

INSPECTION REPORT

BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Wealdstone, Harrow

LEA area: London Borough of Harrow

Unique reference number: 102189

Headteacher: Mrs Heather Harris

Reporting inspector: Ms Lynne Fardell
21736

Dates of inspection: 7 - 11 February 2000

Inspection number: 188625

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 8 to 12 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hibbert Road
Wealdstone
Harrow
Middlesex
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Miss M Mears

Date of previous inspection: 10.06.96

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Lynne Fardell Registered inspector	Art Modern foreign languages [French] English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Carolyn Webb 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?
John Collings Team inspector	Science Design and technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
J Edmund Peacock Team inspector	English Religious education Music Special educational needs	
Amanda Tapsfield Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Belmont Middle School is located in Wealdstone in the London Borough of Harrow. Three hundred boys and girls between the ages of eight and 12 attend the school. They come from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, predominantly from Asian, Afro-Caribbean and English families. Less than half the pupils speak English at home. The main languages the other pupils speak are Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Arabic, but most understand English. Ten per cent of the pupils came to this country as refugees. One hundred and five pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, of these 14 have Statements of Special Educational Need, this is above average. Twenty seven per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, this is above average. A significant number of pupils leave and join the school at points other than when they would normally transfer between schools.

The school has seen some major staffing changes since it was last inspected in June 1996. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 1999, and of the 21 members of the teaching staff only two full-time and four part-time teachers were at the school during the last inspection. The number of refugee pupils and pupils identified as having special educational needs has risen.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Belmont Middle School provides good provision for its ethnically diverse pupils. The newly appointed headteacher and the re-constituted governing body are working closely together to plan for the school's future, and leadership and management are sound. Although pupils' attainment is below average in the national tests, they make satisfactory progress over time. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good.
- Standards in art and music are above those usually found.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils clearly demonstrate their respect for each other's feelings, beliefs and values in an atmosphere free of oppressive behaviour. The school has good procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating any oppressive behaviour.
- Relationships are good throughout the school, and pupils have good attitudes to their learning.
- The school has established very good links with parents and parents are happy with the education their children receive.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics, science and in information technology.
- Use of assessment, particularly to guide curriculum planning.
- The school's picture of its strengths and weaknesses needs further clarification.

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

The strengths outweigh the areas for improvement, which will form the basis for the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1996. Since that time the school has been through a turbulent period, as a result the progress made on the key issues identified in the last report has been spasmodic. Teaching in Key Stage 2 has improved, and is now good. The school now has improved facilities for caring for pupils who are unwell. Some progress has been made in improving assessment procedures, but the use made of these remains underdeveloped. Standards in design and technology have improved. The school has reviewed its homework policy and parents are fully informed of this. Levels of homework given to pupils in Key Stage 2 are good and are satisfactory in Key Stage 3. Procedures for identifying priorities in the support given to pupils who speak English as an additional language have improved; their progress is assessed regularly. The deployment of learning support teachers and assistants has improved although the extent to which they are informed of lesson plans and objectives still varies between teachers.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	B	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	D	E	E	
Science	E	E	E*	E*	

Pupils' attainment on entry is below average overall. At the end of Key Stage 2, the school's results in all three core subjects were well below national averages; they were in the lowest five per cent in science. These results match the overall trend of the last four years. Statistics show that pupils who remain in the school for four years generally achieve higher standards. The school has set realistic and manageable targets for pupils' attainment. Although pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, and at the time they leave the school is below average in mathematics and science, pupils' progress over time is satisfactory. Inspection evidence is that in English pupils attain standards broadly in line with those expected for their age, and they make good progress. The difference between test results and inspection judgements may be explained to some extent to the pupils' lack of experience in test situations and that they perform better orally than in written work. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations. In religious education, design and technology, French, geography, history and physical education pupils' attainment is close to that expected. Attainment in art and music is above that usually found. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in acquiring a working knowledge of English. Pupils who come from the travelling community make sound progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils enjoy their lessons and want to further their knowledge.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is sound. Generally pupils behave well in and out of lessons, but a small number of pupils sometimes act inappropriately. One pupil was permanently excluded from school in the last reporting year, this is above the national average.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good overall. Pupils' personal development is well planned and most are aware of their responsibilities to each other and the world outside school.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is satisfactory overall, and very few absences are unexplained by parents.

Through focused teaching most pupils are interested in their lessons, and are eager to please their teachers. A good feature of the school is the good relationships that exist between all groups of pupils, and with the adults in the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 8-11 years	aged 11-12 years
Lessons seen overall	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 is good or better in over half of lessons, it is very good in one in eight lessons. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed during the inspection. The National Literacy Strategy and English are taught well and the school has made a sound start to implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and teaching in mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers manage their pupils well; they have high expectations of them, both academically and socially. They plan satisfactorily for pupils of all abilities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Generally broad and balanced, but planning for information technology does not cover all National Curriculum Programmes of Study in sufficient depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. The deployment of learning support assistants has improved and the appointment of specialist learning support teachers has had a positive impact on the provision made. However, the extent to which class teachers plan to use these valuable resources in order to have the greatest impact on pupils' achievement is inconsistent.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision is made for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Through effective support they make good progress in acquiring a working use of English and have full access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good in all aspects. The rich cultural and linguistic backgrounds of pupils are used well to enrich this area of the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Pupils are well cared for in school, teachers know their pupils well and provide them with appropriate educational support and guidance.

The school works well in partnership with the parents. The quality of information given to parents about their children's progress is good overall. However, a few parents of pupils with special educational needs would value more detailed information on the provision made for their children.

The school's broad and balanced curriculum includes personal, social and health education that is appropriate for the age and maturity of the pupils. With the exception of information technology, all subjects of the National Curriculum are planned for appropriately. The range of extra-curricular activities includes sporting and musical activities. Good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development includes good role models offered by the adults in the school and opportunities for older pupils to become prefects and to take responsibility for a range of tasks around the school.

The school has good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development, as well as eliminating oppressive behaviour and promoting good behaviour.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The newly appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher are in the process of identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has recently been reconstituted; and governors are in the process of reviewing their organisation in order to fulfil their responsibilities efficiently. Statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Since her appointment the headteacher has worked hard analysing the information available to provide the school with a clear picture of its performance.
The strategic use of resources	Generally resources are used well and budgets are planned well.

The school has a good number of recently qualified and experienced teachers, and learning support assistants, for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation is spacious and pupils benefit from a number of specialist facilities. A suitable range of learning resources is available, although not enough use is made of the information technology suite.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post since September, in that short time they have identified a number of priorities for school improvement. The governors have worked hard in recent months to secure the appropriate personnel to lead the school forward. They consider carefully how expenditure is planned and budgeted for to match the priorities identified in the school development plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents value the accessibility of staff. • Parents appreciate how well the school responds to their questions and suggestions. • They like that their children are expected to work hard. • Parents appreciate that their children like coming to school. • They consider that teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like the range of activities offered outside lessons extended. • A few parents would like to see a closer partnership with parents developed.

The inspection team supports the positive views of parents. It is judged that the partnership established between the school and parents is good. Although the school provides a satisfactory range of activities beyond lessons, this could be extended.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils enter Belmont Middle School at the age of eight; many coming from the First School that shares the school building. On entry their attainment is below that expected for their age in the key areas of literacy and numeracy.
2. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils achieve average standards in English and religious education, but their achievement in mathematics, science and information technology is below average. These results are comparable in relation to the national average with those in 1996 when the school was last inspected. Statistics show that pupils who remain in the school for four years generally achieve higher standards than pupils who join the school later. In Year 7, pupils' achievement is similar to that usually found in English but below expectations in mathematics, science and information technology. Nevertheless, pupils generally make satisfactory progress in their learning in these subjects with the exception of information technology, where progress is unsatisfactory. Throughout the school, achievement in art and music is above that usually found, and pupils make good progress. Pupils' achievement in all other subjects is similar to that usually found in most primary schools.
3. In the most recent national tests the standards achieved by pupils aged 11 were well below the national average in all three core subjects. Standards in English were below those achieved by pupils in similar schools, and were well below in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence is that standards are broadly average in English, and are below average in mathematics and science. However, at both key stages pupils' ability to contribute orally in lessons is significantly better than their ability to read, interpret and record. This combined with pupils' lack of experience in taking tests limits their ability to communicate effectively what they know and understand. The trend over the past four years has been for pupils to achieve standards that are below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science.
4. The school has recently begun to use National Curriculum test and assessment data to provide information for setting realistic targets for pupils' achievement so that they make suitable progress over time. However, it is in the very early stages of analysing these results over time to help plan the most effective curriculum for pupils. For example, the school has not used the information gained from assessments to adjust how pupils are taught handwriting, an aspect in which pupils' skills are underdeveloped, and restrict many from attaining the higher Level 5 in English tests.
5. Due to good teaching, good relationships, pupils' interest in their work and their good behaviour, most pupils are on target to achieve improved standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11. However, as many pupils speak English as an additional language, many of whom are refugees in this country, and over one third are on the school's register for special educational needs, pupils' results in tests do not always accurately reflect what they know and understand.

