of numbers and starting to match objects and numerals of up to six items with increasing accuracy. Some of the more able children accurately count up to six items, make sets to find different ways to make six and then record this. A satisfactory range of practical mathematical activities is provided for the children. By the end of reception, the majority of children are still working towards the expected standards and developing their early mathematical language and concepts.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. Teaching in this area is satisfactory and children have regular opportunities to undertake a range of self-chosen activities to develop their knowledge and understanding in a range of different areas. Standards are well below the expected level by the end of the reception year although children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Through a focus on living things, children plant beans and watch them grow into plants as they water them each day. Children enjoy their construction activities using a satisfactory range of construction kits in addition to junk modelling. Children enjoy the use of the computer suite where they develop appropriate mouse control skills. They learn about different cultural and religious celebrations and festivals including, for example, the Chinese New Year and Christian celebration of Christmas.

57. Planning is underdeveloped. There is scope to enrich the provision through more structured activities, for example, within the class 'shops' that are poorly resourced, and through fuller use of the outdoor environment to provide more exploratory and investigative learning. In one lesson, magnifying glasses were set out with a range of fabrics to explore, but this was not within a purposeful activity to capture the children's interest and promote scientific enquiry.

Physical development

58. Teaching in this area is consistently sound and children have regular opportunities to use a range of indoor and outdoor apparatus with obvious enjoyment. In the outdoor area children have opportunities to use tricycles, pedal cars, hoops, barrels, large rubber tyres and a large fixed climbing frame with a slide and these support their overall skills development. They are encouraged to develop independence in dressing and changing for physical activities. Both in the hall and outdoors they show a developing awareness of the use of space and control over their own movements. Many children, especially girls, are at an early stage of developing their hand and eye co-ordination when catching, although girls appear to have better-developed fine motor skills and co-ordination when handling scissors. Staff provide frequent opportunities for children to cut and stick materials and to develop the use of a range of tools to develop fine motor skills and co-ordination. Children make satisfactory progress in this area although only a minority attain the expected standards.

Creative development

59. Children have satisfactory opportunities for creative development and staff provide a range of materials for children to explore and handle such as clay, play dough, paint and resources for collage. Children also enjoy their regular music-making lessons where they learn a range of traditional songs and rhymes and use a range of different percussion instruments with a specialist music teacher. This is a benefit to both their language and creative development. Although all classes provide small role-play areas for the children, there is scope to extend and develop these to provide more imaginative and stimulating resources and activities. The classroom 'shops' and 'home' areas provide only limited resources and there is insufficient adult intervention and support to develop the children's creativity. Shared use of adjoining classes and the outdoor area extends the potential for creative activities. However, there are shortcomings in focused tracking and monitoring systems to ensure all children gain optimum benefit from their self-chosen activities. Opportunities for extending creative development are not fully exploited, especially through adult involvement in role-play. By the end of reception children attain well below expected standards although they make satisfactory progress, particularly in handling and exploring materials and music-making.

ENGLISH

60. Standards in English are well below those expected for seven and eleven year olds, and similar to those found at the last inspection. However, pupils achieve satisfactorily in this subject, given their well below average standards when they join the school and the fact that, for almost all pupils, English is an additional language.
61. Pupils at both key stages have difficulty expressing their ideas in any detail when speaking to others. Most do not have sufficient vocabulary or standard English grammatical patterns to offer extended answers. The school has recently introduced

various strategies to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. In good lessons, teachers systematically teach key vocabulary and demonstrate grammatical structures for pupils to imitate and repeat after them. Key vocabulary for English, mathematics and science is displayed clearly in classrooms. This not only supports the significant number of pupils at an early stage of learning English, but also benefits all pupils. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils sat in the 'hot seat' and pretended to be the princess in the story that they heard the day before. Pupils enjoyed this activity, which the teacher had already demonstrated effectively, and confidently asked the 'princess' their own questions. Year 6 pupils prepared to give an oral presentation to the school council about having a school snack shop and enjoyed preparing what they were going to say. Year 4 pupils are responding well to opportunities to speak in public through their involvement in the *Oliver* production.

