

INSPECTION REPORT

CARLTON HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brighton, East Sussex

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique reference number: 114381

Headteacher: Mrs Dilys-Wyn Foster

Reporting inspector: Ms Cherry R Jackson
005358

Dates of inspection: 28 February – 3 March 2000

Inspection number: 000193575

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sussex Street
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Appropriate authority: Brighton and Hove

Name of chair of governors: Mr Ron Hassell

Date of previous inspection: 17 February 1997

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		Art	Results & achievements
		Design & Technology	How well pupils are taught
		Physical Education	Leadership and management
Belinda Price	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values & personal development
			How well the school cares for its pupils
			Partnership with parents
Susan Hails	Team inspector	Equal opportunities	
		Special Educational Needs	
		English as an additional language	
		Science	
		Information Technology	
		Religious Education	
Peter Wilson	Team inspector	English	Curricular and other opportunities
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Carlton Hill is a primary community school, with a nursery class, for children aged 3 to 11 years. There are 209 pupils on the roll, which has risen in recent years owing to the school's increasing popularity. The proportion of pupils eligible for free meals is consistently high, currently twice the national average. The proportion for whom English is an additional language is also high; most are Bangladeshi. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs are above the national average. The majority of their needs centre on speech and communication. Baseline assessment shows that the ability profile of the intake is below average for Brighton, with a weakness in language ability; there is a small gifted and able group in the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has some key strengths and weaknesses. The teaching and learning are good and have resulted in sound standards and good achievement for the infants. Standards are unsatisfactory in Year 6 but meet the national expectation in the Years 3, 4 and 5. Provision is improving due to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies but the impact has been slow in the juniors due to poor continuity in the staffing there. Management strategies were not strong enough to overcome these difficulties. The strength of the leadership is its clear direction but the weakness is the lack of formal systems.

There have been significant weaknesses in pupils' attainment in the past. However, taking account of the good quality of teaching and learning now and the sound standards in almost all year groups, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The infants' attainment is very high compared with like schools in reading, writing and mathematics, and standards are close to, or above, the national average in reading and mathematics.
- Standards in reading meet the national expectation in all the year groups.
- Standards of art work are good throughout the school.
- The pupils concentrate well, and can take responsibility for working independently.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good.
- The teaching and the work of the learning support assistants are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as an additional language is good and they make good progress.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been whole heartedly adopted and the staff are using them to raise standards.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social education is good and for cultural education it is very good.

What could be improved

- The standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of the juniors are below the national average. Mathematics and science standards are below average for like schools.
- The use of marking to let the pupils know how to improve, and the use of homework, are inconsistent across the classes and the older pupils especially do not all know how well they are doing.
- The curriculum in the nursery is not well balanced.
- The school development plan is not clearly focussed on improvement.
- Monitoring of teaching and lesson planning do not ensure consistently high quality, particularly when there is long term teacher absence.
- The use of attainment data is undeveloped and is not providing the school with information it needs to improve standards.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made sound progress since the last inspection, in February 1997. There has been

good progress in developing the teachers' skills at questioning. The proportion of teaching that is satisfactory or better has improved from 80% to 96%. Statutory requirements are being met for National Curriculum subjects and religious education and there are other sound improvements in curriculum planning, many related to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The communal act of worship now meets statutory requirements. Governors know their school well now; but the school's capacity for improvement is hampered by unsatisfactory strategies for monitoring standards and quality.

Improvements in standards are just satisfactory. Standards in English, mathematics and science for Year 6 have improved over the last three years although they are not yet high enough. Improvement for the other junior years and infants has been good. Standards for the under fives are broadly as they were at the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E*	E	E	C
Mathematics	E*	E	E*	D
Science	E*	E	E*	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The school's test results for 11 year olds have been below or well below the national average consistently over these recent years. There has been little high attainment at level 5. Asterisks by grades indicate attainment within the lowest 5% nationally. Compared with similar schools, Carlton Hill results are average in English and below average in mathematics and science.

There are some unavoidable circumstances that contribute to the unsatisfactory results: the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the groups learning English as an additional language, and pupils who joined the school in their last primary year, may not attain well. The small size of the year groups makes data less reliable. The school's results rose for the previous three years, but fell slightly in 1999. In that year and the previous one, long term staff absence in the junior department was unavoidably high.