6. Standards in reading are broadly in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of average and higher attainment read fluently, with accuracy and expression. Although lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, read slowly, they often read accurately. Research skills develop slowly over the key stage. Although, by the age of 11, most pupils understand about contents and index pages, the use of skimming and scanning and the use of the library for private research is limited. In Year 7, standards of reading are satisfactory, and the higher-attaining pupils are able to read more demanding text. However, pupils continue to have difficulty in retrieving information.
7. Standards in writing are generally satisfactory for average and higher-attaining pupils. However, lower-attaining pupils have limited opportunities to practise the skills and techniques necessary for extended writing. By the end of the key stage most pupils produce organised and imaginative writing which is well constructed. Throughout the key stage most pupils achieve a satisfactory standard in the writing skills of grammar, spelling and punctuation. In Year 7, writing is satisfactory overall in terms of match, variety and teaching points covered; however, attainment is generally below the level expected for this age group. Handwriting and presentation throughout the school is inconsistent. Although pupils write legibly, many have yet to develop a joined handwriting style, the lack of this affects the presentation of their writing, which is a weak feature throughout the school.
8. Across the school an appropriate emphasis is placed on pupils' skills in literacy. Opportunities are provided for pupils to read for information and pleasure. They are introduced to specific vocabulary in subjects such as mathematics, science and music. Opportunities are given for them to write as they record their work in other areas of the curriculum for example in history and geography. Pupils are encouraged to verbalise their experiences in discussions, such as in religious education and in plenary sessions.
9. In mathematics standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and by the oldest pupils in the school are below those expected for their age. Despite working at expected levels in many areas of mathematics, weaknesses in pupils' knowledge of number bonds and tables has a significant effect on their attainment overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress against their attainment on entry to the school. They consolidate and extend their skills and learn to apply them effectively. Higher attaining pupils are given opportunities to extend their knowledge and application of mathematical concepts. Many pupils benefit from being set according to their prior attainment, and this has had a positive effect upon the standards attained.
10. Although pupils apply their numeracy skills to other work such as when planning work in design and technology and measuring results in science, too often opportunities in other subjects are missed.
11. Pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory over time, as they enter and leave the school with standards below expectations. Although this satisfactory progress is demonstrated through increased knowledge and understanding broadly in line with expectations, pupils are less secure when recording investigations, using scientific vocabulary, recognising when a test is fair and recording key knowledge, understanding and skills learnt effectively. Few pupils are able to independently research or plan an investigation.
12. In information technology, standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and by the oldest pupils in the school are below those expected for their ages.

However, in some elements of the curriculum, such as word-processing, standards are in line with expectations. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the areas of information technology that are taught, but unsatisfactory progress overall since significant areas, such as sensing and monitoring, and modelling using simulation programs, are not addressed.

13. At the end of Key Stage 2 and by the time that pupils leave the school, attainment in religious education is broadly in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in a suitable range of topics related to their religious education curriculum.
14. Over time, pupils on the special educational needs register make satisfactory progress, particularly in improving literacy skills. They generally meet their targets on their individual education plans. However, a large number of pupils with learning difficulties join the school during Key Stage 2. By the time they reach Year 6, they have been in the school for too short a time for their skills to show a comparable level of improvement to pupils who have attended the school for longer periods. This impacts adversely on the school's results.
15. Pupils for who speak English as an additional language make at least satisfactory progress over time and many make good progress. They benefit from a carefully planned support system, both in class and in small groups taught separately. A good feature of their support is the good level of co-planning between the support teacher and class teachers; enabling pupils to be pre-taught the vocabulary they will need to know to fully access the curriculum. The attainment of pupils from the traveller community is low, but they make satisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on entry to the school.
16. There are significant differences between boys and girls in their levels of attainment. The performance of boys in the 1999 English tests compared to girls indicated that the boys were just over a term behind the girls. Boys have attained significantly lower scores than girls in mathematics for all but one of the last four years. The school has not analysed any differences in attainment between different ethnic groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The school continues to instil in pupils the positive attitudes to learning reported at the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most arrive on time and are waiting in the playground for their teachers to collect them in the mornings. The regular few who persistently arrive a few minutes late are asked for reasons and their 'Golden Time' can be reduced. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons; they work well together and want to succeed. Genuine excitement was shown by Year 4 pupils as they suddenly recognised the difference between text and notes on Tyrannosaurus Rex. Year 6 pupils enjoyed their Calypso music composition, sharing their ideas and taking turns with the different instruments to capture the rhythm. In a Year 5 literacy session pupils spoke confidently to the whole class when giving their views on the text and offered thoughtful, imaginative and sensible alternative endings to 'The Pied Piper'. Pupils are polite, interested in others' opinions and listen carefully. They understand how their actions can affect other people, and demonstrate tolerance, sensitivity and understanding in religious education lessons when different faiths and cultures are compared and discussed. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are generally as positive in their responses to learning as other pupils. Most persevere willingly and remain on

task with the help of support staff. The diverse and rich cultural composition of the school's population makes a positive contribution to the mature attitudes shown.

18. Pupils know how they are expected to behave and what will happen if they do not follow the school's rules and conventions. They are pleased when their good work is rewarded and accept that any sanctions are fairly given. Overall behaviour is sound. No bullying, oppressive, sexist or racist behaviour was observed during the inspection. In assemblies, outside in the playground, when moving within school and in most lessons, pupils behave well. Although a small, but vocal, minority can be disruptive this inappropriate behaviour, whilst detrimental at the time to the learning of the rest of their class, does not occur in many lessons. The number of exclusions has reduced in the last six months. Pupils, who might have been excluded in the past, are now offered a pastoral support programme to enable them to remain in school. They and their parents have to sign a negotiated agreement. This new initiative has yet to be tested. Attendance is satisfactory.
19. Personal development and relationships are good. Teachers know their pupils well and provide good role models. Relationships are good between pupils and with all adults at the school, who are trusted to deal effectively with any concerns pupils raise. Older pupils carry out their duties as prefects conscientiously and with pride. They show concern and care for younger pupils, for example, when two prefects sit with each class and eat their dinners and especially when in the playground where they arbitrate and comfort as necessary. All pupils are well aware of those less fortunate than themselves. Through the 'school council' money is raised for selected charities by holding such events as 'Famous Person Day'. Through their own experience and through talks from the police and other services pupils become aware of their duties as citizens and of the difficulties and dangers they may encounter outside the school environment. They quickly develop a sense of natural justice, and are well prepared for transfer to their secondary schools.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching is good overall, and is a strength of the school. Teaching in all subjects is nearly always at least satisfactory, frequently good and on occasion very good. In one in every eight lessons teaching is very good. Teaching is good in over half of lessons and in nearly all other lessons teaching is satisfactory, only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed during the inspection. Teaching has improved at Key Stage 2 and the good standard of teaching in Year 7 has been maintained since the last inspection.
21. Teachers have good subject knowledge in English, art, French and music and are secure in all other subjects. They have high expectations for pupils and set them challenging work. Since the last inspection better use is made of well-qualified and experienced support staff, but teachers' planning does not usually identify what specific activities support teachers and assistants should undertake. Nevertheless, support staff know the pupils well and understand individual pupil's learning objectives.
22. Planning is satisfactory across the school and good use is made of topics that develop skills in a number of subject areas, consolidating skills in literacy, but less attention is given to pupils' numeracy skills. Most lessons are planned to relate to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and weekly plans have clearly defined and appropriate learning objectives. Most tasks are planned to take into

account different ability levels, but on some occasions the level of challenge for individual higher attaining pupils is too low, and for some pupils with learning difficulties tasks are too difficult to achieve without additional support. Teachers use available resources well. Questioning is used skilfully to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding, to develop learning and to ensure that all pupils have a chance to respond. Pupils' contributions are valued and misconceptions or mistakes are used well as teaching points to improve understanding and direct learning. Good use is made of plenary sessions to recapitulate on the lesson and consolidate learning. Teachers are careful to ensure that no time is wasted during teaching time. Lessons begin promptly and are conducted at a brisk pace.