62. Teachers' good demonstrations of reading and writing promote the sound progress pupils make in their literacy skills. Reading taught in literacy sessions, particularly when the whole class works with a 'big' book, gives good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and practise reading with good expression. Higher attainers are currently reaching standards typical of their age, but average and lower attainers are below and well below that standard. As a result, overall standards in reading are well below expectations at present but there are indications of a steady improvement in pupils' rate of progress. Pupils make sound progress in reading fluently and accurately as they move through the school. However, pupils who are not yet reading at the expected level for their age are often given books where characters and plots are not matched closely enough to their stage of maturity. Year 6 pupils enjoy reading and are regular visitors to libraries, both at school and locally. They talk about books that they have enjoyed and name J.K. Rowling and Roald Dahl as their favourite authors.
63. Pupils throughout the school are also improving their writing. They write in a range of forms including stories, poems, playscripts and instructions, such as how to make toast. They use word processing programs for some of their work, such as when they are writing about *Tosh*, the genius cat. The recently adopted marking policy means that pupils are given more guidance with correcting spellings and improving their work. Throughout the school, careful and systematic attention is given to handwriting and pupils are given regular opportunities to practise. As a result, most pupils' handwriting by the age of eleven is neat and legible.
64. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and teaching is improving as a result of recent training. Some good teaching was seen during the week of the inspection. Teachers now have a good understanding of the national literacy strategy and this is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment. Lessons are carefully planned and most teachers keep their lessons moving briskly with a variety of activities to ensure that pupils maintain high levels of interest. Teachers make clear what the pupils will expect to learn from the lesson and this helps pupils to be well involved in lessons. They manage pupils well and establish good relationships with their classes. Appropriate use is made of ICT to support learning. Classroom assistants are used well to support pupils for whom English is an additional language although, in some lessons, tasks are not matched closely to the needs of those at an early stage of learning English.
65. In lessons that are good, teachers plan activities that are matched well to appropriate learning objectives. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning during the lesson, especially where the activities engage their interest and are managed at a

good pace. This was seen, for example, in a Year 2 lesson when pupils were writing a report about dinosaurs. The teacher had chosen an activity that had purpose, which was presented in a lively way to them and this meant that the pupils were highly motivated and enjoyed their report writing.

66. This subject is managed satisfactorily and there has been significant improvement in the school's provision over the past few months. There has been recent training for teachers in implementing the national literacy strategy, which is now firmly in place throughout the school. As a result, there has been development in teaching and in pupils' learning. There have also been recent improvements in analysis of data from national test results, and in resources. Pupils benefit from access to libraries, which are used well to enhance enjoyment of reading. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessing standards and progress but the school has not yet used this information to adapt recommended planning to meet the needs of its own pupils. The subject is well placed to make further improvement.

MATHEMATICS

67. Since the time of the previous inspection standards have shown a fluctuating pattern, but show little sustained improvement over that time. Scrutiny of work confirms the well below average attainment in most year groups reflecting the results in the national tests at Years 2 and 6. However, work in some year groups indicates improved progress being made over the last few months. In general, however, pupils make steady progress from a low starting point but are capable of better achievement by the age of eleven.
68. By the age of seven most pupils show competence in the addition and subtraction of numbers to a hundred but few use numbers to solve number problems to a thousand. They find change from amounts up to five pounds and know halves and quarters. Although their level of number work is lower than the expected standard, pupils show a good understanding of simple strategies for calculating number operations. However, they are hampered by shortcomings in their understanding of mathematical language. By the age of eleven, pupils make calculations of numbers up to and beyond a thousand, and understand fractions and equivalent decimals. They calculate simple percentages mentally and apply their knowledge of numbers to calculate more difficult percentages. Pupils are developing their measuring skills, are aware of units of weight, length and capacity and calculate the area and perimeter of regular shapes. Their confidence in using and applying their mathematical knowledge by Year 6 has recently received a boost with the introduction of some real life problem solving.
69. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Lessons seen in Year 1 and Year 2 show teaching to be mostly satisfactory and sometimes good. In Year 3 to Year 6 teaching in lessons is always satisfactory and often good. Good lessons are conducted at a good pace, and work is matched well to the needs and stages of attainment of all pupils. In some lessons, higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. This problem is being addressed in Year 2 and Year 6 where pupils are now organised in 'sets'⁴ and this is resulting in an improvement in their rate of progress. The oral and mental starters to lessons are used effectively and sometimes imaginatively to create interest and to improve pupils' skills and confidence. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the *Countdown* number problem-solving

