

INSPECTION REPORT

LONGSHAW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chingford

LEA area: Waltham Forest

Unique reference number : 103035

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Kirkland

Reporting inspector: Dr Alan Jarvis (2711)

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th November 2002

Inspection number: 249917

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:	3-11 Years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Longshaw Road Chingford London
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. Marion Fitzgerald
Date of previous inspection:	July 2000

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2711	Dr Alan Jarvis	Registered inspector	Science	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9646	Geraldine Osment	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
28014	Peter Buckley	Team inspector	English Geography History Educational inclusion English as an additional language (EAL)	
31838	Martyn Williams	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Religious education	
19842	Janet Sinclair	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs	
30457	Dr. David Evans	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Longshaw community primary school currently educates 300 boys and girls between the ages of three and 11. The school is part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ) which aims to raise standards and encourage close working between primary and secondary schools in the immediate area of the school. Numbers on roll have fallen due to demographic changes. Most pupils live in local authority, housing association or private housing within close proximity to the school. Although a wide range of attainment is represented, pupils' attainment on entry is below average because many children have difficulties with speech and communication skills. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Around one in four pupils (an above average proportion) are on the register of special educational needs (SEN), mainly with speech, moderate learning or behavioural difficulties; seven pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (below average). Approximately one in six pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL); most are fluent in English. Pupils come from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds with white British, white and black Caribbean and Asian cultures being well represented. There is a small number of pupils from refugee families.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with the potential to be very good. All groups of pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are consistently good by the end of Years 2 and 6 across many subjects. This is supported by a good curriculum. The school is effectively led and managed and provides good value for money. It has already identified the two main points for development, which are set against its many strengths.

What the school does well

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, with the support of an effective governing body, has turned the school around from one that was underperforming to one that is effective in many areas of its work.
- Standards have risen quickly over recent years in English, mathematics and particularly science. Pupils achieve well in these subjects because of the good teaching and curriculum in each subject.
- There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development which ensures that pupils have good attitudes to their learning and make good strides in their personal development.
- There is a very good learning environment in the Nursery; coupled with the good curriculum and teaching that is provided, this enables the children to achieve well across all areas of learning.
- Very good procedures are in place for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour, and these are very successful in ensuring that relationships are very good. All groups of pupils learn in harmony.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- The quality of teaching and the curriculum in some areas of learning in the Reception class, which lead to pupils achieving less than expected.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in July 2000 found serious weaknesses in pupils' standards in Years 1 and 2, the effectiveness of the governing body and the use of assessment. These matters have now been put right and the school no longer has serious weaknesses. Teaching, learning and the quality of the curriculum have all been strengthened. As a result standards in English, mathematics and science have risen faster than the national trend. Compared with similar schools, standards have risen from below average to above average in the past three years. The school has increased its efficiency and effectiveness. This is

because the headteacher has been extremely clear in directing the work of her staff, the governing body has focused well on shaping the direction of the school and all teachers are committed to further improvement. The poor attendance of a few pupils is a barrier to improvement. Very good improvement is evident in the last two years. There is a very good capacity to progress further and the school is on course to meet its challenging targets.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	D	D	C
Mathematics	D	D	C	B
Science	C	C	B	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that standards have been rising quickly over the past three years compared with all schools nationally. Standards in science have been a consistent strength as a result of very strong teaching of scientific enquiry. Overall performance, in the 2002 National Curriculum tests, was above average compared with similar schools.

Inspectors make two key judgements to do with how well pupils are doing academically. When they refer to 'standards' they mean how well pupils are doing compared to others of the same age nationally. The other judgement, 'achievement', is like 'progress', a judgement about whether the standards are high enough for the particular pupils involved, given their starting points.

The children in the Nursery achieve well in all areas of learning. However, achievement is less than expected in the Reception class. By the start of Year 1, standards remain below average in all areas of learning, except in physical development, where the expected standards are likely to be met.

Standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests in Year 2 were below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Teacher assessments in science showed standards to be below average, with a weakness in living things and a strengths in materials. Standards seen during the inspection reflect a picture of further improvement. Standards seen were average in all subjects with the exception of ICT, where they were above average. By the end of Year 2 all groups of pupils achieve well, except in design and technology, music, physical education and religious education, where pupils achieve as well as expected.

Further improvements in standards are also evident by the end of Year 6. Standards seen were average in English and mathematics and above average in science and show strong signs of rising further. Science is strong because pupils are good investigators and can apply their knowledge and skills to new situations. Standards of writing are the weakest aspect of English. Of the other subjects, standards are strongest in art and design and ICT, where they are above average. Standards elsewhere are average, with the weaknesses in history and geography reported at the last inspection showing improvement. Girls and boys are reaching similar standards. Achievement shows a similar picture to that by the end of Year 2; all groups of pupils achieve well in all subjects except in design and technology, music, physical education and religious education, where they achieve as well as expected. There is no significant difference between the standards reached by girls and boys. Some pupils achieve less than expected through poor attendance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school, which enhances the rate at which they learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, although the lunch period is too long for good behaviour to be sustained. Pupils are polite and work together constructively in class. There are no signs of bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils relate very well to their teachers and their peers. Pupils give of their best, are noticeably mature and show very good initiative as they get older.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Although improving, attendance remains fragile. A small number of pupils are regularly late for school and a few have unsatisfactory attendance records.

Exclusions are rare. All pupils are valued and included by the school and they, in turn, show affinity with the good ethos that is promoted. A harmonious atmosphere of mutual respect prevails.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	Good	Good

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

Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning in English and literacy is good overall, with strengths in some Year 3 and 6 classes and in the teaching of SEN pupils. Literacy is promoted well in other subjects. Teaching and learning in mathematics and numeracy are also good overall, with strengths in some Year 3 and 4 classes. Numeracy is promoted satisfactorily.

Teaching and learning in the Nursery are good. However, they are unsatisfactory in the Reception class in creative development, personal, social and emotional development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because lesson planning is weak and the teacher's knowledge is unsure in these areas.

The school generally meets the needs of its pupils well, although less so in the Reception class. This is because the majority of teaching is well targeted on what individuals and different groups of pupils in each class need to learn next. For example, good information is available and used effectively to help teachers set targets in English and mathematics. SEN pupils receive good quality support in class and in group sessions from the classroom assistants, who make an effective contribution to the school's success. EAL pupils are also given good support. Work is also well pitched to meet the learning needs of pupils of differing abilities, although in some lessons the higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils could be challenged further.

There are many strengths in teaching and few weaknesses. The major strength lies in the very consistent way in which teachers manage their classes, which fosters very good relationships and ensures a good pace to learning. Another success of many lessons is due to the fact that they are well planned and organised effectively. This helps pupils to be clear about what they have to learn. Teachers have a well-developed knowledge of many subjects they teach, which ensures that pupils are taught without error. Homework is regularly set. ICT is insufficiently used in learning in all subjects of the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall and improved. The statutory curriculum is delivered well. However, the curriculum in the Reception class is unsatisfactory as not enough time is allocated to some areas of learning; learning through structured play is also under-represented.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good procedures are in place for identifying SEN pupils' learning needs. The new Code of Practice is being implemented well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are well supported in lessons by classroom assistants. Those at an early stage of acquisition of English are given good specialist support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Improved. Very good provision for pupils' moral and social education, which develops their self-esteem and confidence. Good provision for pupils' spiritual education allows pupils to flourish in a climate of aspiration. Good provision for cultural development. As a result pupils develop a good understanding of multicultural Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Well. Pupils feel safe and very well cared for. There are very good procedures for child protection. Those for promoting good behaviour are also very good. Good assessment. Health and Safety is secure.

The curriculum has been enriched through involvement in the EAZ. As a result, there are effective links with partner schools. A good programme for personal, social and health education is in place. Extra-curricular provision is also good; a wide range of activities are well attended. A good partnership with parents is being fostered. However, parents do not always take full advantage of all the opportunities that are provided to work with and participate in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Effective overall. The headteacher leads and manages the school exceptionally well. The assistant headteachers are effective in their wide-ranging roles. Staff share the commitment to further improvement. Management of special educational needs is good. Teachers who co-ordinate subjects generally do this well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Effectively. Governors are strong supporters of the school and give a good strategic lead. They monitor the school development plan thoroughly but need to increase the level of first-hand information they gain. They have ensured all statutory requirements are met with the exception of minor omissions in their annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. All staff are fully involved in planning and evaluation. The headteacher judges and controls the pace of change very well. Test statistics are analysed very well. Very good action taken to address weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Effective. Good financial planning within a tight budget. Special grants are well directed towards the school's priorities. Best value principles are applied well but there is insufficient evaluation of the impact of internal spending.

There are good levels of staffing with little use of supply teachers. The internal accommodation is clean, spacious and classrooms have good quality display. However, the Reception classroom is small and there is no developed area for outside play. The external accommodation is unstimulating and the field

underused. Subjects are adequately resourced overall but there is a shortage of suitable texts in science in Years 3 to 6 and a lack of software to enable ICT to be taught effectively across all subjects.

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 like coming to school. • The school expects pupils to work hard and give of their best. • The good teaching, which leads to pupils making good progress. • Their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports on pupils' progress. • The approachability of the school. • Closer links between the school and parents. • The management of the school. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agree with all of the positive comments made by parents. They largely disagree with the negative views. The range of extra-curricular opportunities is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school is fostering good links with parents but the invitation for parents to be more involved is not always taken up. Far from being of concern, the overall management of the school is good, especially the extremely clear lead given by the headteacher, which has been the key to many improvements. The inspectors found little evidence to substantiate the view that the school was unapproachable. However, they partly agree with parents in that the annual reports on pupils' progress could be improved but they are of satisfactory quality and, in the main, meet statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards, the judgements of how well pupils are doing compared to others of the same age nationally, may be judged from national test results, or against the levels defined in the National Curriculum or the Early Learning Goals as expected by the end of the Reception year. The other judgement, 'achievement', is like 'progress', a judgement about whether the standards are high enough for the particular pupils involved, given their starting points. The achievement judgement shows whether enough progress is being made over time.

1. As at the last inspection, children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with a range of attainment that is below average compared with the national picture. Although a wide range of attainment is represented in each class, a good number of pupils have speech and communication difficulties which hamper their learning in other areas of the curriculum. By the time they reach the end of statutory education, in Year 6, all groups of pupils achieve well and reach at least average standards in all areas of the curriculum.
2. The children achieve well in the Nursery class in all areas of learning because of the good teaching, a stimulating learning environment and the sensitive way in which the teachers and Nursery nurses meet the learning and emotional needs of the children. However, in the Reception class the children do not do as well as expected. This is because there are weaknesses in curriculum planning and not enough time is given to the teaching of creative or personal, social and emotional development and some aspects of a knowledge and understanding of the world. It is in these areas that the teacher's subject knowledge is also weak. As a result of this, and pupils' below average standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, standards at the start of Year 1 are below the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning except in physical development, where the expected standards are likely to be met.
3. At the time of the last inspection, standards in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 were of some concern. They were showing a downward trend. This has now been arrested and reversed, and an upward trend is evident. Standards are rising rapidly. Standards then were well below average in writing and mathematics and in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally in reading. The results of the tests in 2002 were below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing when compared with all schools nationally. Teachers' assessments in science in 2002 indicated that overall standards were below average with a weakness in living things and a strength in materials.
4. Standards of attainment seen in Years 1 and 2, across all subjects, reflect a picture of further improvement. The good teaching quickly makes up for the slower progress made by pupils in the Reception class. By the end of Year 2 standards are average in all subjects with the exception of information and communication technology (ICT) where they are above average. Pupils achieve well in most subjects because of good teaching, particularly in Year 2, with the exceptions of design and technology, music, physical education and religious education, where they achieve as well as expected.
5. Standards have also been rising in Years 3 to 6, at a faster rate than the national picture, since the last inspection. Standards in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2000 were well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. Standards in the 2002 tests were below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. Science has been the strongest of these three "core" subjects for the past three years, mainly because of the very good attention given to the teaching of scientific enquiry. Equally impressive has been the increased performance of the school compared with similar schools nationally. In relation to schools with a similar number of free school meals, standards have risen from below average in 2000 to above average in 2002. Boys and girls do equally well in the tests. However, standards have been adversely affected by the poor attendance of a small number of pupils, with

some not sitting the tests as expected. There are no marked differences in standards reached by pupils representing the different ethnic groups within the school.