23. Teachers employ a range of different approaches to class organisation including the effective use of whole-class teaching, and where appropriate a particularly good emphasis is placed on collaborative work between pupils. As in Year 4 when planning a dance routine, and in Year 7 when composing African rhythms.
24. Pupils are managed very well and classes are quiet, well-ordered environments where pupils work purposefully. Behaviour is good and pupils work successfully on their own or in groups as required. The good relationships between all members of the school have a very positive impact upon the standards achieved. The good use of homework plays an important part in consolidating learning and extending understanding.
25. Work is regularly marked and many teachers provide constructive written feedback for pupils, with clear suggestions for improvement. However, there are inconsistencies in practice and, on occasions, marking records completion rather than indicating how further progress might be made. Oral feedback is always constructive and helpful. Teachers' records are well maintained and informative but the use made to plan appropriate learning programmes for individual pupils varies between teachers.
26. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from good teaching in withdrawal sessions. Work is well targeted to meet their needs. In literacy lessons, class teachers take account of the pupils' abilities and plan work appropriately. Pupils receive help and encouragement to complete the set tasks, and teachers and support staff play a valuable role in enabling pupils with special educational needs to benefit from the lesson activities. However, there is little evidence to show that all class teachers plan appropriate activities with the learning support staff to help pupils in their work.
27. Although pupils who speak English as an additional language are withdrawn from some lessons for specialist teaching, staff work hard to ensure this does not disadvantage them. The specialist teacher works with pupils on similar texts to those being used in class. Older pupils often have the opportunity to work with the class's shared text ahead of the rest of the class, for example pupils in Year 7 had developed an understanding of the plot of 'Macbeth' before their class began to study the text. Planning for these pupils focuses appropriately on acquiring vocabulary and improving fluency in order for pupils to access the full range of curriculum opportunities.

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

28. Overall, the curriculum offered to pupils is broad and balanced and has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of education. However, the curriculum for information technology does not meet statutory requirements, as some Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum are not taught in sufficient depth. The school has implemented both the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily.
29. Planning of the curriculum is generally satisfactory. However, planning in science and information technology does not build systematically on pupils' previous knowledge, understanding and skills. Additionally, the abilities of all pupils are not taken into consideration sufficiently. The time spent on the different subjects of the National Curriculum are broadly in line with expectations with appropriate additional time allocated to extended writing and guided reading to support the English curriculum. The school meets statutory requirements for sex education and drugs' awareness through a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum and 'circle time' is being introduced to enable pupils to discuss their concerns and celebrations in a secure environment. Sound use is made of teachers' expertise with specialist teaching in, for example, French, music, science and design and technology. Good support from learning support teachers and assistants ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum including those who are visually impaired, hearing impaired or who speak English as an additional language.
30. There are many pupils who find it difficult to operate without adult help and support. A good level of support is provided in lessons and this is supplemented by useful work in withdrawal sessions. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for implementing the provision set out in statements.
31. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There is an orchestra, a choir and mixed gender sports teams to Year 6. In Year 7 pupils have the opportunity to represent their school in matches. Opportunities are given for pupils to play football, netball, rounders and skipping and some learn to play a musical instrument. A significant minority of parents expressed the wish for a wider range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in Year 7.
32. The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. The school's positive ethos, characterised by good relationships and mutual respect, helps to promote pupils' personal development. Daily acts of corporate worship are thoughtful occasions, which meet statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and fostered mainly through collective worship and religious education. Reflection is always part of collective worship, although occasionally pupils do not receive enough time or guidance for this. Opportunities are provided to give pupils insight into values and beliefs and reflect on spiritual experiences. Work for some pupils on prayer, involving honest and open discussion about belief and non-belief, allows them to explore the deeper meaning of things they, perhaps, take for granted. Opportunities are given for pupils to explore their religious beliefs within the context of such religious celebrations as Divali, Eid, Hanukah and Remembrance Day. Teachers incorporate a time of spiritual reflection during the week with their classes, and 'circle time' provides an occasion for reflection on personal experiences.
34. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development and promotes values relating to right and wrong and respect for others. Policies on behaviour,

discipline and bullying provide a sound framework within which pupils can regulate their personal behaviour. Provision is considerably strengthened by the consistent and open approach adopted by the staff. Adults treat pupils with respect and generally receive similarly in return. Pupils are encouraged to consider the effects of their actions on themselves and others as they arise. A corporate set of values in the school is based on the pupils' varied backgrounds. The lack of racial tension in a school with so many ethnic and religious backgrounds is a cause for celebration.

35. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to relate effectively to others and participate in the life of the community. The development of the teamwork ethos, carefully nurtured by the headteacher, helps pupils to understand the importance of living in a community. The school and class rules are displayed in every class and throughout the school and are understood well by the pupils. The emphasis placed on the 'Golden Goals' of respecting others, yourself and property is often used in class lessons to encourage pupils to show respect for each other. The staff act as good role models in their behaviour and in the way they treat one another and the pupils. Good social skills are promoted, and visitors are impressed with the way pupils open doors for people, and consistently speak in a polite and courteous manner. The Garden of Remembrance opened recently is a good indication of the ways in which the school thoughtfully considers past members of staff and pupils who have died. The new 'school council' is an important medium for developing social opportunities and raising money for charities, such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The school now has a firm base to give pupils more opportunities to show independence and trust.
36. The school's provision for cultural development is good, with its stated aims to foster attitudes of tolerance and understanding, which promote respect for all members of the community. It actively and successfully seeks to enrich pupils' knowledge of other cultural traditions by inviting visitors from different faith backgrounds into school, and displaying artefacts, posters and children's work from a variety of traditions. Representatives from local Jewish and Muslim faiths have recently visited the school and talked to the children about their religious celebrations. Parents were invited into the school to celebrate Divali. Other visitors have included music and theatre groups, a Mexican enactment group, a local poet, the 'Chaucer' man, and representatives from the police, fire, health and first aid services. Pupils have themselves visited local places of worship such as the Mosque, Synagogue and Church and a Bible Exhibition. In lessons, pupils learn about a variety of cultural traditions through many aspects of the curriculum. Pupils play African and Indian music, learn about British culture in history, and discuss aspects of many religious faiths in religious education. School notices in different languages, and displays around the school highlight the emphasis the school makes on helping the pupils to value the importance of different cultural traditions.
37. The school has a number of visitors to extend pupils' experience, for example, theatre groups, members of the London symphony orchestra, poets, rugby coaching and musicians playing brass, strings and rock. A number of representatives of the community visit the school, for example, police, dental nurse, fire officer and a Muslim visitor. The school has also developed constructive relationships with partner institutions. The close proximity of the First School enables close collaboration in a range of aspects of school life, for example, some of the music is taught by the same staff in both schools, they share aspects of professional staff development and the same school association supports both schools.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has developed satisfactory procedures to care for its pupils. Child protection guidelines are in place and support services are used well when necessary. Welfare assistants care for sick or injured pupils and first-aid practice is good. All incidents are recorded. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and security is always under review. However, the rotting netball posts at the end of the field have not yet been removed and pose a potential hazard to the unwary in the long grass, and the disused netball courts are in poor condition.
39. Teachers know their pupils well and are trusted by them to deal effectively with any problems. Relationships are good. The new positive behaviour management policy is consistently implemented by nearly all adults and has raised the overall standard of behaviour at school. Pupils value the rewards, such as the additional 'Golden' and 'Privilege' time and team and house points that they receive. They understand the sanctions given if they transgress. The amount of homework can double if not completed on time. Records of behaviour are well maintained and monitored, and strategies to improve behaviour are used well by support and teaching staff. Pupils with special educational and other needs, and those who speak English as an additional language are integrated well into classes and supported by their peers.
40. The school plans carefully for pupils' personal development and offers all pupils opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. Circle time is being trialled in Year 4 in order to boost pupils' self esteem and give them the confidence to speak out, and the pastoral support programme is part of the inclusion initiative. This has already reduced the number of exclusions when compared with last year. Older pupils value 'Golden' and 'Privilege' times when they can choose their own activities. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is effective, if informal.
41. The school keeps good records of pupils' attendance and every absence has to be explained. Although the few persistent latecomers are spoken to by their class teacher, and their parents by the headteacher when necessary, there are no incentives in place to boost the overall school attendance percentage, which is similar to the national average.
42. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. For example, the school identifies the number of levels of attainment pupils gain between the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2. They monitor these levels of attainment for differences between boys and girls and those pupils who are with the school from Year 4 to 7, compared with those who join the school part way through. The school does not monitor attainment by ethnic groupings. Pupils take non-statutory tests each year in English and mathematics to identify whether yearly progress is being made. Teachers make termly assessments in core subjects and ongoing teacher assessments are recorded in teachers' personal records. Work is not moderated with colleagues to ensure assessments are accurate, although the school has started to address this in English. The school is in the process of adopting the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work for some subjects, in science for example, and is developing recording systems to monitor pupils' progress through use of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's expectations for each unit of work.
43. The use of assessment to inform curricular planning is unsatisfactory. The school does not analyse data sufficiently to ensure that what pupils should know,

understand and do in a lesson or series of lessons is securely based on the range of pupils' prior achievement. For example, with the exception of literacy and numeracy, lesson plans do not consistently identify different expectations for pupils with differing abilities and tests are not systematically analysed to identify areas of misunderstanding. However, the school has started to use its assessment data to set some realistic targets, introduce time for extended writing and guided reading and, in Year 7, pupils are also involved in self-assessment.