In their lessons now the current Year 6 are not attaining the national expectation in English, mathematics and science. The school has set itself challenging targets for these pupils for the tests this year and is working hard to meet them. The teaching in this year is good but the pupils are hampered by weak past learning caused by lack of continuity in the teaching. Their personal achievement is not satisfactory. The pupils are not likely to meet the targets. They can speak, listen and read in a satisfactory way but they cannot write sufficiently sustained passages. They can do simple mental calculations but find it hard to apply their mathematics or choose the right operation. They can understand what a fair test is in science but do not have enough scientific knowledge.

The younger junior classes are on course to meet the national expectation, with Year 5 more competent already in their lessons than Year 6. Year 5 can organise their writing well; even the less able can write accurately and grammatically; Year 5 can calculate to 100 and are working on division by 10 to 10000. They can choose the right operation to solve a problem and discuss different approaches; in science they can do experiments independently, predict outcomes on the basis of previous learning and record their findings. Their personal achievement is sound.

Attainment for the infants is better and there are usually good proportions of high attainment at level

3. They have improved from well below the national average for reading in 1997 to average in 1999 and are in the top 5% compared with similar schools. They have always been better at mathematics than English and in 1999 were well above average compared with the nation and in the top 5% for similar schools. They are weaker at writing, usually below the national average, but in 1999 they were well above the average for similar schools. Their science attainment is about average for the nation and for similar schools. Considering their attainment on entry their achievement is good overall.

Attainment for the under fives is below the national expectation, with weakness in language and literacy and physical development, although the other areas of learning show sound attainment and, in art, attainment is good. Many of these pupils are very inexperienced and have learning difficulties when they start school, so that their achievement is sound.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Parents and pupils say that pupils like coming to school very much. The pupils say they enjoy learning. They are very enthusiastic about numeracy and literacy lessons. They always work responsibly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In lessons and in the playground pupils do as they are asked and dispute rarely. Movement around the building can be careless.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect other people. Even young pupils understand that they can hurt or support others and try hard to do the latter. The under fives meet the expectation for their age group here even though many are immature when they start school.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. A small minority of parents keep pupils at home for domestic reasons or to take them on holidays.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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.

During the inspection, the teaching was satisfactory or better in 96% of the lessons, and unsatisfactory in only 4%, with 60% good or better and 13% very good.

Teaching in English and mathematics is good due to detailed lesson planning and work well matched to the needs of the pupils. The pace of the lessons is unfailingly good and the teachers work hard to find out where pupils have misconceptions and to deal with them.

Teachers and learning support assistants manage the pupils' behaviour very well, motivating them with praise and genuine concern; the teachers promote the independence of the pupils well by good organisation of classrooms and lessons. Questions are well used to make the pupils think and extend their understanding, although the demand for the under fives is not as rigorous as it could be. The use of support staff is very good: they are well briefed before lessons and confident in dealing with pupils. Teaching could be improved in some subjects if clearer objectives were set. Work is not consistently marked to tell the pupils what they need to do to improve. Homework provision is inconsistent because individual teachers do not follow a whole school policy about how much to set.

Pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs learn well because work set meets their individual needs well. Those who are gifted and able have suitable work

and in the juniors individuals work on particularly challenging tasks. All the pupils concentrate well and most work independently, making good progress. The juniors have been slow to learn skills and develop understanding in the past; they cannot always talk very articulately about their own learning. These factors are impairing their confidence, particularly in Year 6, and slowing their learning now.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad with a good range of interesting activities and a strong tradition of thoughtful art. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well implemented. All the pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn with each other; no one is excluded. There are good sport and arts opportunities outside the school day and members of the local community contribute. The nursery class curriculum is rich in creative work and knowledge and understanding about the world, but the balance of time to activities is weak.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils' individual education plans are known to all the staff. The pupils have some individual teaching and very good support in lessons from class teachers and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The pupils have careful attention from the Local Education Authority's specialist support teaching service, whose staff plan in detail for them. Their class teachers supplement this planning well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, with strong direction on personal responsibility and consideration for others. There is a good range of references to different traditions and ways of life within the curriculum, which helps pupils understand and value different cultures and to participate in their own. There is also sensitive study of the work of many different artists.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The effective arrangements for ensuring good behaviour are a strength. Weaknesses are the failure to use formal assessment systematically to identify strengths and weaknesses in attainment and the lack of strategies to improve attendance.