6. The standards of attainment seen in Years 3 to 6 again paint a picture of continuing improvement. This is because the consistently good teaching continues to address past underachievement of some pupils and provides good levels of challenge. By the end of Year 6, standards are average overall in English and improving. They are also average in mathematics and again rising and above average in science, where standards are strong, and also rising. In the other subjects of the curriculum, the strengths lie in art and design and ICT where standards are above average. Elsewhere standards are average. The weaknesses in standards in history and geography reported at the last inspection have been rectified because the curriculum and teaching have been strengthened. Pupils achieve well in all subjects except design and technology, physical education, music and religious education where they achieve as well as expected because of the satisfactory, rather than good, teaching and curriculum provision.
7. There are a number of reasons why standards and achievement have been improving. At the heart of this has been the exceptionally clear leadership of the headteacher. She has rooted out the weaknesses in standards identified at the last inspection and ensured that all staff are very clear about the action they needed to take. For example, all staff now have a much better understanding of the school development plan and their contribution to the school's targets. Teaching has been strengthened because all staff are very clear about the areas they need to improve; they have been keen to take the action they need to do so, and have been given the necessary support to assist this process. The effective strategies used in literacy and numeracy lessons are being spread to other subjects of the curriculum to good effect. This is enabling all groups of pupils to be much clearer about what they need to learn and the best way of going about this. Two current initiatives are also starting to bear fruit: teachers are using more open-ended questions to challenge pupils and using a wider range of approaches to learning. These are enabling teachers to target questions more precisely to individual or groups of pupils and encouraging more pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning.
8. Good attention has been given to developing English and literacy throughout the school. Pupils achieve well in this area of the curriculum. In the Nursery and Reception classes all staff focus well on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, as many children have limited vocabulary and lack confidence when talking with others. By Year 2, pupils are much more confident in their use of English in class; they listen carefully when required and express their opinions in a considered manner; for example, in circle time. By Year 6, standards progress well and they listen and talk confidently in a variety of contexts. They listen and respond carefully to other people's ideas and opinions. Standards of literacy are also rising. Pupils' reading standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. This continues the trend of improvement. Pupils are avid readers throughout the school and use the school and local libraries well. They read a wide range of books and use them well to retrieve, select and organise information in their work. Standards in writing have improved since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 they are average, but by the end of Year 6 they remain below average and are the weakest area of literacy. However, standards are rising in this area. Although the average and higher-attaining pupils write and achieve well through Years 3 to 6, it is the high numbers of SEN and EAL pupils who find the greatest difficulty in advancing their writing standards and where the school is already giving greatest support. Standards of presentation are generally good throughout the school with careful attention given to spelling and punctuation. Literacy is used well across the curriculum.
9. Effective steps have also been taken to improve standards in mathematics and numeracy. As a result, standards have risen sharply at the end of both Years 2 and 6, and continue to improve. Although many pupils are still working within the Early Learning Goals at the start of Year 1, good teaching and a well-planned curriculum in Years 1 and 2 have ensured that standards are equally developed in all areas of mathematics. Thus pupils' weakness in their ability to use and apply mathematics, identified at the last inspection, has been put right. By Year 2, most pupils are confident in their use of number up to 100 and have a sound recall of simple times-tables. However, lower-attaining pupils struggle beyond 20 without help. Most can use mathematical names for common two and three-dimensional shapes and are starting to use standard and non-

standard measures. By Year 6, standards are equally strong in all areas of mathematics. Pupils' mathematical and numeracy skills develop well, again because of a well-planned curriculum and consistently good teaching. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to express simple formulae in words, interpret coordinates on graphs, develop their understanding of area, and use the terms mean, mode and median when describing averages. It is in these areas where standards could further improve. The use of numeracy across the curriculum, although satisfactory, is not as well developed as literacy.

10. Standards in science are strong in Years 1 to 6, although they are lower than expected in the Reception class. Standards are developed well from Year 1 onwards and are equally good in all areas of science. The weakness in standards reported at the last inspection in Years 1 and 2 has now been put right, as has the weaknesses in living things, seen in last year's teacher assessments at the end of Year 2. It is the combination of teachers' secure subject knowledge and the way in which scientific enquiry and pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are integrated that has led to results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 rising rapidly. This linking of investigations and knowledge encourages pupils to question why things happen and to develop an enquiring, scientific, mind. Many of the higher-attaining pupils can successfully apply their knowledge and skills to new situations. For example, they could say how they would carry out a fair test to see if adding sugar to water prolonged the appearance of flowers in a vase. Nearly all lessons in Years 3 to 6 are taught for two hours. This works well and helps pupils explore their own ideas during whole investigations.
11. The school helps all groups of pupils to achieve well, with pupils only achieving less well than expected in the Reception class. For example, SEN pupils achieve well against the targets set in their individual education plans because of the good level of support they receive from classroom assistants in class, the effective monitoring of their work and the strategies put in place to secure further improvement. They achieve well across most areas of the curriculum because teachers give good attention to their needs in all lessons. These pupils in Year 6 do particularly well because they receive regular, good quality teaching in literacy and numeracy from the special educational needs co-ordinator. As a result of all of these factors, standards for this group of pupils are rising across the school. Similarly, the needs of EAL pupils are incorporated well into daily lessons; those who are at an early stage of acquisition of English receive good specialist support in small groups. The two refugee pupils and those who have recently joined the school have been quickly assimilated and given appropriate support based upon an analysis of their needs. This enables them to learn well. The needs of gifted and talented pupils have also been identified and as a result they also do well. For example, a small number have been put into classes with older children to provide stimulus. Occasionally, some are entered for the National Curriculum tests a year early and have achieved success in this approach.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have positive attitudes to school that enhance their learning and enable them to achieve well. Good attitudes are closely linked to good teaching. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and very good management skills to keep the pupils interested and involved with the lessons. For example, during a lively Year 5 art lesson the teacher's good organization enabled the pupils to develop their fine motor skills when learning about Louis Comfort Tiffany. Eighty-eight per cent of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that their children like school and this was evident during interviews with pupils when they expressed positive views of their school. They are enthusiastic about the range of clubs offered to them; they particularly like art and mathematics lessons and are happy with the opportunities provided for them to help in school. Pupils' good attitudes make an important contribution to rising standards in the school.
13. The majority of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection team agrees with their opinion and judges behaviour to be good overall, and this is better than reported at the inspection of July 2000. Teachers apply the behaviour policy consistently, which means that the pupils know what is expected of them and there is no confusion when different teachers teach them. Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is satisfactory. The lunch period is a long time for pupils to sustain good behaviour in the playground,

particularly in Years 3 to 6. However, the school has recognised that there is a need to develop the playground environment and is currently fund-raising to improve the outdoor facilities. There were no signs of bullying, racist or oppressive behaviour because the school policies in this area are consistently implemented by all staff. In a small number of instances unsatisfactory behaviour adversely affected the learning of other pupils but this was quickly and effectively dealt with. The headteacher has excluded only one pupil in the past year for unacceptable behaviour. This is a lower number than reported at the previous inspection. Good behaviour is contributing positively, helping pupils to learn and achieve well.

14. Overall, the school cultivates the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well, which is better than reported at the last inspection. Eighty-seven per cent of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that the school is helping their child become mature and responsible. Year 6 pupils show these characteristics very clearly in the way they conduct themselves around the school, in lessons and their approach to homework. There are very good relationships throughout the school. All pupils sensibly carry out any duties given to them and show respect for and tolerance of others. All pupils listen very well to their teachers and each other in lessons and assemblies. They work sensibly together in groups or pairs and are confident when answering questions or performing - for example in the Shakespearean and African drumming workshops. All of the opportunities provided have a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. The school is successfully meeting one of its aims: "to encourage each child to be a responsible member of the class, school and community".
15. Attendance has been fragile since the last inspection. Based on national data, school attendance rates were very low compared to other schools in the year ended 2001. Although they have improved this year, the overall attendance rate of 93.49% for the last half term is unsatisfactory. There are a number of pupils who are regularly late for school and this is disruptive for the individuals as they can miss important aspects of the early morning procedures. A small number of pupils have also been absent for the National Curriculum tests. Parents should be aware that non-attendance and lateness adversely affect the learning of their children.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching, and the learning it engenders, is consistently good in nearly all classes. This is a primary reason why standards have been rising and pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning, and their consistency, have been strengthened since the last inspection. During the inspection teaching was good or very good in around seven out of ten lessons. Most of the remainder were satisfactory, except for some unsatisfactory teaching seen in the Reception class.
17. Teaching and learning are particularly strong in English, mathematics and science. This is a result of a good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and staff training. Rigorous monitoring of teaching has also clarified what aspects of teaching teachers need to address in order to improve. Good training and an effective oversight of teaching in art and design and ICT have also ensured that teaching is consistently strong. Besides the weaknesses evident in the Reception class, most teachers in Years 1 to 6 lack confidence in the teaching of music. This is a barrier to the satisfactory teaching and learning being further improved.
18. Teaching and learning have improved in the Nursery class since the last inspection. They are now good across all areas of learning. This is because of the stimulating environment which has been created, good planning and the use of well-chosen and stimulating activities. Together these ensure that all groups of pupils are included and enable them to learn effectively and at a brisk pace. However, teaching does not always challenge pupils to a very high level through questioning. It is this factor that, if implemented, would make the Nursery teaching very good. In the Reception class, unsatisfactory teaching was seen in creative development, personal, social and emotional development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. These weaknesses are due to the teacher's lack of knowledge in these areas of learning and imprecise curriculum planning. In other areas of learning in this class, teaching is satisfactory or good.

19. Teaching and learning were seen in all subjects in Years 1 to 6 and supplemented by evidence from retained work, planning, work on display and talking to pupils. This has ensured a secure judgement to be made on the quality of teaching, not only on individual lessons, but also over a period of time. Analysis shows that teaching and learning are consistently good in all subjects by the end of Years 2 and 6, with the exception of design and technology, music, physical education and religious education, where they are satisfactory. The teaching and learning in these latter subjects have been strengthened by the use of national and local planning guidance. However, they are not yet good because learning in lessons is not as brisk as elsewhere and some teachers are not consistently applying the three-part lesson structure used in English and mathematics.
20. Most lessons are well planned and executed. A major strength is that the majority of pupils are managed very well. This ensures that there is a good learning atmosphere in lessons, good relationships and little time is lost in learning. Pupils are particularly adept at learning together in small group work. The consistency of approach, adopted year by year, leads to the attitudes and work ethic of the pupils improving as they grow older. This has a direct bearing on their motivation and capacity to do well. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and skilfully shared, particularly in Years 5 and 6. This enables basic skills to be used well across subjects, and individual subject expertise to be continually developed. The best teachers in the school are using a wide range of methods and techniques. This helps add both interest and challenge to learning. Planning for lessons has also improved since the last inspection, through joint planning and close monitoring by the headteacher. Classroom assistants are also used well in all lessons. Their contribution results in the SEN and EAL pupils learning and achieving well. Homework is used well. It is set regularly with, for example, Year 6 classes eagerly reading ten or more pages each night as well as doing other work.
21. There are some clear elements to teaching that distinguish between satisfactory, good and very good lessons. The satisfactory teaching did not have the brisk pace seen in the good lessons. Teachers also tended to talk to the pupils or question them for too long, which limited the time available for the pupils to work effectively in small groups. Similarly, the good lessons lacked the challenge that was planned for the higher-attaining pupils in the very good lessons. Some very good lessons also suffered from teachers questioning pupils for too long. For example, in a Year 6 science lesson the teacher dwelt for too long on safety and other matters before allowing the pupils to investigate very effectively in groups.
22. Teaching effectively caters for all groups of pupils. SEN pupils receive good quality support in class and in group sessions from the classroom assistants. The Year 6 SEN pupils are taught well by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) who takes them daily for a literacy and numeracy lesson. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs are also taught well and consequently many are on target to reach the expected level for their age. Staff support them effectively, ensuring that their particular needs are well met. Pupils' individual education plans (IEPs) are used well to ensure teaching is targeted clearly at their needs. The classroom assistants, SENCO and teachers all liaise well to monitor progress and promote further learning. EAL pupils are also given extra support and their needs are appropriately catered for in class. Teachers know the pupils in their classes well and plan effectively to meet the needs of pupils of varying ability. However, on occasions the use of explicit objectives that are focused on the learning of the higher-attaining pupils would help to further raise standards. Good teaching provision is made for gifted and talented pupils and those who join mid-way through each year.
23. The quality of teaching and learning of English and literacy is good by the end of both Years 2 and 6. This has steadily addressed the underperformance of pupils reported at the last inspection, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Introductory whole-class sessions in literacy lessons are well taught. A good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils enables teachers to target questions at particular pupils and help correct misunderstandings or challenge them. Some teachers share lesson objectives with their pupils better than others. In the best teaching seen, in Years 3 and 6, teachers gave the pupils a crystal clear idea of what they should be learning, sufficient time was given for activities to be undertaken and the lessons finished with a plenary to summarise what

was learnt. However, in the satisfactory teaching seen in Years 1, 4 and 5, time for group work was squeezed, allowing less time for writing.