⁴ When classes are 'set', pupils are organised into groups on the basis of their stage of attainment

game shown on television helped pupils to develop ways of quickly and accurately calculating numbers and to find their own methods of calculation.

70. A feature of good lessons is the quality of teachers' demonstrations and the involvement of pupils in these to assist their learning. Resources are used well. For example, Year 3 pupils made a right-angle template when investigating angles larger or smaller than a right angle and this enabled them to compare the sizes of angles accurately. In successful lessons, plenary sessions were also used well to assess the level of learning through skilful questioning.
71. Pupils are managed well and teachers and pupils enjoy good relationships which have a positive effect upon pupils' learning. Support staff appropriately help different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, and this enables them to make satisfactory progress. There is sound support for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English who also make sound progress. Individual targets are set for some pupils but they are not always reviewed regularly, nor are they yet in general use. Marking of pupils' work lacks precision and does not give sufficient guidance to pupils on what to do next to make progress.
72. The subject leader provides good leadership and management and is in his first year of appointment. He has made a positive start and has been pro-active in his approach to implementing improvements in order to raise standards in mathematics across the school. There is a heavy reliance on the use of photocopied worksheets in Years 1 and 2 and this reduces opportunities for pupils to record their own jottings and calculations. Opportunities are used well for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in other subjects such as science and geography. The use of ICT to support learning in mathematics is underdeveloped. There has been recent improvement in procedures to assess how well pupils progress throughout the school. However, they are not yet sufficiently embedded for this information to be used effectively to guide pupils in their next steps of learning.

SCIENCE

73. After a period of improvement following the last inspection, attainment in science declined and, in the National Curriculum tests in 2002, was very low. The attainment of current pupils in Years 2 and 6 remains well below average, and their achievement during their time in school has been unsatisfactory. Recent improvements in teaching and the organisation of the curriculum have led to learning that is now satisfactory. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection although rapid recent improvement is now evident. Learning has improved and teaching in lessons is at least satisfactory. A continuing weakness is the lack of attention given to developing pupils' scientific skills. Attainment has not risen fast enough.
74. During Years 1 and 2, pupils acquire some relevant knowledge and skills but there is a lack of breadth and depth. Year 1 pupils record sources of light energy and appliances that use electricity. By Year 2, pupils know some of the features of animals and complete simple electrical circuits. They know that some foods are 'healthy' and others 'unhealthy'. Higher attaining pupils understand some of the features of a fair test, such as when testing the distance toy cars travel after being rolled down a ramp. Adults generally support pupils with special educational needs well during practical activities. Care is usually taken over scientific vocabulary used during lessons so that pupils at an early stage of learning English can participate fully.