44. Satisfactory systems are in place for the identification of pupils with special educational needs. Regular reviews take place for all pupils with individual education plans. Records for pupils with special educational needs provide opportunities for their progress to be monitored. Support services are appropriately involved in the identification, assessment and teaching of pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school has established good links with all parents, whatever their nationality or cultural origin, and plans to develop these further by providing a room for their use. The school provides very good information in the form of the school brochure, governors' annual report, regular news and other letters. Parents are told about curricular matters and are asked for their views. The school is awaiting their comments on the new behaviour policy. When necessary, documentation is translated into some of the many languages spoken by parents. Local community support groups help if needed and the office staff are always ready to give assistance filling in forms. The comprehensive annual reports are well written and give details of individual pupil's progress and both parents and children are asked for their comments. Homework diaries are inconsistently used, but can provide useful information to enable those parents who wish to help their children at home. However, many parents are not able to assist their children with homework and a few are not happy with the amount given.
46. Most parents of children with special educational needs are well informed about their individual education programmes and appropriately involved in their annual reviews, although a few expressed that they would like more detailed information on the provision made for their children. All parents, including those who speak English as an additional language, are encouraged to talk with teachers if they have concerns; translators will be found if necessary.
47. Parents are very supportive of the school. Their attendance at consultation evenings, when targets their children have been set are reviewed with them, and at school productions is excellent but very few accept the invitation to assist in classes. Some grandparents and members of the local community talk to Year 6 pupils about their experiences in World War II. Others demonstrate their national cooking on the very popular 'international food' stall at the summer fair, one of the successful fund-raising events run by the hard-working parent-teacher association. All parents are invited to celebrate religious festivals.
48. The school's good partnership with parents and parental support for their children's education has a positive impact on standards and contributes to pupils' behaviour and personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Management and leadership is satisfactory overall. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are relatively new to the school, having been appointed in September 1999. Additionally, the governing body was re-constituted at the same time, having previously been part of a joint governing body with the first school; a number of new governors have been appointed. These changes have followed a turbulent time in the school's history, and a year in which no permanent headteacher or deputy headteacher were in post. As a result the school is at an exciting point in its development. Since their appointment the headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard with other staff members, with the support of governors, to establish a team of professionals who share a clear vision for the school's future. The staff and governors share a common commitment to achieving high standards. Through planned monitoring and careful analysis the headteacher is beginning to develop a good picture of the quality of education being provided in the classrooms.
50. The role of the co-ordinator is identified in the school development plan as an area for improvement. Although some co-ordinators have monitored teaching and learning in their subjects, such as the English co-ordinator when implementing the National Literacy Strategy, most co-ordinators have limited involvement in monitoring. This means that they do not have the opportunity to develop a clear picture of how well their subject is taught throughout the school, or the quality of learning that takes place. Nevertheless, as part of their role they review medium-term planning whilst the headteacher monitors teachers' shorter-term plans. This lack of a clear programme for co-ordinators to evaluate classroom practice means that they cannot securely measure how effectively written plans are used in classrooms.
51. Staff professional development arrangements are sound. They are overseen by the headteacher and reflect both the identified needs of the school and the personal needs of the staff. Although the school has a relatively high turnover of staff, the school does not have policies for the induction of newly appointed or qualified staff. Appraisal procedures are currently suspended nationally and the headteacher has not yet held professional development interviews with her colleagues, however these are planned for. Many staff have recently attended relevant professional development courses both externally and in-school.
52. Since the governing body was re-formed, governors have worked hard to fulfil their responsibilities. In particular, they have spent much time and energy to ensure that the appropriate people were appointed to key managerial posts in order to lead the school forward. In this respect they have taken an active part in shaping the direction of the school. When operating as a joint governing body, working parties met regularly: and had clearly defined responsibilities. The governing body is now in the process of establishing a committee structure and terms of reference to enable governors to execute their responsibilities efficiently. Most statutory requirements are met, although there are some minor omissions in the information sent to parents.
53. The headteacher and governors consult with staff when planning for the school's future development and use the information gained to identify and prioritise appropriate areas for improvement in the school development plan. Progress made towards improvements is monitored at regular intervals and their usefulness evaluated.
54. As the school's senior management team is so new to the school, as yet, a suitable understanding of the school's main areas of strength and where improvements are

needed has not been clearly arrived at. Nevertheless, the headteacher has spent much time considering priorities for the future. For example, the need for more detailed analysis of pupils' performance in order to raise standards. Currently results are not used diagnostically to identify the areas in each subject in which pupils excel and those where they are less successful. This means that valuable information is not used effectively to adjust the educational programme so that attainment is raised wherever possible. The school development plan was written by the acting headteacher and priorities identified in this are being addressed appropriately.

55. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good overall and pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from the additional resources and facilities required for teaching Key Stage 3 pupils. The school has a good number of teachers for the number of pupils on roll. They are appropriately qualified with a range of experience to match the demands of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2 and for pupils in Year 7. In addition the school has a good number of specialist teachers for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. A good number of experienced support staff provide learning support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, children from the traveller community and those who speak English as an additional language as well as two full-time assistants responsible for the library, resources and welfare.
56. The committed and experienced support staff provide good quality support for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Administrative staff carry out their administrative duties effectively. The school is cared for well by maintenance and cleaning staff and is clean and in good order. The cleaners and midday supervisors perform their roles in a friendly, capable way and are all valuable members of the school team.
57. The accommodation is spacious and enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. There are dedicated rooms for science, food technology, music, art, design and technology and information and communications technology. In addition there are dedicated rooms for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The school library is spacious and well planned to ensure all pupils can easily access books. Displays in the shared areas of the school demonstrate a good range of subject matter and are carefully presented to celebrate pupils' efforts. Classroom displays are predominantly informative, with a lower proportion of space devoted to pupils' work.
58. Outside accommodation is satisfactory and provides suitable space for play and organised games. The garden of remembrance gives a place of quiet reflection for pupils as well as providing a good resource for environmental activities. The school makes good provision for the inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities despite the physical limitations of being largely on the first floor of a building with no lifts or wheelchair ramps.
59. Learning resources are sufficient for the school's curriculum and age range of pupils. Resources show no bias in favour of any one ethnic, gender or socio-economic background, and are equally accessible to all. The choices of shared texts used in literacy do not favour any one group of pupils over another. They are appropriately stored and accessible to staff and pupils. Good resources are available for science and design and technology. Although they are satisfactory in most other subjects, the resources for information and communications technology are unsatisfactory. The school has sufficient computers to support learning across

the curriculum, although many of these are elderly and no equipment for sensing and monitoring external events, or for pupils to create multimedia presentations is available. Insufficient software is available to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for information technology at Key Stage 3. The library is well stocked with a good range of up-to-date non-fiction books as well as a sound range of fiction. Within classes there is a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction books to support the curriculum and recreational reading. Good use is made of outside visits such as to museums, places of worship and a local farm to support work in school; and of visitors such as theatre groups, members of the caring professions and music groups. The school makes good use of the local education authority's resources library to borrow artefacts for projects such as those in history.

60. The school makes good strategic use of resources and financial planning is good; governors are fully involved in this. Expenditure is closely linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan and clearly targeted to improve pupils' standards of attainment and experiences within the school. Governors have yet to formally decide on the committee structure to adopt. However, the establishment of a finance committee is under consideration. When operating as a joint governing body they made good use of available information to plan as far ahead as is reasonable and used the principles of best value to ensure that resources were used well. Financial administration is efficient and unobtrusive and ensures that adequate information is available to the headteacher and governors to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities and to make considered decisions. Specific grants given to the school, such as for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, are monitored carefully, ensuring that these are used for their designated purposes.
61. The school has high numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and over half of the pupils with special educational needs; pupils' achievement over time is satisfactory and their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. When taking these factors into consideration alongside the quality of education provided, in particular the good teaching, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. The recently appointed headteacher and re-constituted governing body should give priority to addressing the issues identified below and should now:
- (1) Raise standards in mathematics, science and information technology by:
 - i. meeting statutory requirements in information technology;
 - ii. using assessment more effectively in order to clearly identify what all groups of pupils should know, be able to do and understand by the end of a lesson or series of lessons;
 - iii. improving pupils' ability to record, so that their skills in written work more closely match their oral competence;
 - iv. ensuring that the science and information technology curricula build systematically upon pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills from one year to the next and are appropriate to their ages and abilities;

- v. making better use of pupils' skills in information and communication technology in other subjects and more efficient use of resources in order to consolidate pupils' information technology skills.
- (2) Form a clearer picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses by:
- i. analysing performance data, including the performance of different ethnic groups;
 - ii. make more consistent use of performance data to guide curricular planning so that it more accurately meets the needs of all pupils;
 - iii. developing a structure for the systematic monitoring of teaching and the curriculum that improves their own and co-ordinators' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in subject areas in order to identify priorities for raising attainment further.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	41	45	1	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	300
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	81

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	14
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	105

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	179

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	62
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	36	41	77

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	20	16
	Girls	30	25	23
	Total	47	45	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (70)	58 (50)	51 (58)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	15
	Girls	27	21	25
	Total	43	37	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (57)	48 (41)	52 (48)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	9
Indian	109
Pakistani	18
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	1
White	76
Any other minority ethnic group	67