24. Teaching and learning in mathematics and numeracy are also good by the end of Years 2 and 6. Some very good teaching was seen in Years 3 and 4. This is because teachers plan well, use questioning to good effect and gain useful information during lessons, which aids future planning. The management of lessons is also an important strength. However, a weakness is the low level in which ICT is used to develop the subject. Although some examples of numeracy were seen in a number of subjects, pupils' books in science do not reflect good use of numeracy.
25. Teaching and learning in science have improved since the last inspection, especially in Years 1 and 2. Teaching seen was nearly always good. Some very good teaching was evident in Years 4 and 6. Teachers have consistently good subject knowledge. A further strength lies in the effective way in which the teaching of scientific enquiry is integrated with developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes. Classroom assistants contribute well to group work, both enabling pupils to be actively involved and challenging their scientific thinking. The result is effective learning in which pupils learn new facts and ideas at a brisk pace. Pupils are keen to co-operate, participate and reflect on what they see in the investigations they plan and carry out because teaching encourages them to put forward and think through their own ideas. However, there is scope to sharpen lesson objectives to ensure pupils of all abilities are challenged and discuss the significance, validity and reliability of the data pupils collect in investigations.
26. The teaching of ICT remains good, as it was at the last inspection, but several aspects have been consolidated. Teaching has benefited from good training and co-ordination and this leads to good learning in the most successful lessons, based on a clear explanation and analysis of what computers will do. ICT is taught well as a discrete subject because teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum requirements. However, they use ICT less well in other subjects of the curriculum, with opportunities being restricted by a lack of suitable software.

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

27. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The quality and range of learning opportunities are now good overall. The curriculum is broad and balanced across all subjects, including religious education, which is well planned in accordance with the Solihull Locally Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum is fully inclusive and ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Schemes of work to support teacher planning are in place for all subjects and have been thoroughly adapted to meet new criteria and the needs of the pupils at the school.
28. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good in the Nursery but unsatisfactory in the Reception class because not enough time is given to knowledge and understanding of the world, creative activity or personal and social development. In addition there are too few opportunities for children to develop their learning in these areas through well-planned, structured play activities. These deficiencies, and a need to strengthen planning, are impairing standards and result in the children achieving less than expected at the start of their statutory education.
29. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, teachers plan precisely and effectively for pupils of all ability levels, ages and needs. The overall quality of planning is good, and in science it is of very good quality. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effectively implemented, with the provision for both being good. Whilst literacy is well used to raise standards across the curriculum the use of numeracy, whilst satisfactory, is not quite as strong. Planning for the other subjects of the National Curriculum is good. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when the somewhat intermittent teaching of units of work in geography and history affected the continuity of pupils' learning. This has now been put right, as has the time given to religious education, which is now taught in a balanced way. The school has made a conscious decision to invest heavily in single-age rather than mixed-aged classes, and ensuring that all subjects are taught separately. This is working well and paying dividends.

30. There is further scope to improve the curriculum and make it very good or better. Although ICT is used in some subjects, its use across the curriculum is not yet strong enough. There is scope to enhance by simply providing more opportunities for ICT to be exploited in pupils' daily work. All pupils in Years 1 to 6 have a daily literacy and numeracy lesson in the morning. This dominates the curriculum structure and the way it is planned. There is the potential to develop more imaginative curriculum structures, which would add interest, challenge and richness without losing any of the rigour already established. The work that has already been started in widening the range of learning methods could also be spread more widely and be tailored to the ways in which different pupils naturally learn. There are insufficient opportunities identified within subject planning to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, although provision elsewhere has resulted in this being a strength of the school.
31. Curricular provision for SEN pupils, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, is good. This makes a significant contribution to their progress in lessons and enables them to achieve well over time. The school is effectively implementing the new Code of Practice, thus ensuring that the needs of pupils on the SEN register are met and they have equal access across the curriculum.
32. A significant number of parents consider that the school does not provide a wide range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors disagree with them and judge this provision to be good. This is a further improvement on the last inspection. There is a wide range of activities outside lessons. These activities, that are giving a positive experience to pupils, include Kwik cricket, football training, a swimming gala and diving competition, participation in borough athletics, a dance club, short tennis and cycle training. There are also singing, recorder, poetry and science clubs. Girls and boys have equal opportunities to participate in all activities, which are well supported. Visits are made to places of interest, such as Leyton Orient Football Club, Mole Hall Wildlife Park, a 'Ragged School', the Museum of Childhood, the National and Tate art galleries. The clubs provide pupils with a greater range of experiences, enrich the quality of the curriculum and successfully promote their personal and social development.
33. There is good equality of access and opportunity for boys and girls, SEN and EAL pupils and those from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. This is the result of the good use of appropriate teaching methods and materials and the good monitoring and support of pupils' academic and personal progress. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and good role models are provided within the school. Effective steps are taken to ensure that pupils new to the school quickly settle into their learning. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils and acknowledges that improving provision for them is an area for further development. The school ethos is one of inclusion, equal opportunities, racial equality, harmony, mutual respect and support. These principles clearly steer the way the curriculum is planned and implemented.
34. As well as the statutory subjects, the school makes good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). PSHE lessons and circle time take place across the school and pupils interviewed during the inspection were very positive about these. For example, they find it very helpful to be able to discuss sensitive issues with their teachers and classmates during circle time in an atmosphere of confidence and respect. Currently, the co-ordinator is monitoring teachers' lessons plans for PSHE so that she can produce a scheme of work that best meets the needs of all pupils. Sex, health and drug education are all in place and the school works closely with outside agencies to promote a healthy life style. For example, the community police officer, the fire service, the London Ambulance Service and the Accident Prevention Unit make a good input to the curriculum. The good provision for PSHE is ensuring that the pupils are developing confidence and responsibility and preparing them to be active citizens.
35. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. The Christmas carol service is celebrated in St. Anne's Church; the local leisure centre is used for swimming lessons and classes visit Highams Park Lake to support work in history, geography and science. The vicar from St. Anne's, the cycle safety team and a paramedic have all visited the school and all of these contributions further enhance pupils' learning experiences.

36. The school has good links with other partner institutions. Student teachers from Middlesex University are welcomed into school and currently three support staff are training as teachers at Middlesex University; as a result assistants are giving very valuable support to pupils in the classrooms. Year 6 pupils play in league and cup football fixtures, pupils are involved in borough athletics and diving competitions and the swimming team were medal winners in the middle schools' swimming gala. Infant and junior pupils participate in music festivals with pupils from other schools. Through the EAZ, staff meet for joint in-service training, and there are contacts with other schools through borough and primary headteacher group meetings. Heads of Year 7, from local secondary schools, attend parents' evenings, high-attaining Year 5 pupils visit a secondary school to take part in science activities and, as part of the 'Move on Up' programme, Year 6 pupils attend an induction day at the secondary schools. These effective links help the pupils to make a successful transition from primary to secondary education.
37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. This reflects a school aim that is being very successfully achieved: 'to develop each child's awareness of moral, religious and personal values'. The provision for spiritual development is good. The legal requirement that the school provides a daily act of collective worship is being fully met, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Assembly themes reinforce the pupils' own and others' values and beliefs. Pupils are provided with opportunities to explore what motivates them and what drives other people. Following the reading of a story, 'Nobody owns the skies', about a black woman who wanted to be a pilot, the pupils were asked to reflect on how lucky they were to be born in a time when they could do just about anything if they worked hard. Opportunities to inspire pupils and develop their spiritual awareness are not always identified in lesson planning but some lessons were seen during the inspection that allowed pupils to appreciate and understand what is special and worthy of respect. For example, in religious education in Year 6, the class had a very good opportunity to explore their emotions when studying the story of Noah. In a Year 6 history lesson, the class role-played with artefacts to develop an understanding of ancient Egypt. The schools' good provision for spiritual development is enabling pupils to flourish and blossom in a climate of aspiration.
38. The school takes very good measures to promote moral development. The discipline policy is applied consistently by all teachers. Therefore, pupils know how they are expected to behave and lessons are not disrupted. Every year the pupils write class rules with their teacher. They appreciate the reward system and accept the consequences of undesirable behaviour and feel that all teachers treat them fairly. Personal, social and health education lessons, circle times and assemblies all contribute positively to pupils' moral development. The story 'War Game' was re-enacted during an assembly and gave the pupils a very good opportunity to reflect on the ethics of war. The pupils are becoming morally aware and this can be seen in the good behaviour in lessons and their approach to moral dilemmas they encounter.
39. Provision for social development is very good. This is reflected in the very good relationships throughout the school. Pupils are able to exercise responsibility; for example, in assembly and supporting the youngest children at lunch times. Teachers ensure pupils work together in pairs and small groups; for example, in a Year 5 personal, social and health education lesson when the pupils discussed anti-social behaviour. The many clubs organised by the school, and the Year 6 residential trip to the Isle of Wight, also offer pupils the chance to develop socially. All of these opportunities are producing confident pupils with good attitudes to learning.
40. The cultural development of the pupils is good. The school works closely with the vicar of St. Anne's Church. Pupils visit there regularly to support their learning. Pupils also gain an understanding of their own culture through a range of visitors to the school, for example the Shakespearean workshop and senior citizens talking about their experiences of the Second World War and the visits pupils make, including the Millfield Theatre for a production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. As reported at the inspection of July 2000, the school's approach to multicultural development is also good. An African drummer was a welcome visitor during the inspection week; the library contains a range of books that reflects cultural diversity, the school's recognition of Black History Week and the celebration of many festivals including Diwali, Eid and Hanukah. The

school community comprises many pupils from a wide range of backgrounds; they are all tolerant of each other and work happily side by side. The school is making good provision to ensure that the pupils are prepared for living in our diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school takes very good steps to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. The health and safety policy clearly states the organisation and arrangements at the school. Risk assessments take place and are appropriately recorded and dealt with by the governors premises committee; this is an improvement since the inspection of July 2000. There are good arrangements in place for first aid and medical support; appropriate records are kept. The pupils are satisfactorily supervised at break and lunchtimes; kitchen staff and lunchtime supervisors have good relationships with the pupils and are able to deal with behavioural issues if any should occur. The school has very good arrangements in place for child protection issues. Three members of staff have been trained for this role and all staff are aware of the procedures that are in place. The school has established good provision for pupils' PSHE. In PSHE lessons and circle time pupils are able to discuss personal issues and learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy.
42. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are effective and are helping pupils to mature noticeably as they go through the school. Circle time, PSHE provision and the acknowledgement of success during celebration assemblies are all helping pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. During lessons pupils receive very good support from their teachers and classroom assistants and this ensures that all pupils can be successful in their learning and partly accounts for the good standards across the school.
43. There are very good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate oppressive behaviour. The consistency with which staff apply rewards and sanctions is a major contributor to the good behaviour in the school. The pupils know what is expected of them and understand the consequences are of not behaving well. These good procedures also successfully contribute to good attitudes to learning because the pupils feel safe and well cared for.
44. The school has set up good procedures for the monitoring and improving of attendance. Attendance registers are taken promptly and checked daily; instances of unexplained absence or unpunctuality are recorded and parents are contacted if no reason for absence or lateness has been received. The education welfare officer (EWO) works closely with the school, visiting families if necessary. The good procedures for the monitoring of attendance have resulted in a better rate of attendance and fewer unauthorised absences this term.
45. There are good procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These have improved since the last inspection when the use of short-term assessment to guide curricular planning was identified as a weakness. The assessment and monitoring of progress for SEN pupils is good. There are good procedures to identify strengths and weaknesses in English, mathematics and science through detailed analyses of national test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and through a range of optional tests in other years. The information that is gathered is used to help teachers set curricular targets for their classes and group targets in English and mathematics. However, the existing procedures are not yet sufficiently developed to assess the progress of individual pupils and different groups of pupils over a longer period of time. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress are not consistently sound in the other curriculum subjects. As a result, the information that is available is not always used effectively to influence curriculum planning or to provide pupils with a clear enough view of what to do to get better.
46. The arrangements for the identification and assessment of SEN pupils are good. IEPs contain specific and measurable targets that are regularly reviewed and shared with parents. Pupils are clear about their targets and are involved in monitoring their progress towards them. Monitoring and support for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs is good and the classroom assistants play an important role in this through observing pupils' responses to activities and identifying areas for further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Overall, the school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Although there was a low return, the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and parents' meeting indicate that parents and carers have confidence in the school and are less negative than at the time of the last inspection. A significant number of parents do not feel they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. The school provides three opportunities for parents to discuss the progress of their children and look at their work. Usually, about 90 per cent of the parents attend. As only one consultation evening a year is required by statute, parents are given more opportunities than is strictly required. Parents are also welcome to talk to teachers at the end of the day. However, the inspection team judges the quality of the annual reports to parents as satisfactory. Art and design is not reported separately on all of them. Although the reports do not sometimes give enough information to parents about the level at which their children are working or set targets for improvement, the information given on progress is satisfactory overall.
48. A significant majority of the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaires felt that the amount of homework received by their children is appropriate. The inspection team agrees with them as evidence shows that homework is regularly set throughout the school. The home/school reading books are well used by many parents and teachers, and in Year 6 contact books provide a useful dialogue between teachers and parents to support children's learning. The good help that many parents give to their children with homework is a valuable asset to the school and is having a positive impact upon pupils' attitudes to work.
49. The school prospectus is informative but the governor's annual report to parents does not contain all of the required information. The governors' newsletters called GOLD, and the school newspaper "School Talk" keep parents up to date with the day-to-day life of the school. The behaviour policy is shared with them and the home school agreement and homework policy were written in consultation with parents. Induction procedures in the Nursery for parents and children are very good and help to make the parents feel a part of the school community. Parents are invited to assemblies and church services and some parents help in school, sharing their skills with the pupils and teachers, including reading and organising the dance and craft clubs. The school association (FOLA) organises successful fund-raising events including quiz nights, themed raffles and children's discos. The school arranges curriculum meetings for parents to find out about what their children are learning but they are not well supported.
50. A number of parents do not feel that the school is well led or approachable or that it works closely with them. The inspection team disagrees with them, as their responses to the questionnaires do not reflect that this is a good school. This is a school that makes positive efforts to build good relationships with parents but parents do not always take full advantage of all that is provided for them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher took up post just around the time of the last inspection and inherited a school with serious weaknesses, suffering from declining standards, pupils underperforming by the end of Year 6, an ineffective governing body and some weaknesses in the curriculum and development planning. The headteacher has shown outstanding leadership in the last two years. She has turned the school around, converting it from an underperforming to an effective school. She is well supported by two able and effective assistant headteachers. They have wide-ranging responsibilities, share the management of the school and provide strong support to the headteacher. She has assembled and developed a cohesive and skilled team of teachers. Together, they have robustly addressed the key issues for action evident at the last inspection. The combination of effective and improving management systems and commitment of all staff and governors to further improve provision and standards means that there is a very good capacity to improve further.
52. The management of the curriculum, teaching and learning is also effective. This has improved since the last inspection, although there is now a need to focus on putting right the curriculum and