75. Throughout Years 3 to 6, there is insufficient depth and breadth in pupils' work. Pupils' skills are not developed in an organised way. Pupils in Year 6 were very enthusiastic when given the opportunity to design and carry out an investigation about the effectiveness of various thermal insulators. Skilful teaching enabled them to produce a suitable experimental plan but they found difficulty in following instructions in the order suggested. They were uncertain and inaccurate in taking and recording results. Year 6 pupils understand how the force of gravity causes objects to fall and that air resistance can slow the rate of fall. They know about a range of habitats but are uncertain about detailed features. Year 5 pupils know some of the properties of solids, liquids and gases but there is a lack of security in their knowledge of the key facts. Year 4 pupils link some of the properties of materials with their uses. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress as other pupils and are often well supported in lessons. The written work of higher and average attaining pupils shows that English skills are not a major barrier to progress.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but is better than this in lessons taken by members of the beacon team. In good lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and give pupils opportunities to develop and use their skills. Enthusiasm for the subject, high expectations and the good management of pupils help to ensure they make good progress. These result in good behaviour, concentration and perseverance by pupils. In all lessons, relationships with pupils are positive features. The most important weakness in lessons is that pupils do not have a chance to develop their skills and practical opportunities are restricted. Careful attention is usually given to the vocabulary and language used, but there are examples when unhelpful analogies are used which serve to confuse rather than clarify a point. Although work is marked regularly, marking lacks precision and errors are not used to help pupils improve their work.
77. The curriculum has improved with the recent introduction of detailed planning into Years 3 to 6 but planning for Years 1 and 2 is underdeveloped. The work covered in the past in all years has been random and lacked a logical approach. The time allocated for science in Years 1 and 2 is low. There is some sensible use of pupils' literacy skills, but formal recording methods are introduced too early in the school. Satisfactory assessment procedures have been introduced, but they have not yet been used to inform planning sufficiently. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils were encouraged to think about how amazing it was that a plant could grow from a small seed and the beauty of flowers. A particularly effective contribution from a classroom assistant introduced pupils to the names of vegetables found in local shops in various languages (such as *spinach* or *sag*), and about the use of sweet potatoes in the West Indies. Management of the subject has been assisted by the work of a member of the beacon team who is a science specialist.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Since the last inspection standards have declined although pupils attain the expected standards by the ages of seven and eleven. Art still plays an important role within the life of the school and pupils show evident enjoyment of the subject. Pupils throughout the school put much enthusiasm into their art work and behave well in lessons. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding and learn to evaluate their own work critically and to appreciate the work of other artists.

79. Pupils demonstrate expected standards in their creative and technical skills when working in two dimensions as well as in their knowledge of the work of other artists. Year 6 pupils, for example, produce carefully executed pastel pictures based on the work of Degas and use sketchbooks appropriately to gather information and to develop visual ideas. Year 5 pupils mix their own colours to decorate large papier-mâché pots which they have designed after making a series of sketches which show an appropriate awareness of form, texture and shape. Year 4 pupils paint confident double portraits of their friends and Year 3 pupils recreate tissue paper images based on the flower paintings of Georgia O' Keefe. They recall relevant factual information about the life of the artist and enjoy using viewfinders to undertake observational drawings in the school courtyard. In Year 2, pupils produce lively work on repeat leaf-print patterns based on the work of William Morris and handle paint confidently when making colourful pictures of the Great Fire of London. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make attractive woven glitter pictures of fish, collage and paintings, showing a sound appreciation of texture and design.
80. Overall teaching is satisfactory, with some good lessons observed during the week of the inspection. Good teaching in Year 5 classes provided pupils with good learning opportunities when they explored how appliqué can be used to tell a story. They learnt about the Bayeux tapestry and the traditional willow pattern before creating their own willow pattern designs with pencil on paper plates. Sketchbooks are used well in the upper part of the school and pupils take care in their work.
81. The school has recently developed a new scheme of work in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject co-ordinator is on leave of absence at the present time but works closely with the external consultant to develop the focus art days. A comprehensive collection of portfolio and photographic evidence has been maintained over time within the school and this provides useful staff reference for assessment purposes.
82. Displays around the school are of a satisfactory quality. Occasional visits, such as to an art gallery and sculpture trail, enrich the curriculum. In addition, pupils benefit from the visiting artists who are invited in to work with pupils, such as on textile art, clay mask making, and felt work. Interesting work is undertaken during the art focus days when pupils experience the recreation of living portraits based on the work of famous artists. Pupils enjoyed making a large photo-collage of the school last year. Plans are in hand to extend the recognition of artists and artistic traditions across a wider range of cultures and to continue to develop opportunities for work in three dimensions, including with clay.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

83. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils continue to attain the expected standards by the end of Year 6. The range of resources, which was previously described as barely satisfactory, is better.
84. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6, although little material was available to assess pupils' attainment in Year 6 across the full range of areas of design and technology. Pupils use a range of materials satisfactorily to make chairs of various designs. Attainment is strongest in the aspects of *making*, but not as good for *designing* because designs give little detail of materials to be used or measurements. Artefacts made using a range of joining techniques display satisfactory quality. Some of the objects, such as picture frames and chairs, lack precision in cutting and joining skills. A particularly successful product was a working escalator, which involved a winding mechanism to move the steps. Year 5 pupils

understand the way cams are used to produce movement. By Year 2, pupils compare puppets of different designs and make finger puppets using appropriate sewing techniques. Year 1 pupils have experimented with simple techniques for weaving wool to produce attractive designs.

85. Lessons in DT were only seen in Years 3 to 6, but the progress that pupils make indicates that teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Pupils are interested and enjoy their work because they can succeed even if they have limited English skills. Good support is given to individuals so that all make similar progress in lessons. Teachers understand the main elements of the subject, advising pupils for instance about the use of running stitch or backstitch, or introducing simple pneumatic work. Weaknesses, however, include the slow pace of lessons so that pupils do not experience new material quickly enough. Additionally, artefacts are not always easily visible when pupils record observations.
86. The co-ordinator has led the subject well and has had as much impact as could be expected in the time available to him. He has introduced a suitable policy, and given curricular guidance that is designed to ensure the steady development of skills across all areas of the subject. Links with literacy are satisfactory, with teachers often giving good attention to pupils' level of language development. Numeracy skills and ICT are not used to best effect. Little systematic assessment takes place, a weakness that the coordinator is currently addressing. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are encouraged to persevere when making artefacts, and to co-operate when required.

GEOGRAPHY

87. Standards are below national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. There has been a decline in overall standards since the time of the last inspection. However, the school has halted this in recent months and put in place appropriate strategies to raise standards. The impact of this is already evident in lessons, in scrutiny of work and in discussions with staff and pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing geographical knowledge and understanding and enquiry skills. The school has recently drafted a new scheme of work and formalised a new subject policy.
88. Pupils throughout the school behave well in lessons and show enthusiasm for their learning in geography. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate additional adult support and work is structured to meet their learning needs.
89. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils are keen to locate Mexico using a range of different atlases and enjoy the challenge of finding the capital city. Higher attainers know how to use a simple map key and distinguish between water and land masses. Year 4 pupils know that the equator is an imaginary line around the globe. With support, the majority locate India and the United Kingdom on the globe and on a world map and track land and sea routes between the two locations. They discuss the relative time scales of such journeys. Year 5 pupils show satisfactory geographical enquiry skills when they investigate the local area and consider questions such as *Should Bury Park be closed to traffic?* through resident interviews and traffic surveys. Year 6 pupils show a sound understanding of the water cycle, erosion and the causes of flooding. They record, through diagrams, their knowledge of mountains, glaciers, ridges and hanging valleys, and are fascinated by their research into volcanoes.

90. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and some good lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. For example, good use of resources in a Year 2 lesson enhanced pupils' learning, and well planned use of the computer suite in a Year 6 lesson challenged pupils to undertake investigations into the location and formation of volcanoes at levels appropriate to their different learning needs. Marking is inconsistent across the classes. In the best examples, teachers give positive written feedback on what needs to be improved and what has been done well. There is insufficient recorded work undertaken over time in Years 1 and 2, and there are some inconsistencies in covering the planned curriculum each term in Year 6.
91. Although satisfactory use is made of the local environment, there is scope to extend fieldwork opportunities for all pupils, such as the trip made to Redbourne by Year 5 pupils. The school has plans to introduce a residential visit for pupils in the upper school in the future. Resources are satisfactory. The school has already identified the need to update atlases. Subject co-ordination is now satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to her role and has only recently started to develop assessment and monitoring procedures to ensure that the curriculum is consistently covered across all classes and year groups.

HISTORY

92. Although pupils' progress is satisfactory they attain below the expected standards by seven and eleven. Seven year olds show a developing understanding of the passing of time, including changes in their own lives. They understand that aspects of life have changed over time such as cooking and cleaning equipment. They also demonstrate knowledge about the life of Florence Nightingale.
93. By the age of eleven pupils demonstrate knowledge about aspects of life in different historical periods including the Ancient Greeks, Romans, Tudors and Britain since the 1930s. They know, for example, about trade in the time of the Ancient Greeks, the reasons for Roman settlement of other countries and aspects of life for those growing up in the 1950s. Although pupils make sound progress, particularly in their developing sense of chronology, they have limited knowledge about significant people and events in the past and their use of evidence to find out about the past is underdeveloped.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In a good Year 5 lesson, pupils made significant gains in their understanding of how the period of Ancient Greece compared in time to other significant periods and events from the Ancient Egyptians to the present day. They also gained knowledge about the influence of the language of Ancient Greeks to be found in modern-day English. The lesson was planned well, with resources used effectively to raise the interest of all pupils and particularly meet the needs of lower attainers and pupils at an early stage of learning English. The teacher established a positive learning ethos, through his good relationships with pupils and demonstrable interest in the subject. As a result, pupils were interested and attentive throughout and worked purposefully on their tasks.
95. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements and takes some account of national guidance. Medium-term planning, however, does not provide enough guidance for teachers to ensure pupils make steady progress in historical skills and understanding as well as knowledge. Arrangements for assessment are also limited to recording the National Curriculum level pupils have attained. Scrutiny of work in books shows differences in the quality of tasks between classes and year groups. In some classes, for example, over reliance on worksheets of limited quality constrains

the extent to which pupils can build on their existing skills, knowledge and understanding. However, history is enriched by visits to places such as the Roman town of Verulamium and to a 'Victorian' school.

96. The subject is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. She has a sound understanding of key strengths and areas for development and, as the result of recent improvements in the co-ordinator's role, has appropriate plans for improving provision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

97. Pupils' attainment by Years 2 and 6 is not as high as at the time of the last inspection. There are a number of reasons for this. Expectations of what pupils should achieve have increased since the last inspection and the way ICT is delivered in the school has changed. ICT was rarely incorporated into class activities. Staff training has had a good impact on teachers' skills and teaching within the ICT suites is at least satisfactory. The use of ICT in class-based lessons is limited and this means that pupils' experiences are not consolidated sufficiently from one lesson to the next. The development of two well-resourced ICT suites, one for Years 1 to 2 and one for Years 3 to 6, is a good improvement.
98. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in ICT although their keyboard and mouse control skills are below the level expected. Many pupils are slow to find letters or numbers and there is a lack of accuracy in using the mouse. Pupils in Year 1 begin to understand that data can be represented in a number of forms. In the lesson the emphasis was largely mathematical involving the interpretation of graphs. During a Year 2 mathematics lesson, higher attaining pupils used the ICT suite to develop their multiplication skills using a relevant program. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know there is a wide variety of ways to communicate, including semaphore, telephones, books, writing, sign language and Braille.
99. The attainment of pupils by Year 6 varies according to the aspect of ICT involved. The main weakness remains the use of keyboard and mouse, which is slow and inaccurate. However, pupils know about search engines and how to obtain information from using the Internet. Too much of this work displayed was simply printed directly from the Internet, rather than summarised in the pupils' own words. They enter data accurately in spreadsheets as do those in Year 5. These pupils are beginning to understand how spreadsheets can be used to complete a range of calculations. They also enter data to produce a range of different graphs, although not all are appropriate representations of the data concerned. Year 4 pupils designed and produced book covers. These included the incorporation of text but the pictures were unsophisticated and lacked control. Word processing skills are developing but spelling and punctuation errors are not always corrected, and text is not adjusted to give the best visual effect.
100. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. A key weakness that inhibits faster learning is pupils' lack of opportunity to practise and develop skills between formal ICT lessons. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and their confidence is improving. The ICT suites are used to good effect, both to teach particular skills and to link work with other subjects, such as in geography when Year 6 pupils found out about volcanoes. There are occasions when work in the suite does not focus sufficiently on the development and use of ICT skills, such as when pupils wrote questions that related to car colour graphs displayed on a large screen. An effective