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	25

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	275

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage	8	1
Black – other	1	
Indian	1	
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups	3	

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

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
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	£
Total income	610,958
Total expenditure	601,598
Expenditure per pupil	1,947
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,646
Balance carried forward to next year	21,006

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	104

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	42	4	1	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	30	4	1	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	42	17	5	3
The teaching is good.	52	39	4	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	34	13	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	40	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	36	1	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	37	41	13	2	8
The school is well led and managed.	43	42	3	2	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	39	4	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	37	14	13	10

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

63. The attainment of the majority of pupils when they enter the school is below average.
64. Results of the national assessments for 11 year olds in 1999 show that the performance of the pupils in English was well below the national average, and below the average for schools with a similar intake of pupils. It fell below the national average for their age group by the equivalent of nearly two terms. The number of pupils achieving above average standards was below the national average, but close to the average for similar schools. Taken over the last four years, the performance of the pupils in English was below the national average; it fell below the national average for their age group by the equivalent of nearly a term. The performance of boys in the 1999 tests compared to girls indicated that the boys were just over a term behind the girls. In Year 7, evidence gained during the inspection showed that attainment in English is generally in line with expectations for that age group, although handwriting is not up to the expected standard. The most recent test results are similar to those attained at the time of the last inspection.
65. Inspection evidence is that pupils' attainment in English is broadly in line with expectations. The difference between this judgement and the test results may be due, to some extent, to the pupils' inexperience in taking tests, and that their oral skills are better than their writing skills. Pupils' progress overall is good. The literacy hour is beginning to make an impact on the standards of attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6 and in the lessons observed, learning is at least satisfactory.
66. Appropriate targets to improve standards have been set by the school, and evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of written work and listening to children read, indicate that the school is likely to achieve its target in Key Stage 2 tests this year.
67. In lessons, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils are taught to listen carefully and they learn to pay careful attention to the spoken communication of the adults around them. Pupils, including many who speak English as an additional language, express themselves clearly and confidently and teachers ensure that pupils of all abilities are actively involved in these sessions. This is evident in lessons such as those on 'Macbeth' where pupils relate to interpretations of relationships between 'Macbeth', and 'Lady Macbeth'. This is also evident in work on the poem 'The Listeners' where pupils develop a sense of inference and deduction; in discussions to distinguish the difference between fact and opinion; and in lively debates about the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin'. In other areas of the curriculum, for example in religious education, pupils are encouraged to discuss issues and develop thoughtful ideas about respect and courtesy, particularly when thinking about prayer in different religions.
68. Standards in reading are broadly in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils of average and higher attainment read fluently, with accuracy and expression. They retell stories they have read previously, and use appropriate strategies to correct their own mistakes. Although lower attaining pupils, including

those with special educational needs, read slowly, they often read accurately. They describe what is happening from clues in the text or pictures, and talk about their favourite parts of the story. Research skills develop slowly over the key stage, but by the age of 11, most pupils understand about contents and index. There is little evidence of the development of skimming and scanning or the use of the library for private research. Since the last inspection, some improvement has been made in providing a wider range of reading, which is mainly due to the introduction of the literacy hour. The recent introduction of a home/school reading log is helping to raise pupils' performance in reading. In Year 7, standards of reading are satisfactory, and the higher-attaining pupils are able to read more demanding text. However, the higher order skills are generally not well developed and pupils have difficulty in retrieving information.

69. Standards in writing are generally satisfactory for average and higher-attaining pupils. However, lower-attaining pupils have limited opportunities to practise the skills and techniques necessary for extended writing. Pupils write in a variety of styles and for a range of purposes such as stories, diaries, descriptions and poetry. Year 4 pupils know about story setting and character studies and are beginning to organise their thoughts and develop writing techniques and skills. By the end of the key stage most pupils produce organised and imaginative writing which is well constructed. They know about writing for an audience with a range of content including letters, debates, and evaluating texts such as 'I am David'. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress with the effective support of learning support teachers and assistants. Throughout the key stage most pupils achieve a satisfactory standard in the writing skills of grammar, spelling and punctuation. However in Year 5, although some higher-attaining pupils achieve above average standards, most pupils do not apply known rules and techniques in their extended writing. They are not reliable in their use of capital letters and full stops; stories follow a plan at a basic level and grammar and punctuation are not used consistently in the correct way. In Year 7, writing is satisfactory overall in terms of match, variety and teaching points covered; however, attainment is generally below the level expected for this age group. Handwriting and presentation throughout the school are inconsistent. Although pupils write legibly, many have yet to develop a joined handwriting style, the lack of this affects the presentation of their writing, which is a weak feature throughout the school.
70. Pupils' attitudes to English are good. They enjoy their lessons, are well behaved and show respect for their teachers and each other. They ask and answer questions and make good contributions to opportunities for discussion. They experience more difficulties when working independently, and some pupils remain off task for some time.
71. Teaching in English in Key Stage 2 is good, and ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good or better in almost three out of five lessons, and is satisfactory in all others. This reflects the amount of time and energy that the school has invested in implementing the National Literacy Strategy, the framework of which teachers know well, and are comfortable with its structure. Lessons are well planned and teachers use a good range of activities to focus on the different aspects of literacy. Through good knowledge of the subject, they involve pupils in positive discussions using good quality open-ended questions. Lessons have clear learning aims and progress towards achieving them is reviewed with the class at the end of the lessons. Teachers choose activities to match the learning needs of individual pupils. Although learning support assistants work alongside teachers to support

children with special educational needs, little evidence is seen in teachers' planning to identify specific tasks for them. Most teachers' handwriting styles do not demonstrate an appropriate model for the development of a consistent, cursive script necessary for pupils to achieve a satisfactory standard by the end of Key Stage 2. In Year 7, very good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to concentrate and become involved in understanding the text of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and good opportunities are planned for pupils to write in a range of styles, often at length. Throughout the school marking procedures are inconsistent. Although some teachers provide evaluative comments, on many occasions ticks are used routinely, with little constructive suggestions for improvement.

72. The English curriculum in Key Stage 2 is based appropriately on the National Literacy Strategy, and the school has provided additional time to focus on the development of pupils' reading and writing skills. In Year 7, pupils follow an appropriate curriculum based on language, literature and creative writing activities. The amount of money recently spent on books and other resources has enhanced the teaching of English throughout the school. The library is well stocked with a variety of suitable fiction and non-fiction books, which are classified into appropriate sections. Books and literature appropriate for boys have recently been provided to help raise standards. Two library assistants are in the library throughout the day to help pupils choose books to loan. The school benefits from good, enthusiastic leadership from the co-ordinator, who monitors the quality of teaching and planning of lessons. She provides good support for colleagues to help their planning and is beginning to use assessment results to analyse the progress of pupils in order to set appropriate targets to assist in raising attainment.

MATHEMATICS

73. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and by the oldest pupils in the school at present are below those expected for their age. Nevertheless, the school makes satisfactory provision for the teaching of mathematics and by the time they leave pupils have made sound progress in relation to their attainment on entry.
74. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was well below the national average and demonstrated an improvement on the results from the previous year. Eighteen per cent of pupils who took the tests attained the higher Level 5; this is below the national average. However, these results are in line with the average percentages for similar schools. These results are comparable in relation to the national average with those in 1996 when the school was last inspected. Boys have attained significantly lower scores than girls for all but one of the last four years.
75. Despite working at expected levels in many areas of mathematics, weaknesses in pupils' knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables has a significant effect on their attainment overall. The discrepancy between this judgement and the well-below average test results can be accounted for, to some extent, by pupils' inexperience in test situations. The school has only recently begun to give pupils regular experience of taking tests similar to those in the national assessments at the end of each key stage. Year groups are now set for mathematics on the basis of pupils' performance in the assessment tasks designed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which all year groups now take at the end of each academic year.

76. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by ten or 100. They use a range of written and mental strategies to apply the four operations of number, and more able pupils in Year 6 can apply these and work with decimals to at least two places. About half of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 understand how fractions, decimals and percentages relate to one another, and can apply this knowledge to practical problems. Pupils measure angles with a protractor and can identify acute and obtuse angles. They can calculate the perimeter and area of simple shapes. Pupils collect data and construct and interpret graphs of various forms.
77. Pupils in Year 7 use and apply the four operations of number to problem-solving effectively. They round numbers to the nearest ten or 100 and use this to aid mental calculations. More able pupils solve simple linear equations and use co-ordinates in four quadrants accurately. Pupils measure angles with a protractor and consider the properties of a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They undertake simple statistical analysis of given data, and consider basic elements of probability. More able pupils extend their use of probability theory and study the use of ratio.
78. Pupils make satisfactory progress against their attainment on entry to the school. They consolidate and extend their skills and learn to apply them effectively. Higher attaining pupils are given opportunities to extend their knowledge and application of mathematical concepts. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Many pupils benefit from being streamed according to their prior attainment, and this has had a positive effect upon the standards attained.
79. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work. They enjoy the oral mathematics element of each lesson and in many classes collaborate well in their independent tasks. A notable feature of many mathematics lessons observed was the lack of irrelevant conversation during group work. Older pupils are particularly good at helping one another and sharing their methods of approach to a problem. Nearly all pupils are well behaved in lessons; however, at times they are given limited opportunities to develop independent learning skills.
80. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2 in one out of five lessons the teaching is good and in three out of ten it is very good. In Year 7 in one out of three lessons the teaching is good. Where teaching is most successful it is characterised by teachers' great enthusiasm for mathematics, which they communicate to pupils and develops in them an excitement for handling numbers. Effective planning includes a range of tasks closely matched to pupils' prior attainment in mathematics. Lively questioning extends pupils' deductive skills, and encourages them to share their own ideas and strategies with their peers. The techniques used vary in whole-class mental arithmetic sessions, but teachers use this time well to promote and extend pupils' skills in mental arithmetic and basic number skills. Where teaching is less successful teachers do not plan for the range of abilities within their set, leaving some pupils insufficiently challenged and others with tasks that are inappropriate for them to complete unaided. Teachers make satisfactory use of numeracy and mathematics in many other areas of the curriculum, such as measuring in science and data handling in geography. There is very little evidence of the use of information and communications technology to support learning in mathematics,

although pupils in Years 5 and 6 use a database to store and manipulate data and to produce different types of graphs.

81. The co-ordinator for mathematics is new this term. Appropriate areas for development have been identified by the senior management team and the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and is keen to monitor both pupils' work and teaching in order to identify strengths and areas for development in the school's provision. He is a good practitioner and leads by example. A satisfactory range of books and equipment for mathematics are available. The school makes effective use of a commercially produced scheme to support the work of the National Numeracy Strategy. Year groups share equipment effectively, however, sharing of equipment across year groups is less well established. For instance, in one lesson observed pupils shared the year-group's calculators one-between-two, the extra equipment necessary not having been borrowed from another year group. This had an adverse effect, slowing the rate of pupils' learning considerably.

SCIENCE

82. Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in the 1999 national tests was well below average and in the lowest five per cent nationally. This is comparable with results in 1996 when the school was last inspected. The standard of work seen during this inspection was below national expectations at both Key Stages 2 and 3. However, at both key stages, pupils' ability to contribute orally in science is significantly better than their ability to read, interpret and record it. This combined with pupils' lack of experience in taking tests limits their ability to communicate effectively what they know and understand.
83. Year 4 pupils are not secure on what makes a test fair and make only simple predictions; for example, will they be able to hear sounds through liquids? At Year 5 pupils' work is closer to expectations and they know the symbols for recording a simple circuit, they identify materials that are conductors and those that are insulators, including air. Although recorded work is not sufficiently accurate to demonstrate understanding, pupils are sufficiently confident to design a simple switch using basic materials. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils discuss food chains using the appropriate science vocabulary, for example, producer, consumer, predator, prey, carnivore and herbivore. Higher attaining pupils create a range of food chains. They begin to develop an understanding of food webs rather than chains and realise that removal of any organism will have an effect on any other above it in a food chain. At Key Stage 3 pupils in Year 7 can, with support, investigate the effect of air resistance on the rate of descent of a parachute. When aided pupils recognise that there are a number of variables that are important, for example, size and material of the canopy and the mass. However, an insufficient number of pupils recognise without prompting what to change, measure and keep the same to ensure a test is fair or who are able to record independently.
84. Pupils' achievement over time is satisfactory as they enter and leave the school with standards below expectations. Although this satisfactory progress is demonstrated through increased knowledge and understanding, which are broadly in line with expectations, pupils are less secure when recording investigations, using scientific vocabulary, recognising when a test is fair and recording key knowledge, understanding and skills learnt effectively. Few pupils are able to independently research or plan an investigation.

85. Pupils with special educational needs do not have individual education plans identifying targets in science. Nevertheless, pupils are well supported by teachers and learning support teachers and assistants and are able to be fully involved in the curriculum. Specialist help includes support of a visually impaired pupil using Braille; hearing impaired pupils and pupils whose ability to speak English is limited, to record their work appropriately.
86. Science contributes to pupils' literacy skills in all years through pupils' planning and recording of their experiments. Numeracy is supported through activities such as pupils interpreting graphs when recording the rate of growth of plants in Year 5, and measuring distances in centimetres and forces in Newton's when investigating forces in Year 7. Insufficient use is made of information technology in all aspects.
87. Overall teaching is satisfactory; in two out of every three lessons teaching is satisfactory and in one lesson out of three it is good. Teaching is most effective when the objectives of a lesson are clear and shared with the pupils. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding are used to extend and challenge pupils' thinking and pupils are encouraged to take initiative in planning their own investigations. Teaching is also effective when lessons are well planned, have pace and pupils are well managed to ensure that they all make progress. Good management also fosters good relationships between teachers and pupils and develops good attitudes to learning. This enhances pupils' involvement and enables teachers to challenge them to consolidate their learning. Teaching is less effective when; introductions are too long, what is to be learnt is not shared with pupils, recording does not emphasise the objectives of the lesson and opportunities for pupils to work independently are limited.
88. The school introduced the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work in September. This is not yet consistently applied; resulting in some inappropriate work that is not matched to pupils' ages and abilities. The lack of systematic short-term assessments restricts teachers' ability to predict appropriate expectations for the full range of ability when planning. Consequently, the curriculum does not build systematically on pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills from one year to the next. Overall accommodation and resources are good and Key Stage 2 pupils benefit from the enhanced provision of a science laboratory and equipment for pupils in Year 7.

ART

89. By the end of Key Stage 2, and the time that pupils leave the school, standards in art are above those usually found. Pupils make good progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
90. Pupils explore drawing techniques using a range of materials including pencil, charcoal and crayon. Year 4 pupils study the 'Willow Pattern' and emulate this well using a combination of felt tip and crayon and make interesting 'fruit' pots. Year 5 pupils emphasise shape and texture when modelling their clay fish and combine mosaic and colour-wash to produce Aztec masks. When taught by the co-ordinator this year group produces some outstanding drawings. By the age of 11 many pupils have developed sound drawing skills, particularly in linear work, using shade and tone well. They use dry paint, glue and charcoal to produce some fine

representations of primitive art. These pupils have also successfully emulated the work of Clarice Cliff in ceramics. Pupils learn the skills necessary for different techniques, for example when making their 'Arnolfini Mirrors' Year 7 pupils use papier-mâché over a clay mould to produce their self-portraits. They apply their skills well to other subjects, such as when designing posters to explain the effects of pollution. Throughout the school pupils generally use their preparatory drawings well, exploring the effects they create using various media.

91. Teaching in art ranges from satisfactory to good, and is good overall. Lessons are generally planned and prepared well with appropriate resources made available to pupils. However, the teacher usually selects resources and pupils are not given enough opportunities to decide which materials they feel are most appropriate for different projects. Teachers share their own expertise in the subject, give clear instructions and they teach their pupils new techniques to further improve their work. Teachers have appropriately high expectations of their pupils and encourage them to refine and improve upon their original ideas. Good opportunities are planned for pupils to use clay and other sculptural materials.
92. Pupils enjoy their lessons in art, and from the moment they enter the studio are very eager to begin. They experiment confidently and most discuss their work sensibly. They co-operate with each other; sharing and organising resources and equipment well and demonstrate good routines in their care for these.
93. The co-ordinator has had specialist training in art, but has few opportunities to share this expertise with classes other than his own. Although he has monitored teachers' planning, he has not monitored the quality of teaching and learning in art. Very good guidance is available for teachers to base their lessons on, with detailed instructions for some projects. There are sufficient resources; these are well organised and accessibly stored.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Standards at both key stages are in line with those found nationally and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection, where standards were below national expectations.
95. In Year 4 pupils identify the structure and function of the various parts of a torch and, from research of pupils' preferences, design, plan and make a fruit drink. By Year 5 pupils have made sound progress to extend the torch disassembly into designing and making a torch working from plans, modifying these as work proceeds and completing the project within a given time limit.
96. At Key Stage 3 pupils research the function of siege machines and then design their own. They implement their designs by choosing and using a range of tools and materials safely and independently. They combine a range of mechanisms based on levers and pivots and explore the possibility of incorporating a ratchet to enable the siege machine to be primed efficiently and released effectively. They make sound progress through greater independence in work with greater autonomy. For example, by selecting tools to complete a task and by solving their own problems.
97. Pupils develop skills progressively and make a range of artefacts, but recording, planning and evaluation are inconsistent and reflect the quality of the artefacts

produced. For example, pupils do not systematically identify problems encountered or the solutions found. Numeracy is supported through use of accurate measurement and the inclusion of dimensions on plans and their literacy is supported through good discussions and collaboration. However, insufficient use is made of information technology.

98. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and have full access to the curriculum. For example, pupils who have difficulty in handling tools are supported by learning support assistants, and helped to use them safely. One visually impaired pupil is supported to create her designs and plans in Braille.
99. Teaching is satisfactory. From a scrutiny of pupils' work and the lessons seen, teaching is judged to be sound at both key stages. The most effective teaching is where teachers remind pupils of safety, challenge them to improve their designs to enable more effective implementation of design briefs and develop skills through emphasising the correct use of tools for a particular purpose. Sound teaching is also evident in the use of the design and technology room to enable pupils to have the full range of facilities from which they can make informed choices. Good management of pupils ensures safe productive work and maximum use of facilities in the time available. Pupils' attitudes are good and this has a significant effect on the amount of work they complete and the time teachers have available to challenge pupils through discussion.
100. Co-ordination is sound overall. The school is adopting and modifying the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work to identify the progression of knowledge, understanding and skills more clearly. The co-ordinator has insufficient time to monitor teaching or evaluate the subject's performance but the development of the co-ordinator's role is identified in the school development plan for the forthcoming year. Recording of pupils' achievements in design and technology is unsatisfactory. This restricts teachers' ability to plan work that is matched to the full range of ability and based on prior achievement. Overall accommodation and resources are good with Key Stage 2 pupils benefiting from the enhanced provision for the Year 7 pupils. Pupils' achievement is restricted where these facilities are not used for practical work.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with those expected for their age, and have been maintained since the last inspection. No lessons were observed in Year 7 and judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans and on discussion with pupils. Standards attained by the oldest pupils in the school are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
102. Pupils in Key Stage 2 can describe and compare the physical and human features of different localities and consider how their own neighbourhood contrasts with a different area of the British Isles and with life in Mexico. They discuss how types of settlement vary and consider the changes in Harrow and Wealdstone as settlements over several centuries. They learn about world weather and consider the five climatic zones. Year 4 pupils recognise symbols on maps and can use two-figure co-ordinates to locate particular features. They learn about the environment

of a village in India and can consider how the lives of children there vary from their own.

103. Year 7 pupils learn about plate tectonics and volcanoes can discuss their effect on the lives of people who live close by. They learn about how earthquakes are measured and know that the movement of tectonic plates causes them. They learn about measures of latitude and longitude and about time zones of the world and can identify the locations of cities and features of the world by their degrees of latitude and longitude.
104. Pupils enjoy their geographical studies and talk with enthusiasm about the things they have learned this year.
105. Two geography lessons were observed in Key Stage 2 and both of these were good. Teachers manage pupils well and give clear descriptions and explanations of the aspect being considered. Some staff have good subject knowledge and share this effectively with pupils. Teachers make effective use of pupils' good memory for facts that many display and work hard to develop the parallel skill of interpretation.
106. The scheme of work for geography provides a good balance between physical and human geography for each year group. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic. He monitors the school's provision through reading teachers' planning and advising colleagues. The use of information and communication technology to support studies in geography is limited, although some classes do make use of a database to review weather conditions in different cities of the United Kingdom. Resources for geography are sufficient. The use of extended field trips to enhance the curriculum is limited by lack of finance, but good use is made of day trips to a local field study centre and of walks in the local area to complete traffic surveys etc.

HISTORY

107. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection with standards at both key stages in line with those found nationally.
108. The youngest pupils develop an understanding of chronology by creating their own time line of the significant events in their lives. This is then developed so that pupils become aware of the type and age of houses they live in, and they use this information to compare the characteristics of the lives of the ancient Greeks with their own. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use secondary sources, such as video, to make valid comparisons between holidays taken in 1930 and today. Sound progress is made during the key stage with Year 6 pupils applying their knowledge to make deductions. For example, that travel in 1930 was relatively more expensive and less available and, therefore, that few members of the working classes would have been able to afford to go abroad.
109. Sound progress is made in Key Stage 3, with Year 7 pupils showing a greater understanding of how history has informed our society today. For example, they are aware of the influence of the Norman Conquest in 1066 and understand why William the Conqueror won the battle of Hastings and Harold lost. Through a study of medieval Britain they understand how our current system of government was initiated and can discuss the basis of medieval society, the development of

parliament and the significance of Magna Carta. They understand how the lack of pay led to the peasants revolt against the introduction of the poll tax.

110. History supports literacy through, for example, Year 4 pupils writing as a boy or girl in the 1930s and Year 6 pupils writing a diary as a citizen in early London. Little evidence of history supporting numeracy was seen and insufficient use is made of information technology.
111. Although pupils with special educational needs do not have individual education plans that identify targets in history they are well supported and have full access to the curriculum. All pupils with special educational needs complete similar work to their peers.
112. From a scrutiny of pupils' work and the lessons seen teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall. In two thirds of lessons teaching is good, and in all others is satisfactory. As no lessons were seen at Key Stage 3 it is not possible to make a secure judgement on teaching at this key stage. However, from a scrutiny of pupils' work and interviews with pupils teaching is indicated to be at least satisfactory. Teaching is most effective where teachers' knowledge and understanding are used to involve pupils in challenging discussions by relating ideas to their own experiences. For example, by developing an understanding of their own homes before comparing them with those in ancient Greece, and how changes in transport have influenced holiday choices. Good management and high expectations of pupils, pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour ensure that tasks are completed and classroom discussions are interesting, challenging and develop learning.
113. At the time of the inspection the co-ordinator was on long-term leave due to illness. There is no monitoring of teaching or evaluation of the subject's performance. However, the school is evaluating the use Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work and the development of the co-ordinator's role is identified in the school development plan for the forthcoming year. Recording of pupils' achievements in history is unsatisfactory. This restricts teachers' capacity to plan work that is matched to the full range of ability based on prior achievement. Sound use is made of the local education authority's loan service to extend the range of school's resources.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and by the oldest pupils in the school are below those expected for their ages. However, in some elements of the information and communication technology curriculum standards are in line with expectations. Provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory overall because of the lack of some major elements of the required Programmes of Study, such as sensing and monitoring, and modelling using simulation programs. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the areas of information and communication technology which are addressed, but unsatisfactory progress overall since significant areas are not addressed.
115. All pupils use the 'Windows' operating system to access required programs. They can switch on and access a given program and do so with great confidence. Pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 use a word processor to enter and edit text. They vary

the size and style of type and use 'drag and drop' techniques to move text within a document. They have recently learned to use a spellchecker when editing, although many are not yet confident to use this unaided. They set up the fields, add files and seek information from a database, although they cannot amend data already stored. Younger pupils use a graphics program, for example, to create a design for wrapping paper with a repeating pattern. They control a screen 'turtle' creating sequences of instructions to control its movements, such as to follow a path or draw a specified shape.

116. Pupils do not have opportunities to use CD-ROMs for independent research, nor do they use programs such as adventure games to explore simulations, making predictions about the consequences of their decisions. They do not use information and communication technology for the control and monitoring of external events and environments.
117. Year 7 pupils use a word-processing package to produce newspaper front pages related to their English literature studies. They create blocks, boxes and columns and add headings and text within these. They use a graphics program to develop designs for illuminated letters and have some experience of the use of spreadsheets. Although they undertake some desktop publishing they do not have opportunities to create multimedia presentations. Nor do they have access to the use of sensors to measure and record physical variables. They cannot discuss any of the social, economic or moral issues raised by information and communication technology.
118. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time in the information and communication technology suite. They persevere when the equipment is 'unco-operative' and collaborate effectively on shared tasks. Competent pupils give good support to peers and all pupils give good support to classmates with special educational needs. They are particularly appreciative when these pupils demonstrate a competence with the equipment, which is lacking in their other work.
119. The teaching of information and communications technology takes place in the school's computer room. Each class has one hour per week timetabled in the computer room and these lessons are well focused upon teaching pupils how to use particular information and communication technology tools. However, the equipment is not used effectively to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, or to facilitate the development of pupils' personal study skills. Pupils do not get a chance to practise and develop their use of information and communication technology tools since very few classrooms have computers and the suite is not available to pupils outside information and communication technology lessons. An additional result of this is that the computers are in use for less than 40 per cent of each week. This is not an efficient use of resources.
120. In all the lessons observed the teaching of information and communication technology was at least satisfactory. In one quarter of lessons in Key Stage 2 teaching is good, and in one quarter it is very good. In Key Stage 3 all teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory. Where teaching is good or better, it is characterised by teachers having sufficient confidence with the equipment to allow the pupils a high degree of independence. In the best lessons teachers vary tasks to match pupils' prior attainment and pupils spend most of the hour working at their own workstations. Where teachers' subject knowledge is less secure, more time is spent in whole-class teaching, with the result, for example, that

in one lesson pupils spent only a third of the lesson actively working on their own assignments. All teachers support pupils well during information and communication technology lessons, and some make good use of competent pupils to give good support to their peers. However, these pupils have not received any training and as a result can be too helpful and complete tasks for their friends instead of teaching them how to undertake the tasks for themselves. At the end of each lesson all the computers are switched off, as part of the authority's energy saving programme, with the result that time is wasted at the beginning of each class's lesson whilst the computers boot up. This is not a good use of time. Two computers in the school library are used well to address the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs.