teaching weaknesses in the Reception class. All teachers are seen teaching regularly, either by a member of the senior management team, external consultants or subject co-ordinators. As a result the headteacher has an extremely clear view of what each teacher does well and where they need to improve. The results of all classroom visits are discussed, teachers are aware of their improvement targets and support is given to teachers to help make their teaching better. The impact has been that teaching is now stronger and more consistent since the last inspection. Good oversight of the curriculum has ensured that no subject is neglected and that past weaknesses in history and geography have been rectified. Subject co-ordination is much stronger and this has also helped to improve the effectiveness of the school. It is good in all subjects except science, where it is very good, and design and technology, music and physical education, where it is satisfactory. Nearly all co-ordinators are proactive in monitoring standards and provision and helping other teachers to raise standards in their subjects, although two subjects currently lack a full-time co-ordinator. Strong links with other schools, fostered by the EAZ, have helped co-ordinators develop their role well.

53. The leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The SENCO is fairly new to her post but has already had a significant impact on the provision. She has received good training and is well supported by colleagues in local schools. This has helped her to implement policy and practice quickly and effectively. IEPs have been reviewed to ensure targets are specific and relevant to work in the classroom. Pupils' progress is monitored regularly in consultation with classroom assistants and through informal discussions with class teachers.
54. Very good action has been taken to improve and meet the targets the school sets for itself, for raising pupils' standards and improving provision, through the school development plan. The plan is much better than described at the last inspection. It is drawn up with a clear knowledge of how much each aspect will cost and what training staff might need to implement each part of the plan. All staff are involved in drawing up the plan and individuals are empowered to take responsibility for those areas which are linked to their roles within the school. It focuses on the right priorities and is easy to follow. Costs and success criteria are indicated for each development point, although occasionally the link between a desired improvement and how this will lead to improved standards is not sufficiently clear. A much closer scrutiny of assessment data and better information on individual pupils, especially in English and mathematics, have enabled staff to target individual pupils and provide the necessary support to help raise standards. Another important factor, which has aided the very effective action taken, is that the existing expertise of staff has been reviewed and better deployed and co-ordinated. Thus, for example, the assistant headteachers have a clear brief to oversee particular year groups. Within this structure the expertise of individual staff has been arranged so that more experience or skilled staff can help other teachers further develop their expertise and assist them with meeting targets.
55. The governing body is effective. Its work has been considerably strengthened since the last inspection. It is purposefully chaired and the committee structure has been thoroughly reviewed. Terms of reference for each sub-committee are clear. All governors are kept very well informed on all issues by the headteacher and co-ordinators. Although some governors are linked to some subjects and make occasional visits, they do not gather enough first-hand information to inform the decisions they have to make and enable them to act as 'critical friends'. The way in which the governors look at the efficiency and effectiveness of the school through their monitoring has received close attention, as it was of some concern at the time of the last inspection. Their monitoring of the development plan is now very thorough. The governors have put in place a good performance management system, health and safety procedures are now secure and the failure to provide a daily act of collective worship has been rectified. They take a much more pro-active role in drawing up and monitoring the progress of the school development plan and, as a result, are able to focus resources more effectively on areas of need. Governors have ensured that all statutory requirements regarding the National Curriculum are met but there are minor omissions in their annual report to parents. There is a good policy and practice on promoting racial equality. This has ensured that all groups of pupils relate harmoniously to each other.
56. Financial planning remains good, as it was at the last inspection. Last year a large carry forward (money not spent the previous year) of 5.5 per cent was a feature of the budget. Nearly all of this

was earmarked for improvements to the accommodation. This has now been spent. In the current year a budget was set, but finances are under great pressure. The school says this is because of untimely and unclear information being made available from the local education authority (LEA). A significant loss has also been made through the LEA being unable to fully recompense the school through its "insurance" arrangements, which covered staff absence. As a result, the school's finances are currently on a knife edge. There is little contingency to cover emergencies. Much of the school's income comes from external grants such as those for SEN, EAL, earmarked monies to improve standards from the government and the EAZ. These funds are spent well. They are directed to the purposes intended and have a good impact on standards and overall provision. Information technology is used well to improve financial and administrative efficiency, and steps are being taken to widen use to enable data on pupils' academic performance to be better tracked. Finances are audited regularly. Prompt action has been taken on all the recommendations of the last audit report.

57. The school is effectively pursuing the principles of best value. The headteacher and governors look at the performance of the school in the national tests against local, national and similar schools and so they have a good idea of how well the school is doing against a number of benchmarks. However, the governors are not yet skilled in comparing the costs of the school with other similar schools. Good value for money is being increasingly sought through competitive, contracted-out services and all contracts, when they expire, are subject to this discipline. The governors and headteacher are effective in evaluating how well money is spent internally, as in, for example, judging how well money on SEN or ICT is spent. Most of the consultation and information exchange between the school and the pupils and their parents occurs through consultation evenings or through newsletters or the PTA, but there are plans to enhance this by the establishment of a school council. The headteacher and governors report that requests for information from local and national bodies are often badly timed or involve too short a timescale for a proper response; sometimes, different bodies ask for the same information in different format. Although these bureaucratic demands are reducing, they still divert the management of the school from normal core duties.
58. The school is currently well staffed by teachers of good quality, including four non-qualified teachers from Commonwealth countries. These have settled in very well and have quickly made an effective contribution to the life and work of the school. Although there has been some staff illness, which has necessitated the use of supply teachers that have sometimes been of an unsatisfactory quality, these difficulties have been resolved. There are no current teaching vacancies despite a modest turnover of staff, and good quality staff have filled any vacancies which have arisen. An improved and effective system for inducting new staff operates, which quickly helps staff settle in well. More classroom assistants have been employed who are used well to enhance the quality of learning and assist teaching staff in other duties. Most subjects are adequately resourced with books and equipment but there are shortages of suitable texts in science in Years 3 to 6 and software to enable ICT to be used well across the curriculum; for example problem-solving software in mathematics. The internal accommodation is good, particularly in the Nursery. The classrooms are spacious and attractive with classroom display of a good quality, which aids learning across subjects. The caretaking staff keep the school clean and well maintained. There is a small, but useful, ICT suite and a good-sized library that is well stocked. The quality of the outside accommodation is weaker, and has correctly been identified within the school development plan as in need of development. The Reception classroom is rather small and pupils' learning suffers from the lack of a well-developed outside area; the field is underused as it is in need of maintenance and although there has been a good investment in a climbing wall in the infant playground, the junior playground environment is unstimulating. Security on site is excellent.
59. The school provides pupils with an effective quality of education. This is a result of consistently good teaching and a strong curriculum, with the exception of the Reception class, which leads to all groups of pupils achieving well by the end of Year 6. Very strong provision for pupils' moral and social education and the good care provided result in pupils having good attitudes to school and growing well personally, and pupils of all abilities working in harmony. As a result of these

outcomes the school provides good value for money with respect to what it achieves in relation to its expenditure. This is an improvement on the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to further raise standards and improve the quality of education offered, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (a) improve standards in writing* by:
 - implementing the existing improvement plan for this aspect of English and literacy;
 - focusing on improving the writing skills of lower-attaining pupils.

(See paragraphs 8, 80)

- (b) improve the quality of planning, teaching and the learning environment in the Reception class so that the children achieve well by:
 - ensuring that the teacher's knowledge all areas of learning is at least secure;
 - improving curricular planning in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and pupils' personal, social and emotional education;
 - ensuring that appropriate time is given to all areas of learning;
 - improving the opportunities for outdoor and structured play*.

(See paragraphs 2, 64, 66, 68, 71, 73)

The following minor weaknesses should also be addressed:

- the fragile attendance so that it is improved to at least the national average level (see paragraph 15)
- the use of ICT across the curriculum* (see paragraphs 26, 82, 91, 97, 103, 107, 111, 116, 124, 131, 136)
- pupils' annual reports to parents (see paragraph 45)
- the quality of the outdoor environment (see paragraphs 58)
- the minor omissions in the governor's annual report to parents. (see paragraph 55)

* The school has already included improving standards in writing, the use of ICT across the curriculum and improving the quality of the outdoor environment within its current school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	30	19	2	0	0
Percentage	0	22	45	28	3	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	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	260
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	77

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	73

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	44

Pupil mobility in the last school Year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.2

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	20	23	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	115	17	17
	Girls	19	20	21
	Total	34	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (79)	86 (87)	88 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	37	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (82)	88 (95)	88 (92)
	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	22	32	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	20
	Girls	26	23	30
	Total	41	40	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (69)	74 (69)	93 (82)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	18	18
	Girls	25	25	28
	Total	39	43	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (67)	81 (72)	85 (82)
	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	168	1	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	22	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	39	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	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)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	23.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	687.45

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers	
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Financial information

Financial Year	2001
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	£
Total income	1008885
Total expenditure	975613
Expenditure per pupil	3415
Balance brought forward from previous Year	14202
Balance carried forward to next Year	47474

Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
<i>FTE means full-time equivalent.</i>	

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two Years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two Years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

324

Number of questionnaires returned

68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	39	4	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	57	6	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	59	7	4	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	51	6	6	3
The teaching is good.	37	56	3	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	46	20	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	41	10	6	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	61	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	23	52	13	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	22	54	12	6	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	54	7	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	36	25	7	7

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The questionnaire shows that parents have some concerns about five of the twelve questions they were asked to respond to. They are positive about the school helping their children to become mature, agree that most children like school, are taught satisfactorily and progress as might be expected. However, there are some parents who feel that the school is not led as well as it should be, the school could be more approachable, it could work more closely with parents and there could be more extra-curricular activities. All matters raised by parents were thoroughly investigated and are included in the report.