aspect of teaching is that pupils are usually supported by a number of adults. Too often care is not taken to ensure that one of a pair of pupils does not have to lean across to get to the mouse or keyboard. This limits improvement in these skills. Teachers carefully explain the terms they are using so that pupils whose English skills are underdeveloped can take a full part in the lesson. Pupils enjoy their ICT lessons, behave well and persevere even when experiencing difficulties.

101. The new co-ordinator has introduced a new and helpful policy. Suitable outline guidance ensures that pupils experience all elements of the ICT curriculum, and the co-ordinator plans to develop more detailed guidance. In the short time since he took over, he has produced a good analysis of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, and an action plan to improve provision further. It is recognised that pupils have very different ICT experiences outside of school, and many pupils do not have access to a computer at home. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. They learn to work co-operatively and are encouraged to explore web sites to appreciate the wealth of information available. Care has been taken to ensure pupils understand the rules relating to restricted Internet access. Outline assessment procedures are in place, but their use is not yet consistent across the school.

MUSIC

102. Pupils at both the infant and junior stages make satisfactory progress and attain the expected standards by seven and eleven. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection. Year 2 pupils sing familiar songs such as *Bingo* with gusto and enjoyment, and perform simple clapping rhythms accurately. They show developing understanding of how a sequence of sounds can depict a story and work in collaborative groups to create and record their own ideas. Those Year 4 pupils taking part in the forthcoming production of *Oliver* demonstrate good standards of singing and high levels of confidence in their performance. Year 5 pupils work in small groups to consider ways of making the performance of a song more interesting by, for example, different groups taking turns to sing. Year 6 pupils devise their own rhythmic patterns and perform them, maintaining a steady pulse alongside others.
103. The quality of both teaching and learning is satisfactory. Two teachers teach the subject throughout the school and pupils benefit from their good levels of subject expertise and confidence. Lessons are carefully planned with a good range of activities managed at a sound pace. As a result pupils make steady gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding.
104. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum that is enriched by opportunities to join the junior choir, receive specialist instrument tuition, and take part in performances such as the forthcoming production of *Oliver*. Care is taken to provide opportunities for pupils to experience music and instruments from their own cultural heritage. Pupils benefit from the provision of two dedicated music rooms although poor acoustics put some constraints on the quality of learning. There are good arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' standards, although their recorded work is not retained so that they can review their own learning and progress. The subject is managed jointly and satisfactorily by the two specialist teachers. They have a clear view of standards throughout the school and sound plans for further improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