121. The recently appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic. He monitors teachers' plans and has begun to monitor pupils' work. He is working to develop a scheme of work that uses elements of the programme recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and is seeking to adapt this to fit the requirements of the updated National Curriculum. Teachers keep a track of the programs pupils have experienced, however, there is no systematic record maintained of skills pupils have learned. Assessment procedures are in their infancy, and based solely on teachers' informal observations of pupils. Staff are positive about the opportunity to teach information and communication technology as a discrete subject and the co-ordinator acknowledges the need to plan for greater use of the equipment.
122. The resources for information and communications technology are unsatisfactory. The school has sufficient computers to support learning across the curriculum, although many of these are elderly. However, there is no equipment for sensing and monitoring external events, or for pupils to create multimedia presentations. Insufficient CD-ROMs are available to support research in other subjects and there is insufficient software to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for information technology at Key Stage 3.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

123. By the time they leave the school Year 7 pupils' attainment is similar to that usually found in most schools. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are introduced to French earlier than most pupils nationally and they make sound progress in their acquisition of the language in Years 6 and 7. A brisk pace is set to most lessons and Year 6 pupils respond confidently. They describe the colours of commonly found fruit, forming their responses in complete phrases. They use their known vocabulary well to work out unfamiliar words in questions posed by the teacher. They learn simple greetings and introductory phrases to use in simple conversations. Pupils enthusiastically play 'Touchez la tete' to reinforce their vocabulary of body parts. Some pupils are becoming so adroit at this that they defeat the teacher! Year 7 pupils tell the time using the quarter and half hours, and some use their knowledge of number vocabulary to tell other times. They learn and use an increasing range of vocabulary, often matching sentences to pictures. Many can record their work accurately using the target language, but about a quarter of the pupils find this difficult.
124. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and share their love of the French language effectively with their pupils. They use the target language fluently, employing a range of

techniques to ensure that pupils understand the vocabulary being used. Lessons are well prepared and teachers have appropriately high expectations of their pupils.

125. Pupils' attitudes to learning a new language are good. They are enthusiastic and most are keen to try to use new words. They confidently 'have a go' using new or unfamiliar vocabulary. They listen carefully to their teachers and through this improve upon their pronunciation of new vocabulary.
126. French is introduced to pupils in Year 6, a year earlier than required, and this gives pupils a good start to their acquisition of the language. Lessons are planned in line with the National Curriculum requirements for Year 7. A suitable range of resources is available to support teaching. However, opportunities are missed to reinforce learning through displays and classroom notices.

MUSIC

127. Standards of attainment in music are above those usually found for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the beginning of Key Stage 3. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
128. Year 4 pupils demonstrate an awareness of rhythm and pitch, and are encouraged to sing with increasing clarity of diction, demonstrate an awareness of phrasing, understand the difference between pitch and dynamics and sing in tune. By the end of the key stage, pupils sing with an increasing control of tempo using an expanding repertoire, maintaining independent parts and responding to other performers. They show good understanding when they perform complex rhythms and can play with percussion instruments in a calypso style. Year 7 pupils can internalise a rhythm to perform with a wide range of percussion instruments in an African style. They play fluently, confidently and with expression at a high standard, demonstrating good rhythm and pace, and respond well to other performers.
129. The quality of teaching is always good, and usually very good. Lessons start with a lively approach to rhythm exercises, and this captures the interest of the pupils. The teacher uses her good management skills to enable pupils to listen and watch with minimum interruption, which enhances their learning. Lessons move along at a good pace, and she leads with energy and enthusiasm, motivating the pupils. She has a secure knowledge of what is required for the pupils, and her high expectations result in raising the levels of the pupils' performance. Planning is thorough, and appropriate activities are chosen for the pupils' stages of development. All aspects of the curriculum are planned for over the key stage.
130. Pupils have good attitudes to learning music. They enjoy participating as a class, in groups, and performing for each other. They concentrate hard, work well together and demonstrate a willingness to practise and improve. They behave well, and are good at listening to each other's performances. They work collaboratively and respond well to music, particularly when this has a strong sense of rhythm. Particularly impressive are the ways that pupils with special educational needs are integrated into music lessons and are accepted so readily by other pupils. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 7 lesson where a visually handicapped pupil played the drum within a group situation, and in a Year 5 lesson where a physically handicapped pupil joined in singing and rhythm exercises with the help of a learning support assistant.

131. The part-time music co-ordinator is keen to develop the musical strengths of the school. The school has good resources, including a variety of good quality percussion instruments. The co-ordinator has just started an orchestra, which is led by one of the peripatetic instrumental teachers, to help raise the levels of musical attainment in the school. Visiting teachers offer lessons in brass, woodwind, and strings and for Indian music playing the tabla and harmonium. A highlight of last term was the performance of a group of Year 7 pupils at the Barbican, who performed their own composition and they were highly commended.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. During the week of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Inspection evidence is drawn from observations of games, dance and gymnastics lessons and from a scrutiny of planning and discussions with staff and pupils.
133. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and those in Year 7 achieve expected standards in physical education, and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from the enhanced provision for physical education required for pupils in Key Stage 3 in that they enjoy access to a wider range of activities than is usual for pupils in Key Stage 2.
134. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of physical education. Most pupils are able to meet the swimming requirements of the National Curriculum by the time they leave the school, although a significant minority does not.
135. Standards attained in games are at least those expected and sometimes better. Many pupils have good co-ordination and throw and catch accurately. They show sound control and passing skills in football, hockey and netball. Year 6 pupils have recently begun to learn basketball and can differentiate and compare different types of throw in basketball and netball. Pupils have satisfactory running and jumping skills. School teams enjoy considerable success in local tournaments and inter-school competitions.
136. Pupils perform dances that demonstrate an awareness of the emotion or idea they are trying to portray. They can talk about and evaluate their own and each other's choreography, considering links between moves and adapting their sequences accordingly. In gymnastics they develop skills of balancing, turning and twisting and travelling. They develop series of moves into progressively more complex sequences. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make sound progress.
137. Pupils appreciate each other's efforts and are given opportunities to reflect upon and evaluate their own and each other's performances. They take part enthusiastically in physical activities and co-operate well in pairs; groups and teams, showing appropriate regard for fair play.
138. All teaching of physical education is satisfactory and some is good. Many staff have evident enthusiasm for sports and are keen to share this with pupils. Lessons are planned well and teachers give clear instructions and make good use of pupil performance to demonstrate achievement and encourage others. Teachers provide

good role models and change into appropriate clothing for physical education lessons. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to activities.

139. The co-ordinator has specialist training in physical education and has great enthusiasm for the subject. She monitors teachers' plans and advises colleagues on techniques to apply in lessons and training courses to attend to further their expertise. She has observed some lessons and has taught lessons for colleagues to observe, as well as undertaking some team-teaching to support colleagues who lack confidence in teaching physical education.
140. The school has appropriate resources for physical education. The large playground area and playing field provide satisfactory facilities to all outdoor activities and the hall is suitable for indoor activities. Resources are satisfactory, maintained well and easily accessible. Resources overall are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. At the end of Key Stage 2 and by the time that pupils leave the school, attainment is broadly in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Evidence in displays, photographs, written accounts in books, and lessons observed show that pupils are making satisfactory progress in a suitable range of topics related to their religious education curriculum. This represents a steady maintenance of standards since the previous inspection.
142. Pupils recognise the integrity and dignity of all people in the world with regard to religion. Their knowledge of the religious and non-religious beliefs of others apart from their own is growing. Year 4 pupils learn about the values, symbols and objects of different religions such as those found in the Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths. During Year 5 they learn creation stories, and about Holy Books associated with major religions such as the Bible, Qur'an and Torah. Year 6 pupils look at the links between religions through the study of worship rituals including prayer. By Year 7 pupils' knowledge of religions is broadened and includes studies of Christianity around the world and festivals of the Hindu and Jewish religions such as Puja and the Passover.
143. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and often good. Planning has several strong features. A broad range of topics is presented and covered in a systematic way. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they carefully prepare lessons to capture the pupils' interests and make full use of the pupils' personal experiences of their own religious rituals to share with the class. In lessons, teachers tell the pupils clearly what is to be achieved. Pupils are given time to review their learning and discuss their own ideas and feelings, for example in the good discussion on how Muslims treat the Qur'an with respect by washing their hands before touching it.
144. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. The good relationships that have been built up between pupils and adults strongly support the main messages of the religious education programme. Pupils pay proper attention and answer questions politely. They show genuine interest in the facts and stories they hear and make remarkable efforts to contribute to discussions, which are often thought provoking, yet at the same time show a great deal of respect for each other's point of view.

145. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. She has a good grasp of the syllabus requirements, which results in effective organisation of the subject. Teachers' plans have been carefully scrutinised, and the required resources are available for all the topics to be studied this year. Religious education makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The reflective aspects of the subject are now in place and the subject is well placed to develop further.