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

61. Children enter the Nursery the term after their third birthday and most children stay there until they enter the Reception class in the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection, there were 64 children attending the Nursery on a part-time basis and 12 children in the Reception class. Children start in the Nursery with a fairly wide range of skills which are below average overall, and although they achieve well whilst they are in the Nursery, their attainment on entry to the Reception class is also below average overall. This is because there are a good number of children who have difficulties with speech and communication, which hamper their learning.
62. By the end of the Reception year, attainment overall is below average in all areas of learning except physical development, where it is average. All children, including SEN and EAL children, achieve as well as expected in communication language and literacy, mathematics, physical development and the information and communication technology strand of knowledge and understanding of the world. Their achievement in all other areas of learning is less than might be expected. This is due to weaknesses in curricular provision and the teacher's inadequate knowledge of those areas of learning.
63. The quality of teaching is good in the Nursery class, across the areas of learning. This is a consequence of the good learning environment created, the well-planned and organised teaching to cover the areas of learning in a relevant and interesting manner and the sensitive approach of all staff to meet the diverse learning needs of the children in their care. As a result of this, children settle quickly, enjoy the activities on offer, demonstrate high levels of independence and make good gains in their learning. The main weakness in the teaching in the Nursery is that not all staff question the children in a manner which fully develops their thinking skills; nor do they give the children sufficient opportunity to respond fully. The Nursery co-ordinator does not have sufficient opportunities to monitor this aspect of provision.
64. In the Reception class, the teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall, although there is some good and satisfactory teaching. It is good in the information and communication technology strand of knowledge and understanding of the world but unsatisfactory in the rest of this area of learning. Elsewhere it is also unsatisfactory in creative and children's personal, social and emotional development. It is satisfactory in all other areas of learning. The main weaknesses in the Reception class teaching are a lack of knowledge of some of the areas of learning, a lack of clearly-stated learning objectives in planning, and weaknesses in curricular provision. These are not helped by the fact that planning is not detailed enough to support the teacher where her skills are weaker. There is not enough time given to knowledge and understanding of the world, creative activity or personal and social development, and there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their learning in these areas through well-planned, structured play activities. Where teaching is satisfactory or good, the teacher is much more confident in her ability to teach these areas of learning and generally teaches them well, ensuring that the children develop the appropriate skills and knowledge.
65. In both the Nursery and Reception class the support staff make a good contribution to the children's learning. For example, in the story-telling session in the Nursery, the Nursery nurse made good use of resources to engage the children's interest in the story and, through effective questioning, developed their vocabulary well. In the Reception class, the classroom assistant supported several children well during their information and communication technology lesson, seeking every opportunity to develop their keyboard skills and knowledge of initial sounds.
66. The Nursery accommodation is very good. It is very spacious indoors with a large room for general activities and several small areas for group work. Outdoors, there is a good range of play equipment, grassed and hard play areas. There is a good range of appropriate learning resources. All of these are used well by staff to ensure children's learning benefits. As a result of the good use made of space children are able to concentrate undisturbed for extended periods of time. For

example, one child very carefully walked round the painting easel to collect individual pots of paint to ensure each petal of her flower had a different colour, and in another activity children had a large table to spread out the toys in order to create their home environment. The Reception classroom is much smaller and has no direct access to an outdoor area although children visit the Nursery once a week for outdoor play. Additionally, the inside learning environment is overcrowded, making it difficult for children to work independently on structured play activities.

67. There have been good improvements in the Nursery since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage and Nursery co-ordinators have worked very hard to address all the issues raised and in this has been successful. Teaching is now good, the learning environment stimulating and planning and assessment of children's' learning are carefully structured.

Personal social and emotional development

68. Most children enter the Nursery happily at the start of the session and settle very quickly to the activities on offer. They part from parents and carers willingly and very few show concern at being away from them. As they go through the Nursery, they show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out their activities, many showing high levels of enthusiasm, involvement and concentration. They behave very well, and are generally helpful and friendly towards each other. They tidy up well at the end of activities. However, it is obvious from the new children observed that children do not start with well-developed social skills and can be restless and slow to listen. By the time they start in the Reception class, they are fully aware of the expectations for their behaviour, sit quietly when expected to, and abide by class rules and routines. However, they have limited opportunities to work independently as the teacher directs much of their work. They demonstrate less enthusiasm and interest in many of the activities and this is linked to inadequacies in provision for them. Most dress, and undress, independently for physical education. They enjoy being physically active, and use their bodies confidently in physical education lessons.

Communication language and literacy

69. When children start in the Nursery, there are wide variations in their speaking and listening skills; some have a limited vocabulary whilst others communicate effectively in short sentences. Most enjoy listening to stories and enjoy contributing to discussions about them. They are happy to talk about things such as fireworks and trick or treat, and talk confidently in small group situations. They enjoy looking at books and turn the pages appropriately. Some of the older children make up stories to match the pictures and a few recognise some words in books. Most recognise their own name and are beginning to match sounds to letters. In the Reception class children continue to develop their listening skills and most listen well to the teacher. They generally are confident in responding to questions although a few are still experiencing difficulties in talking and communicating. The children read simple books with the help of the teacher or classroom assistant and are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to help with their reading. A few higher-attaining children are using these skills to build three-letter words. These skills are helped when the teacher organises children into small groups and, through good questioning, such as "What sound has it got?", "What is the first sound in turtle?" or "What is the end sound in these words?", focuses on developing these skills. Most write under the teacher's writing and are beginning to form the letters correctly. A few children write simple phrases on their own using a word bank.

Mathematical development

70. Children in the Nursery have a wide range of opportunities to develop their counting and mathematical skills. For example, they count the number of children for drinks at break times and check they have the correct number of cups. There are number games, a 'number of the week' table and 'shape of the week' table as well as focused teaching. Children decorate numbers and shapes to reinforce their knowledge of them. They sing number songs such as "ten fat sausages", which involve counting back in twos, and "Two Little Dicky Birds" focusing on the number two. In the Reception class, most children can count to ten. A small number of higher-attaining children

work with numbers to 20 and, with support, carry out simple addition of numbers. Most collect the correct number of objects to match a given numeral, although a small number of children still have difficulty with this. A few understand “bigger than” and “smaller than” in terms of numbers. They have compared the size of their feet with the biggest foot in the world and ordered their own feet according to size

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. The Nursery children learn well about the world around them through a range of visits and visitors such as the visit to Highams Park Lake, and the visit of the fire engine and dentist. They know the names of a variety of fruit, and draw the foods they like best. Children make ‘shakers’ using a variety of recyclable materials and use these in their music-making. As part of their work on favourite foods they used the computer to complete a simple snack survey. They have good opportunities to cook, which introduces them to the process of change. Through their recent work in Diwali culminating in an assembly for the whole school, they gained an awareness of cultures and beliefs of others. In the Reception class the children do not continue to develop many of these skills well due to the inadequate amount of time given to this area and weaknesses in the teacher’s subject knowledge. However, their computer skills improve and many use the mouse, tool bar and keyboard competently to complete tasks. Although they use materials to make shoes out of shoeboxes and homes for animals, the activities are similar. Overall there is limited evidence that a wide range of objects is built or a variety of tools are used. The teacher’s inadequate subject knowledge and the limited time given each week to teaching it, hamper scientific development. In the lesson seen the children learned that some materials can be seen through whilst others cannot. They learned little else in the lesson. Some shone torches on a variety of objects but were unclear about the purpose of the activity. The teacher did not question the children in order to develop their skills further. There is limited evidence that they are encouraged to develop a sense of time or place in any meaningful way. They learn satisfactorily about other cultures and beliefs through stories such as “The Good Samaritan”, which the teacher used well for this purpose.

Physical development

72. In the Nursery, the children learn about some of their bodily needs through the work on their favourite foods. Older children dress and undress themselves competently but many of the younger children still need support. They use the toilet without help from an adult. Most can climb on the outside apparatus confidently. They run and jump spontaneously and ride wheeled vehicles with appropriate balance and skill. In physical education lessons, younger children follow instructions to march on the spot or stretch. Older children move along benches in a variety of ways. They jump off benches sensibly, most remembering to bend their knees. Children in the Reception class have good control over their bodies and use them well to go over, under and through a range of obstacles. They move along benches and beams in a variety of ways and jump off them sensibly to land safely. They throw beanbags into a hoop with a sound level of accuracy. Most have at least satisfactorily developed hand-to-eye co-ordination skills, which they use in cutting, gluing and making activities.

Creative development

73. Children in the Nursery enjoy a wide range of creative activities that develop their imagination and give them opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials. For example, they use small world toys, role play in the Nursery café, paint, draw, and develop techniques such as marbling and cut, stick and glue to make their own objects. They have good opportunities to enjoy music-making through making their own shakers, exploring the sounds of a variety of musical instruments and listening to music on the tape recorder. Most make loud and quiet sounds using their shakers and use them effectively in loud and quiet songs. For example, they really enjoyed making loud noises to accompany ‘I hear thunder.’ There are good examples throughout the Nursery of this area of learning being fully exploited to develop children creatively and as a result, they achieve well. Children in the Reception class use scissors and glue to cut out animals to put in their animal houses. They learn to mix paints to make new colours but do not have the

opportunity to experiment with colour mixing. In music they can play a selection of musical instruments loudly or softly. They draw and paint, but this does not involve developing ideas or discussions with the teacher to describe what they are trying to do. In their mixing of colours and music-making, children show limited enthusiasm and make few gains in their learning and this is mainly because the activities do not challenge them and they have few opportunities to develop their own ideas or explore the qualities of resources. Children are not making much progress in their development as limited time is given to this area of learning and the activities are not well planned to ensure effective learning takes place.

ENGLISH

74. Standards in English at the end of Year 6 were well below average at the time of the last inspection. Since then there has been a significant rise in standards, representing very good improvement. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 show that 76% of pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 4 or better, in line with the national average. However, fewer pupils reached the higher levels and thus the overall school level of performance was slightly below the national average. In 2002, standards in the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 were below average in reading and average in writing. This is an improvement since the last inspection. From inspection evidence, standards by the end of Year 2 are average, while those at the end of Year 6 are average in reading and speaking, above average in listening and slightly below average in pupils' writing. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and has good strategies in place, which have already raised standards but have had insufficient time to fully impact.
75. By the end of Years 2 and 6 all groups of pupils, including SEN, EAL and gifted and talented pupils, achieve well. Pupils enter the school with below average standards in communication, language, and literacy and show good improvement on their prior attainment. This is due to a range of strategies to improve teaching introduced in the two years since the last inspection and the improvement in pupils' attitudes to their work, especially those seen in Year 6.
76. Standards of speaking are average but those in listening are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils enter the school with below average skills and, due to well-planned opportunities, achieve well. They sit and listen to instructions well and are able to apply them. As they get older, pupils work well together collaboratively and listen to each other. Teachers provide planned time, including, for example, circle time for pupils to express their opinions. Many opportunities arise during the literacy hour for pupils to speak. In a Year 2 lesson pupils had, in pairs, to discuss and order a sequence of sentences from 'The Cat that lost its Purr'. A visitor from a Shakespearean Theatre group provided a very good range of speaking opportunities for Year 6 pupils as they improvised on the theme of 'A Midsummer Nights Dream'. Most pupils were confident, but some were reluctant to put their views to the Duke. In discussion groups, during the inspection, pupils were able to express their opinions and recount in detail visits linked to their studies in history and geography.
77. Standards in reading are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well in relation to the prior attainment. All classes have access to a good range of reading books, colour coded according to difficulty, and teachers are very thorough in monitoring pupils' progress. Pupils are heard to read regularly at school and classroom assistants and parents make a significant contribution to this. The home school reading logs indicate that parents are very supportive and even older higher-attaining pupils are heard to read regularly. As pupils progress through the school, they use a range of strategies to help them decode the text and those hearing pupils read have a clear focus on ensuring that pupils understand what they read. Pupils read quite fluently as they get older and they are encouraged to read with expression, although the lower-attaining pupils find this difficult. Pupils from an early age know such terms as author and illustrator, and as they get older identify their favourite author, discuss characters and predict what will happen next. Older pupils, in particular, are confident in using the well-organised library. Pupils throughout the school have very positive attitudes and enjoy reading. One Year 6 pupil was reading a Salman Rushdie novel from home while another, when asked where the book came from, said, "I picked it up in the Co-op down the road".