105. Pupils continue to attain the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 as found at the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress in this subject as the result of satisfactory teaching and learning. There is no significant variation in progress between any groups.
106. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand the impact of exercise and talk about the effect it has and how their bodies feel. They carry out warm-ups effectively and follow instructions carefully and safely when they use their hands and feet to travel in different ways. They are beginning to use space with an awareness of others. They make controlled wide and narrow shapes with their bodies on the floor and in the air. Some work independently whilst others work co-operatively in pairs. Pupils with special educational needs are included fully and work well with a partner, with pupils learning from each other by copying their shapes. By the age of seven most pupils are able to throw and catch a ball, as well as bounce and catch, and accurately bounce a ball on a target. They demonstrate satisfactory skills in skipping and bowling or striking a ball with a bat. They are happy to show their skills to the rest of the class and they do so with confidence. They have not yet had the opportunity to evaluate their own or the work of others, and this does not enable pupils to extend their skills fully.
107. By Year 6 pupils are developing their games skills appropriately and achieve the expected standards. In a Year 5 lesson netball skills were taught and pupils learned to develop and improve their own level of ability in passing and intercepting the ball through small group competitive activities and games. The lesson ensured good development of these skills and pupils learned specific vocabulary as well as the rules of the game. In a Year 6 lesson for girls, they made good progress in their development and acquisition of cricket skills due to the very good quality of the teaching they received. About half the class had not experienced the game before and due to the good demonstration by the teacher the pupils accurately struck a ball off a tee. Their confidence developed as the lesson progressed. Year 6 boys have swimming lessons separately, in accordance with parental wishes. Only a small proportion of pupils achieve the expected standard in swimming.
108. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall with some examples of good practice demonstrating teachers' confidence in their own subject knowledge and the teaching of basic skills in games in particular. Lessons ensured pupils enjoyed the subject and developed positive attitudes, and contributed well to their social development. Pupils were managed well and this contributed to the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils.
109. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to experience all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study. At present there are no formal procedures for assessing the progress that pupils make. The present arrangements for swimming are inadequate and the subject co-ordinator is currently reviewing them to achieve better access to this important area of their physical development.
110. The co-ordinator has considerable experience of this area and took over responsibility at the start of 2003. She is extremely conscientious and provides good support and advice to her colleagues. She is committed to improving the subject and extending extra-curricular sporting opportunities for pupils to help raise their levels of achievement. This requires support from her colleagues as well as the school's senior managers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

111. Standards by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. As a result, as they move through the school they show an increasing ability to express ideas and feelings and have greater knowledge and understanding of religious issues to aid their thinking and discussions.
112. Teaching in RE is satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to answer questions by drawing on their existing knowledge and make good use of a range of resources. For example, in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were learning about Jewish festivals, the teacher had made a model of the shelter made for the celebration of Sukkot and pupils enjoyed watching it being assembled, with leaves and branches on the roof. This gave a better understanding of what the Jewish Harvest celebrations would be like and pupils compared it with their school's Harvest thanksgiving. In a Year 1 lesson about special people, pupils enjoyed looking at the 'family' of knitted dolls that the teacher had brought for them to see and named different family members and identify them with their own families. This activity was relevant to the everyday lives of pupils, who could talk about people who were special to them. In such lessons, pupils are enthusiastic, they are keen to answer questions and enjoy sharing knowledge with one another.
113. Year 2 pupils have sound knowledge about the way people of different faiths celebrate. They learn about Diwali, Hannukah and Christmas and compare them with the celebration of Eid. They know there are special holy books, that the Qu'ran is special to Moslems and the Bible is the Christians' special book. They learn about the world being created and think about the beautiful things in the world, such as spiders' webs, flowers and leaves.
114. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound grasp of the importance of world religions and learn about the similarities and differences in the ways people of different faiths worship by looking at the symbols that are found in religious buildings and used in worship. They learn about the Ten Commandments and the rules for life in the Qu'ran and relate these to the need for rules in a community such as a school. They are interested in religion and keen to discuss issues such as moral dilemmas that they may face in life.
115. Management is satisfactory and there is now a subject co-ordinator. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when there was no-one leading the subject. Pupils visit the local parish church and the mosque and this means that pupils have first hand experience of places where people go to worship God.