78. In writing, standards are average at the end of Year 2 and just below average at the end of Year 6. However, this still represents good achievement on pupils' prior attainment. It is in the area of writing that the high numbers of SEN and EAL pupils have the greatest difficulty. The school has identified this, and the SENCO teaches a group of Year 6 pupils daily, during the literacy hour, from the two classes to continue to raise standards.
79. By the end of Year 2 most pupils are able to write independently using simple words in sentences, make their meaning clear with logical sequencing and use capital letters and full stops. However, there are few pupils who can construct more complex sentences and achieve higher levels. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils listened for the use of capital letters as the teacher read a passage. In their group work they discussed alternatives to "and" and "then", in order to create more complex sentences. In their writing, key words are usually spelt correctly or are phonetically plausible. Handwriting is generally well formed and more able pupils join their letters. Pupils present their work well and there is sensible use of worksheets for reinforcement of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
80. By the end of Year 6, the average and higher-attaining pupils are writing complex sentences, well punctuated and using a good range of vocabulary. However, it is the high number of lower-attaining pupils that reduces the overall school standards in writing. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, many pupils showed a good technical vocabulary, confident with terms such as onomatopoeia and alliteration, when analysing the poem 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll. Pupils write for a range of purposes. In Year 3, pupils read 'The Pied Piper' and discussed the difference between prose and play scripts while Year 6 pupils write suspense stories and factual accounts of their role models. Pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work are good.
81. There are good examples of the use of literacy across the curriculum in, for example, science accounts in Year 2, Black History Month in Year 4 and Year 5 pupils writing letters home from their billets in World War Two. The use of ICT is less well developed and is limited mainly to word processing, although the school newspaper 'School Talk' is interesting and well presented. English makes an important contribution to pupils' social and cultural development through the collaborative group work and the range of texts from different cultures in the literacy hour. On the Shakespearean Theatre day, pupils were encouraged to make moral decisions.
82. The good quality of teaching and learning has been sustained since the last inspection and has now impacted on raising standards. The introductory whole-class sessions in the literacy hour are well taught. The well-matched tasks and targeted questioning seen in many lessons show that teachers have a good knowledge of the needs of individual children. All lessons are carefully planned with clear objectives. However, there is some inconsistency in the effectiveness with which teachers share these objectives with pupils, so that they know exactly what they should be learning, and in some lessons the time for group work becomes 'squeezed', allowing less time for writing and the plenary session. In the best lessons seen, teachers encourage pupils to review their learning against these objectives at the end of the lesson. Good examples of teachers using skilful questioning to extend pupils' learning and to target pupils of differing abilities were seen in all lessons. Teachers deploy and brief their classroom assistants well, and this contributes to the effective, skilled support they give to both pupils with special educational needs and others groups with which they work. All of these factors contribute to pupils achieving well in English. Teachers manage their pupils in a positive and effective way, which helps to build their confidence, sustain their concentration and contribute to their positive attitudes to the subject. In the lessons seen little use was made of computers in the classroom, although there are examples of word-processed work. Teachers make good use of their assessments of pupils to match work to pupils' needs and to adjust their planning. All pupils have individual targets, which they know and understand. Work is well marked in accordance with the school's policy. Teachers' skills in moderating writing across the school to increase their own awareness of how pupils' skills are progressing in relation to National Curriculum levels, are a current focus of attention.
83. Subject co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator, with the LEA literacy consultant, has worked well with teachers to implement successfully and consistently the National Literacy Strategy, so that the pupils build effectively on previous learning. Rigorous school policies and consistent monitoring

of teaching have contributed to raising pupils' standards. Classrooms have pupils' literacy work well displayed, with good examples of word processed work and key vocabulary and literacy prompts appropriate to the age of the pupils. Resources have been improved. For example, the library is adequately stocked with good quality non-fiction and poetry books that pupils regularly use. Assessment procedures are good and include the use of reading tests and the use of optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. The school is well placed to raise literacy standards to an above average level.

MATHEMATICS

84. At the last inspection, standards were well below average at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and below average for similar schools. Standards have risen sharply since then. In 2001, standards reached in the National Curriculum tests by the end of Year 2 matched the national average. Although they dropped back to below average in 2002, they were in line with those of similar schools. In 2002 standards reached by the end of Year 6 were average when compared with all schools nationally and above average when compared with similar schools.
85. All groups of pupils now achieve well by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of consistently good teaching that is well focused on their learning needs. In addition, good achievement is helped by the National Numeracy Strategy being effectively tailored to their requirements thanks to careful assessment and analyses supported by regular monitoring of lessons. SEN and EAL pupils, and those new to the school, receive good in-class support so that they achieve as well as their classmates.
86. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average. The pupils start Year 1 with some weaknesses in their mathematical development, and many are still working within the Early Learning Goals. Teachers' good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses means that they respond well to appropriate demands and build up their skills briskly. During the last inspection pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics and to explain their workings were underdeveloped. Probing questions now make pupils think hard so that the vast majority explain their methods and reasoning coherently. Higher-attaining pupils are confident in their grasp of place value of numbers at least up to 100 but lower-attaining pupils struggle beyond 20 without help. Most pupils see that subtraction is the inverse of addition and recognise sequences of odd or even numbers. Although competent doubling and halving are common, pupils do not yet use simple fractions. By the end of Year 1 displays show that pupils identify basic two-dimensional shapes and higher attainers in a Year 1 lesson on measurements were already using pencil lengths to discover what was longer or shorter than something else, showing good initiative. This led them well towards sorting objects using defined reference points. However, there was no evidence of further work on shapes and measurements or of data handling such as using charts or graphs because these are areas to be addressed later in the term.
87. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average. Average and higher-attaining pupils show good levels of mental agility, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing competently. Lower-attaining and SEN pupils work confidently with the simple fractions $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$. Displayed work from all groups shows satisfactory skills in deriving pairs of numbers to two decimal places and in finding equivalent fractions or percentages. Pupils regularly use mathematical terms such as "integers" correctly because teachers regularly emphasise key words to support the development of literacy, but there was no evidence that pupils express simple formulae in words or that they have begun to interpret coordinates. They have used their skills in measurements for practical problem-solving, for example to calculate materials needed for tiling a floor. Although most average and higher attainers know their tables up to 10x, they undertake limited work on areas. They draw common 2-D but not 3-D shapes. Lower attainers are beginning to extend their data handling by the use of pie charts. Average and higher attainers are already making competent use of the probability scale of 0-1 and expressing themselves in the correct terminology. They have not yet begun to evaluate mean, mode and median. Pupils were observed using mathematics in information and communication technology lessons but there was no evidence to suggest that ICT is regularly used to support mathematics. In several lessons, computers were available, switched on but unused. Teaching and using numeracy across the curriculum are broadly satisfactory: for example

the use of time lines in history, including the use of negative numbers in dates B.C., and measurements for the construction of slippers in design and technology. However, there is insufficient emphasis on numeracy in science lessons, so opportunities to reinforce pupils' learning are lost.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. This is because teachers carefully check how well pupils are building up their skills and then give them appropriate tasks to reinforce what they have done then take them further. Teachers generally maintain a brisk pace, which challenges pupils throughout the lessons and keeps them focused on the lesson objectives. This enables the pupils to learn well. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 3, the teacher clearly explained the purpose of tasks, indicated that she had high expectations of what can be achieved and used effective questioning to probe and extend pupils' understanding. She also used a good variety of strategies to ensure that all pupils were included throughout the lesson. Pupils were encouraged to explain their methods and thinking, which helped deepen the pupils' understanding of their own learning. A further very good example of teaching was seen in a problem-solving exercise in Year 4, which was characterised by effective class organisation and management, the maintenance of a brisk pace throughout the lesson and high expectations of behaviour and personal responsibility. This encouraged pupils to think for themselves and confidently share their ideas with the whole class. Classroom assistants are used well in all classes. They are usually very well briefed and adopt many of the same techniques as the class teachers. This contributes well to the strengthening of learning and standards.
89. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall because teachers set clear expectations of pupil behaviour. Pupils respond appropriately to these expectations and the consistent reward of praise. The vast majority of pupils were enthusiastic and showed interest in mathematics lessons. Very good relationships between the teachers and pupils and between all groups of pupils made an effective contribution to learning.
90. Assessment in mathematics is good. During the course of the lessons, teachers observe pupils and question them to assess their understanding, knowledge and skills. This information is used to intervene and support pupils. Praise and acknowledgement of pupils' effort, positive attitudes and understanding are used to motivate and inspire pupils. Targets are regularly set for the different groups of pupils in the classes, which helps both teachers and pupils see how well they are doing. As well as the end of unit assessments in the published course books followed, statutory tests in Years 2 and 6 and non-statutory tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 are used consistently to establish the standards of attainment and progress of pupils. This information is carefully analysed and used well to help guide teachers' planning and set challenging work for the different groups of pupils in each class. Marking is regular and supportive comments contribute to pupils' positive attitudes shown in the consistent and reasonably neat presentation of their work.
91. Co-ordination of the subject is good. There is a good understanding of the strengths and areas of development for the subject thanks to careful monitoring and the information is used effectively to further develop the subject. There are satisfactory levels of equipment and resources that enable learning to take place in all areas of work but a lack of appropriate problem-solving software limits the use of ICT. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good and there is the potential to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

92. Standards have shown a very good improvement since the last inspection when they were average in relation to all schools nationally and similar schools at the end of Year 6. Standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests were above the national average and well above when compared with similar schools. The 2002 teacher assessments for Year 2 showed standards to be below the national average overall, although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was average.
93. By the end of Years 2 and 6 all groups of pupils achieve well. This is because of the consistently good teaching, which enables pupils to learn the right things at the right time. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 because of the high proportion of pupils who have a well-

developed knowledge and understanding of the subject and confidently undertake scientific investigations. The strong emphasis given to scientific enquiry is also a major reason why standards are as they are. Standards continue to rise and are equally strong in all areas of science. Standards, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and in scientific enquiry throughout the school, have improved since the previous inspection. Good presentation of written work and use of vocabulary feature in all years.

94. The standards seen by the end of Year 2 are now average and pupils continue to achieve well compared with their level of attainment at the start of Year 1. This is an improvement. Pupils carry out a wide range of investigations such as "What type of paper is rigid enough to support a book?", "What is the difference between chocolate buttons and Minstrels?" and "What do plants need to grow?" In a lesson seen in Year 2, most pupils showed that they were starting to identify a range of materials and some of their characteristics but the range of answers showed that their overall knowledge and understanding was sometimes unsure. Work in pupils' books and on display shows that they are encouraged to say what might happen in their tests, record their work in a variety of ways, and think about what they have found out. Good encouragement is given to pupils to use the correct vocabulary in their spoken and written work, and plenty of encouragement is given to pupils to express their own ideas about what they see.
95. By the end of Year 6, standards are being sustained at an above average level. All groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils say how much they enjoy science and how they are given opportunities to weave in their own ideas into the investigations they undertake. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are encouraged to write simple predictions such as "I think that thin tights will stretch the most" and, when an extra bulb is added to an electrical circuit, "The circuit will work but will not be as bright". They use sensors in investigations to monitor temperature. However, by Year 6, although making predictions is routine, more pupils ought to be able to give a scientific reason to justify their prediction. For example, in a Year 6 lesson seen, only the higher-attaining pupils could write predictions such as "I think you can separate the iron from the other materials using a magnet because the only material in the mixture which is magnetic is iron". Work in books and through discussion shows that pupils can identify the equipment to use in investigations, spot results which seem out of place, use graphs to describe a relationship and use the correct conventions when drawing electrical circuits or ray diagrams. Most pupils can readily identify which factors to keep the same during a fair test but do not always pinpoint what the one factor is that they need to change and to measure changing. Some pupils can explain very well whether the information collected during an investigation is significant, reliable and valid but others find this difficult because the development of individual investigative skills has not been pinpointed in teaching. Many pupils talk about their everyday interest in science and demonstrate imagination and the beauty and creativity of science. For example, some of the older pupils have been thinking about the solar system and have develop a mnemonic to help them remember the names of the nine planets:

Many/Vile/Earthlings/Make/Jam/Sandwiches/Under/Newspaper/Piles

Mercury/Venus/Earth/Mars/Jupiter/Saturn/Uranus/Neptune/Pluto

96. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good through Years 1 to 6. Teaching is very strong in some Year 4 and Year 6 classes. A major strength is that teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, which is very strong in Years 5 and 6, and this leads to pupils thinking clearly and not being confused by erroneous ideas. Lessons in Years 3 to 6 are planned in the afternoon for a full two hours, which helps facilitate whole investigations to be undertaken. Teaching is consistently effective because teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what they have to learn. Behaviour management is very good and so pupils get on with their work conscientiously. Many teachers are using the three-part lesson structure which is a key feature of literacy and numeracy lessons to good effect, and classroom assistants are skilful in encouraging SEN pupils to ask the question "why" when thinking about science. As a result of these factors pupils learn new facts and scientific ideas at a good rate and become good investigators. For example, pupils can correctly identify the symbols for simple electrical components, use the correct units when measuring temperature, forces, time and length and know how to draw food chains starting with a

green plant and ending with a top carnivore. Work is pitched well and tailored to individual pupils of different ability. However, teaching would have made a better impact if the higher and lower-attaining pupils were more closely targeted. For example, in Year 6, where the pupils were separating materials from each other, the higher-attaining pupils could have been asked to come up with at least two ways of separating the materials and the lower attaining pupils could have focused on developing the language they used to describe and explain what they planned and did to solve the problem. Homework is set regularly.

97. Subject co-ordination is very good. Central to the co-ordinator's role is the oversight of pupils' standards, teaching, the quality of the curriculum and staff training, and as a consequence the subject is making good strides. The subject now has a higher profile in the school as a result of the focus given to scientific investigation, the introduction of booster classes, a vibrant and well-attended science club and occasional inputs to assemblies. The curriculum is also very good. It has improved since the last inspection, with the nationally recommended scheme of work being adapted to suit the needs and aptitudes of the pupils. Strong and productive links have been forged with other science co-ordinators under the auspices of the EAZ. ICT is used to satisfactory effect for handling data and researching via the Internet, but there is scope for this to be further exploited as a tool for learning. There are adequate levels of practical resources for the subject with the exception of challenging textual resources and revision books to aid learning in Years 3 to 6. Systems of assessment are developing well and providing better information to help teachers plan more challenging work for pupils. However, the setting of targets for pupils is at an early stage of development, although this features in the subject development plan.

ART AND DESIGN

98. At the last inspection standards were above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Inspection findings show that standards are average by the end of Year 2 but have been sustained at an above average level by the end of Year 6.
99. Pupils achieve well at the end of both Years 2 and 6. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, pupils have sufficient opportunities to study art and design in depth. Secondly, the quality of teaching seen in lessons during the inspection in Years 1 to 6 was mostly good. The co-ordinator has ensured that achievement is better than might be expected from Years 1 to 6 through imaginative planning and thoughtful development of topics. For example, the co-ordinator ensures that pupils study a wide variety of styles and genres, such as Pre-Raphaelite, Impressionist and modern painting.
100. Pupils enter Year 1 with an understanding of creative development at a below average level for their age. By Year 2, standards have progressed well and pupils are achieving better than might be expected. In one lesson observed, pupils in Year 2 discussed still-life paintings in pairs, expressing preferences and examining their emotional responses to the paintings. Skilled teaching in Years 1 and 2 inspires creative responses from the pupils. Wall displays of pupils' artwork exhibit contrasting and imaginative celebrations of pupils' joy in creativity. For example, pupils have produced abstract art in the style of Matisse and enchanting paintings of Elmer the Elephant.
101. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 begin to develop a critical appreciation of artists and their work by experimenting with materials, trying out different processes and evaluating the effects of these. For example, pupils have studied the work of Georgia O'Keefe on poppies and they have linked this work to literacy and their projects on Remembrance Day. Year 4 pupils have studied the paintings of the Pre-Raphaelites as part of their work on the Victorians. In one memorable lesson, pupils diligently painted "the Lady of Shalott" in the style of John William Waterhouse. In this way, art and design makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of a good range of cultures, including non-Western cultures. There are several good examples throughout the school of banners that pupils have prepared for exhibitions in the local church and in the borough musical festival. Year 6 pupils have used Nigerian block print, called Adire cloth, as inscriptions for their mixed media designs.

102. The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good, with some very good features in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, which are used well to ensure that pupils gain knowledge and develop their skills at a good rate. Planning is good and ensures continuity and progression throughout the school. Teachers' expectations are high and as a result pupils' productivity and pace of working are good. Teaching methods are effective and teachers make good use of time, support staff and resources to raise standards. As a result, pupils' interest and levels of concentration are maintained well in lessons and relationships are very well developed.
103. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management for the subject. Good provision has been sustained since the last inspection. There are appropriate procedures for monitoring standards of work and the co-ordinator has had opportunities to support colleagues through scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. This has enabled the co-ordinator to identify certain areas for improvement and to plan curricular changes. As a result she has produced her own scheme of work, which has been successfully adapted to meet the learning needs of the pupils. Systems for assessment are generally satisfactory and there are sound procedures for identifying pupils' progress in sketching and in the use of powder paints. However, assessment procedures do not provide sufficient information for teachers to adjust planning or set individual or group targets for improvement. Resources for the subject are adequate. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in this subject area and as a result standards are impaired.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Observations of lessons, evaluation of teachers' planning and pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff show that pupils are on course to reach average standards by the end of both Years 2 and 6. All groups of pupils achieve as might be expected in relation to their prior attainment as they move through the school. This is because of satisfactory teaching, improved planning and close attention to the scheme of work, which is based on national guidance. SEN and higher-attaining pupils derive particular benefit from the teachers' emphasis on planning as a prelude to model-making. Pupils now have a satisfactory awareness and understanding of the design process throughout the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
105. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have followed the design process from the original idea to the finished product. They have used joining techniques for three-dimensional modelling and made simple hinges and designed homes. In one Year 2 lesson, pupils recognised and named a range of fruit and vegetables, such as potatoes, cabbage and leeks. Most pupils knew which tools were required in order to prepare some vegetables for cooking and so were working at the average level for their age.
106. Pupils through Years 3 to 6 have developed a satisfactory capacity to design and make a range of artefacts. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 have created purposeful money containers and colourful moving monsters. By Years 5 and 6, they can follow instructions, choose materials carefully and give due thought to the suitability of an article for its intended purpose. Year 5 pupils have worked on control mechanisms and structures and used these to produce moving toys and musical instruments. In a Year 6 lesson observed, pupils were in the early stages of designing slippers. They discussed their work carefully and enthusiastically in pairs and evaluated their emerging designs. However, this aspect of the design and technology curriculum is still largely underdeveloped. Pupils have very limited experiences of using ICT to refine and extend their ideas. To improve standards further, pupils ought to be able to work with a greater variety of tools, materials and equipment and produce a wider variety of products that show good finish and imagination in their design.
107. During the inspection only a limited amount of teaching was seen, but on the basis of all the evidence seen, teaching and learning is consistently satisfactory by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is because teachers have sound subject knowledge and ensure that other staff, time and resources are used appropriately. For example, in one lesson seen the classroom assistant was used soundly to help pupils who found the tasks difficult and to gather appropriate assessment

information, which will be used to inform curriculum planning. However, learning in some lessons suffered because the teacher's introductions were too long. This resulted in some pupils being impatient to begin their work and they found it difficult to concentrate on the prescribed tasks. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers could plan more use of ICT into pupils' learning.

108. Subject co-ordination and overall provision for design and technology are satisfactory. Statutory requirements for the curriculum are met. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership, but the developmental plan is insufficiently rigorous to raise standards and to provide a clear focus for future improvements. As a result, pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and design and technology is not given a prominent place on the curriculum. There are adequate resources available, safely stored in a central location, which enables the curriculum to be taught appropriately. Assessment procedures are insufficiently developed and this has a negative impact on standards.

GEOGRAPHY

109. At the last inspection standards were below average at end of Years 2 and 6, because there were weaknesses in the curriculum. From an analysis of pupils' work and discussion with pupils, standards are now average and all groups of pupils achieve well by the end of both years. Standards have improved due to better planning, which ensures greater progress and continuity in the teaching. Also the scheme of work, based on national guidance, helps teachers effectively develop pupils' geographical skills.
110. The curriculum has a good emphasis on the development of enquiry skills, the use of the local environment and environmental issues. Year 2 pupils discover different countries in the world through the travel of "Barnaby Bear" who recently visited France and sent back a great deal of information about Paris. Year 3 pupils have recent work on world weather, identifying different broad climate zones. The display of pupils' work shows a good emphasis on the use of technical vocabulary. All classes use the local environment well and this enables them to make comparisons between their locality and others in the world. Year 6 pupils can discuss differences between Chingford and Nairobi, in terms of climate, buildings, schools and language that they identified in Year 5. This well-balanced curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and the Year 5 study of noise pollution around the school contributes to pupils' moral development. However, the use of ICT is underdeveloped in, for example, the use of data loggers to monitor sound.
111. In the one lesson seen, in Year 3, there was a good emphasis on investigation and the use of secondary sources. Pupils had to research a holiday destination, use the index in an atlas, including coordinates to locate the destination, and plan the route. From this lesson, analysis of pupils' work, displays around the school, and discussions with pupils and teachers, the teaching of geography is good, and through pupils' collaborative work, makes a good contribution to their social development.
112. Subject co-ordination is good. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection and the improvement in standards and the balance in the curriculum have been good. The subject has been well monitored, through teachers' planning, analysis of pupils' work and teaching. There is a clear action plan that focuses on the improvement in pupil assessment, monitoring and resources, including those for ICT.

HISTORY

113. At the last inspection standards were below average by end of Year 2 and Year 6. As with geography, this was due to weaknesses in the curriculum. From an analysis of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and teachers, standards are now average. All groups of pupils achieve well by the end of both Years 2 and 6. Standards have improved due to better planning, based on national guidance that helps teachers develop pupils' historical skills and ensures greater

progress and continuity in the teaching. Better teaching has also made a major contribution and as a result pupils' achievement has improved accordingly.

114. Throughout the school there is a clear emphasis on developing pupils' skills of chronological understanding, historical interpretation and enquiry as well as gaining knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past. In a Year 2 lesson pupils knew that the Great Fire of London of 1666 was some time ago and they started to sequence the daily events through first-hand information from the diary of Samuel Pepys, while Year 6 pupils know that their study of ancient Egypt was BC and that the Roman invasion of Britain was AD. Historical enquiry featured in a lesson in the ICT suite when Year 5 pupils researched information about World War Two, although the Internet site designed by another school was very restricted. The school takes pupils on a very wide range of visits to support the subject and Year 6 pupils can recall vividly, for example, their visit to the Ragged School while studying the Victorians in Year 4. They can express their views and show a good understanding of school life at the time. Other visits include a Year 1 outing to the Southend-on-Sea where pupils compared life at the sea-side today with that seen in photographs of the past. Year 2 pupils made comparisons on their visit to the Museum of Childhood.
115. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection, but from these, teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books, teaching and learning in history are good. In one very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher set the scene for role playing mummification in Ancient Egypt by placing the Jackal's head on Anubis. Other artefacts quickly followed to give pupils an empathy with an historical event which they enjoyed and which contributed significantly to their learning.
116. The subject co-ordination is good and the weaknesses identified the last inspection have been addressed. The improvement in standards is good and the balance in the curriculum much improved since the last inspection. The subject has been well monitored, through teachers' planning, analysis of pupils' work and teaching. A range of visits and visitors to the school also contributed to the strength of the subject. A clear action plan focuses on the improvements in pupil assessment, monitoring and resources, including those for in ICT.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards at the last inspection were above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and a strength of the school. Inspection findings confirm that the school has sustained its above-average standards. All groups of pupils achieve well by the end of Years 2 and 6. There are no differences between the standards attained by boys and girls. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, regular lessons each week in the ICT suite, which focus well on the development of pupils' computer skills, have sustained standards. Secondly, the curriculum for ICT has been reviewed and improved appropriately to guide teaching and learning. Thirdly, teaching has been strengthened and resources upgraded.
118. Inspection findings show that pupils enter Year 2 with average standards for their age. By Year 2 pupils know that information can be reviewed and explained in a variety of different forms and they have become more familiar with using computers to generate pictures. They learn to enter and to correct text, and in some classes reinforce their work in literacy, for example by inserting full stops. Higher-attaining pupils develop good independence in completing and printing work and lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, complete work well in response to particularly effective support from classroom assistants. Pupils begin to use computers to cover some topics from the National Curriculum, but they are not given enough guidance to enable them to do this effectively. Teachers skilfully built the level of challenge in a variety of interesting ways and they were well supported by classroom assistants and other adults. Learning in the ICT suite is impaired because it is small for the number of pupils that use it. However, the good level of additional support ensures that pupils remain focused and interested in their work.
119. Pupils in Year 6 generally use ICT well. They use spreadsheets confidently and are able to describe how to use the Internet to access information on the pioneers of medical science. They

can load, save and print out work effectively. Their class folders, which contain detailed information on various aspects of astronomy and on the Ancient Egyptians, show good levels of research skills in which they presented their information effectively. They have experienced using ICT to model or simulate new situations and use computers to explore patterns and relationships and control other devices, although these aspects could be further developed. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils confidently used a spreadsheet to prepare a workbook which recorded how pocket money was saved for a trip to the Isle of Wight, and then used this to edit and change the information it contained. Although ICT is well developed as a subject it is insufficiently used in pupils' learning in other subjects across the curriculum, and this has a negative impact on standards in these areas. Pupils' understanding and use of the e-mail is less assured and this is because they have had little experience of using this facility in recent months.

120. The quality of teaching and learning is good because teachers have a sure understanding of ICT, show consistency of approach and ensure that knowledge and skills are taught progressively. Teachers have benefited from the additional training provided through the New Opportunities Fund. Their enthusiasm for, and use of, ICT has grown and this is reflected well in the good lessons seen throughout the school. They plan interesting and well-designed activities to promote good learning in each lesson. The computer suite is used well and teachers have an effective working relationship with classroom assistants, who are often able to teach individual pupils and groups well. Most classes are well organised, with a good balance of demonstration, practical work and discussion, and work is carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils in each class. Pupils have access to a computer in their own classrooms, but these are rarely used to enhance learning across the curriculum, especially in literacy and numeracy. This is a weakness that has a negative impact on the quality of pupils' learning in these subjects. The co-ordinator is aware of these deficiencies and has plans to address this issue in the near future.
121. The co-ordinator has managed the subject well and provided valuable support to her colleagues. There is effective monitoring of teaching and this helps to raise teachers' confidence and expectations. She has also identified the need to update the ICT policy. However, she has to spend too much time on the day-to-day maintenance of the system and this reduces the time that the co-ordinator can spend on planning and monitoring the curriculum, which limits the time that she can spend on helping teachers to raise standards. The recently introduced system for assessment is not yet an effective tool for raising standards. There is a clear educational direction for ICT, and teachers share the co-ordinator's enthusiasm for the subject and her commitment to further improvement.

MUSIC

122. Standards were average in singing at the last inspection but there was insufficient evidence to support judgements in other strands of the subject. Standards in singing have been sustained and current evidence indicates that overall standards are now average by the end of Year 2 and 6. All groups of pupils achieve as might be expected.
123. A key issue at the last inspection was the lack of a co-ordinator for music, which meant that insufficient attention was given to assessment and monitoring. The role is at present undertaken in a temporary capacity by the SENCO, with some support from the headteacher. Assessment has been addressed by the adoption of a nationally-recognised scheme of work, supplemented by a bank of relevant comments to assist non-specialist teachers in pitching their judgements at the correct level. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because these teachers are both trained musicians who effectively monitor teachers' plans, but owing to their other responsibilities have insufficient time to monitor teaching to ensure that all pupils have equally challenging learning experiences.
124. By the end of Year 2 pupils sing with enthusiasm. They show a sense of the melody's shape because teachers explain how the musical elements are organised to produce particular effects. In singing a modern carol, for example, pupils listened carefully, identifying correctly rising tones at high emotional points in the lyrics, then applied their skills of appraisal to make improvements to their performance. Most pupils maintain a beat and reproduce simple identifiable patterns. Higher attainers demonstrate a greater degree of tunefulness and expression than their less

competent classmates, who do not always hold a note securely. Whilst pupils see, for example, that variations in pitch and tempo can be used to create effects such as the rumble of thunder, they do not use symbols to represent and record them. There was no evidence that pupils improvise or combine layers of sound to create further effects.

125. By the end of Year 6 the vast majority of pupils sing in harmony and maintain a melody in two parts to a simple accompaniment. Recordings show that pupils satisfactorily compose and perform their own songs, including percussion and recorder accompaniment. The vocabulary, rhyme and rhythm of the lyrics demonstrate good support for the development of their literacy skills also. A mixed-ability group of Year 6 pupils performed simple parts on slide whistle, tuned and untuned percussion from their own non-standard musical notation. This notation was sufficiently clear for others to perform from it also. There was limited evidence of improvisation and the range of music performed was narrow, there being, for example, no use of chords. After their performance pupils considered thoughtfully ways of improving their work, discussing in correct terminology the crescendo necessary to evoke the impression of a storm. They did not take this further to suggest comparisons with a wider range of music. There was no evidence that pupils make use of ICT in their studies.
126. All pupils have good attitudes to their work and behave well, largely because teachers manage classes very well, channelling pupils' energy and enthusiasm into an organised performance. Classroom assistants work well alongside teachers to give appropriate support to lower attainers and those with special needs to enable them to work as well as their classmates. There are examples of good lessons where pupils build up and polish their skills well but teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because not all teachers interpret, to the same extent, the good planning provided to meet the precise needs of the pupils they teach. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, the teacher made good use of pupils' recent experiences so that they gained a vivid appreciation of rhythm and made good gains in knowledge about different types of music. A Year 2 lesson, in contrast, held firmly to the guidelines, providing good examples of sounds described in words but missing opportunities to enhance pupils' appreciation of melody.
127. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory given that there is no permanent subject leader. The acting co-ordinator has clear insight into the needs and priorities for developing the subject and has given good guidance to staff, but has not had the time to monitor outcomes to ensure consistency. The opportunities for pupils to make music in extra-curricular activities such as the recorder club, singing clubs, and the school choir (which regularly takes part in inter-schools music festivals) greatly enrich the music curriculum and also benefit social and cultural education. There are, however, no opportunities for instrumental tuition for higher-attaining musicians. A particular highlight of the inspection week was the visit of an African drummer whose workshops with pupils helped them appreciate a variety of styles of music from different cultures and gain a better understanding of rhythm.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Standards are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. All groups of pupils achieve as well as might be expected in acquiring physical skills and handling equipment as they move through the school. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection. At that time there was no subject co-ordinator, which was a key issue for development. Although there has been a co-ordinator in the interim, this is, at present, again the case. A member of the senior management team has oversight of the subject but this role does not extend to the regular monitoring and development of teaching and learning to ensure consistently high quality. The maintenance of standards and the satisfactory achievement are a result of sound teaching and a good curriculum, including a good range of extra-curricular activities, that meets statutory requirements.
129. By the end of Year 2 pupils reach average standards in the basic skills of travelling and balancing. Their achievement is satisfactory because they recall simple actions well but their control and accuracy is less well developed. In a gymnastics lesson pupils progressed through a range of simple actions such as crawling, jogging, jumping and sliding into short sequences. Accuracy was increased because teachers asked pertinent questions and made comments to help pupils

see what was working well and what could be improved. Higher and average attainers demonstrated reasonable co-ordination but lower attainers were less precise and needed more guidance. Pupils demonstrate an awareness of safety, for example using mats and lifting apparatus carefully. When moving around the hall they show an awareness of space available to them and usually maintain an appropriately safe distance between themselves and others. They are beginning to describe the effects of exercise on their bodies, noting, for example, "When I exercise my heart beats faster", but do not go as far as to explain the benefits of physical activity.

130. By the end of Year 6, pupils connect skills, techniques and ideas and are developing an idea of tactics in a broadly typical way. Their achievement is satisfactory because their accuracy and control are still developing. In a Year 6 cricket lesson, for example, almost a third of the class, including both boys and girls, were members of the cricket club, who showed consistent control and precision of movement. Other class members demonstrated examples of fluency but rarely sustained them. They did not sharpen their performances to the extent that they should because there was only limited attention given in the lesson to evaluation and comparison. During the last two terms of Year 5 and the first term of Year 6 all pupils take swimming lessons at the local pool. Detailed records are kept and certificates proudly displayed, showing that they achieve well. The vast majority meets or exceeds the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided. Swimming lessons were formerly taken only in Year 5, a shortcoming identified in the last inspection report because any pupils joining the school in Year 6 had difficulty in catching up. This issue has now been resolved. Pupils are aware of the importance of 'warm up' and 'cool down' and issues of health and safety but are not fully aware of the benefits of regular exercise to fitness and health.
131. Examples of good teaching were observed, but outcomes indicate that over the longer term the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In a good gymnastics lesson, the tone was set as the teacher shared the objectives with the class and showed them both how the work fitted with previous activities and also the skills they were going to develop. Pupils responded well, showing understanding of rules and routines expected of them in the hall. Reflection on the teacher's frequent questions led to improved performance in their travelling skills. A satisfactory cricket lesson began in much the same way but pupils did not have as many opportunities to evaluate their performances and compare them with others so did not refine their skills as effectively. In all lessons boys and girls of all abilities work with interest and behave well because classes are well managed.
132. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory because good plans and guidelines are available to teachers. The scheme of work enables teachers to develop pupils' skills knowledge and understanding in the subject in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, teaching and learning in the subject are not monitored to identify and share strengths or to address areas for improvement in order to raise standards. The school has ensured that a number of professional sports coaches, including a football coach from Leyton Orient Football Club, come into school on a regular basis to enrich and enhance the curriculum. A good number of after-school clubs such as cricket, football and athletics also help improve pupils' skills. Resources are appropriate and easily accessible but insufficient use is made of ICT to enhance learning and raise standards. Two halls provide sufficient space for indoor activities but there are no changing rooms so both boys and girls have to change in their classrooms. The last inspection report identified deficiencies in the flooring of both the hall and the playground. These have been addressed but currently the surface of the school field is uneven so the school does not use it for field sports, causing staff and pupils to have the inconvenience of travelling to use facilities elsewhere.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. This represents an improved picture compared with the last inspection. At that time pupils made satisfactory gains in the first attainment target, learning about religion, but staff confidence in teaching to the second attainment target, namely learning from religion, was a key issue for development. Revised planning and a programme of team teaching have been instrumental in providing suitable guidance

and support in order to address this imbalance. As a result the achievement of all groups of pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 is now broadly as might be expected in both strands of the subject.

134. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of what is special or sacred, both in their own lives and in the life and faith of others. They appreciate the significance of certain celebrations such as Christmas and Guru Nanak's birthday, pointing out, for example, that "Christmas is Jesus' birthday". Pupils use religious terms such as 'guru' and 'Sikh' correctly and with respect. Average and lower attainers give satisfactory descriptions of festivals, the content varying according to their literacy skills. Higher attainers are more reflective, explaining, for example, some of the reasons for a Christian harvest festival and making tentative links between this and the Hindu Diwali. Pupils recall features of the Jewish Torah correctly, illustrating these well by depicting their own scrolls with extracts from the Ten Commandments. Higher attainers use aspects of their own experiences more successfully than their classmates to create new and original 'commandments' or class rules. Boys and girls contribute equally to lessons. Pupils with special needs are well supported by classroom assistants so that they play a full part and learn as well as everyone else. All pupils listen carefully and respectfully. Their recall of the facts of what they study is a little better than the expression of their own thoughts and beliefs and their reflection on ultimate questions, but this is reasonable for their age.
135. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve as well as expected in both strands of the syllabus. Their grasp, for example, of the story of Noah's preparation for the flood was largely good and was retold well in lessons in their own words. Their ability to empathise with Noah in his reactions to the aftermath was variable but higher attainers thoughtfully considered his many likely feelings, from anger to guilt, and made a good case for their conclusions. The majority of pupils identifies at least some basic elements of the ultimate if puzzling questions posed by life's experiences. For example, their books include their own coherent accounts of aspects of the life of John Bunyan, linked to a consideration of role models and respective values. Displayed work shows that such models tend to be pop stars and sports personalities, admired for their tenacity in overcoming obstacles and career reversals to reach success. A small number of higher attainers ponders more spiritual issues, making profound and relevant connections between the lives of both Bunyan and Terry Waite.
136. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school, with examples of very good teaching seen in lessons. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject so that they teach pupils to relate and summarise facts appropriately. Their questions, tailored to ability, are usually effective in making all pupils reflect on their own experiences so that they understand better the thoughts and beliefs of others. Teachers also regularly take opportunities to support the development of literacy by introducing and explaining appropriate terminology so pupils express themselves correctly. Pupils behave well and show a willingness to take part in lessons because teachers value their contributions. In consequence, over their time in school pupils acquire a satisfactory grasp of some of the essential characteristics of major faiths, and see how beliefs influence people's lives. Some lessons are more successful than others. This is because the co-ordinator has been unable to continue her programme of lesson observations since taking on the additional role of acting numeracy co-ordinator. This has resulted in fewer opportunities to share the best practice.
137. Subject co-ordination is none the less good because an effective published scheme of work has been introduced to ensure that both strands of the locally agreed syllabus are now taught in a reasonably balanced way. A good range of books and resources, especially artefacts, now helps to give pupils vivid and more memorable experiences. Little use is made, however, of ICT to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. Although records show that pupils had used ICT to support their work on the Torah scroll, no examples of this were seen. Visits to local churches are frequent thanks to close links with local Christian clergy, so pupils have first-hand experiences to reinforce their studies. The Vicar, who is also a school governor, regularly leads assemblies whose themes complement the topics of the syllabus. There are, however, no links with places of worship or representatives of other faiths to give pupils similarly constructive experiences and this is a barrier to standards rising further.