The school's work with the parents is sound. Many efforts have been made over the years to work in partnership with parents with some good links resulting, with a variety of groups. Still there are parents who do not feel they are heard. The school makes careful decisions for the well being of the pupils but does not always manage to communicate its reasons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound. The head teacher has ensured that the school fulfils its vision for strong personal and creative development and is raising standards. The delegation, and contribution, of staff with management responsibility lack clarity and purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Governors inform themselves thoroughly about the school but they do not hold the school to account nor focus it sufficiently on improvement planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school has recently begun to identify strengths and weaknesses from attainment data but it is not yet using all the information that could be available. Monitoring, evaluating and development of teaching are very informal and lack a clear focus on improvement. The school therefore could not meet the management challenge of ensuring quality last year when many teachers were temporary.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staffing and accommodation are well provided and used. The quantity and quality of the equipment and materials for the pupils are very good. The school deploys its resources well, with appropriate consideration for giving and getting best value. The relatively high spending on the learning support assistants makes a positive difference to the pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children make good progress, especially in reading. • The teaching is good. • The children are independent at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are poor standards of attainment for the juniors. • Expectations for able pupils are low. • The range of school trips is narrow. • The quality of the teachers' communication with them ranges from good to unsympathetic. • The school does not work closely with them.

The inspectors endorse the parents' positive comments and agree that standards are low for Year 6. Inspectors can see expectations for able pupils may have been low up to last year and junior attainment has been poor. Inspectors judge that the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has brought high expectations, including for able pupils, and is improving attainment. The inspection found that there is a good range of trips and out of school clubs provided.

Inspectors find that whilst all the staff value communication with parents there are some inconsistencies. Some can be altered, like the availability of curriculum information for different classes. Some variations, like individual availability to talk at different times of the day, are inevitable. Whilst the school makes many efforts to work closely with parents it has only partial success. It does not always manage to communicate why it is doing something. On the other hand, few parents attend the meetings which are set up for discussion and explanation.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall standards are below the national expectation for the under fives, good for seven year olds, and unsatisfactory but improving for 11 year olds.
2. By **the age of five**, the children are likely to meet the national expectation for personal and social development, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are not likely to meet the expectation for language and literacy or physical development, because they are weak in these areas when they begin at school and whilst they can catch up in some parts, there are important skills they still lack. Their creative work is very good for the age group. Their personal achievement in reaching these standards overall is sound.
3. Their achievement, in reaching sound personal and social standards, is good. Many start at school lacking confidence and are easily frightened. They are secure in their classes and by the time they are five can meet their own physical needs, care well for others, and share. Reception children, for example, are learning responsibility well through their joint lessons with pupils from another school who have impaired hearing. When joined at the sand tray by a visiting pupil, two reception children at once passed him a toy like theirs to help him join in. The children under five make good progress in understanding what writing and reading are for. They use books meaningfully, turning pages carefully and looking at the pictures. They can recognise their names, and know some letter names and sounds. They listen well but lack initiative and confidence in speaking and role-play. In mathematics, they can sing number songs and recite rhymes; they can count and recognise numbers to ten and sometimes well beyond. The under fives use a computer mouse sensibly and are learning about the past appropriately by looking at old toys. They use small tools and wheeled toys well but are not confident or well balanced in larger movements. Their creative achievement is good, as they are inexperienced at the start but produce drawings and paintings which are well observed and unusually detailed.
4. In 1999, the average levels in the SATs tests for Carlton Hill **7 year olds** were close to the national average for reading, below the national average for writing and above the national average for mathematics. Results over the last four years show a better rate of improvement than the national one for Carlton Hill infants in reading and a similar improvement to the nation in writing and mathematics. The school has appropriately identified writing as a focus for improvement now.
5. In reading, the proportion of pupils who gained the expected level 2 was close to the national average and there was also an above average proportion of pupils attaining highly at level 3. This is very good achievement for the school where pupils usually start below average in language. This is borne out when Carlton Hill's average points for reading are set against those of similar schools, which shows the school's average points are very high in comparison.
6. In writing, the proportion of pupils who gained the expected level 2 was close to the national average and many pupils scored a better level 2B, but there were no pupils attaining highly at level 3. The average level was below the national average because of the lack of level 3s. The Carlton Hill average level was still above average compared with similar schools and nevertheless is a good achievement for the pupils.
7. In their lessons in English the oldest infants are more competent than those seen in the last inspection and can confidently meet the national expectation. They can listen attentively and speak effectively, read accurately, using phonics and a range of ways to work out unfamiliar words. When they write they organise text sensibly and communicate clearly, and they use their phonics to spell well.
8. Mathematics has traditionally been a stronger subject for the Carlton Hill infants. Their average points for the last four years are above the national average. In 1999 the proportion of pupils

gaining the expected level 2 was below the national average but the proportion of better attainment at level 2B and level 3 was well above the national average. The school's average level was very high compared with like schools, another very good achievement.

9. In mathematics lessons the current oldest infants can do more than is expected nationally for their age group. They can add and subtract to 20, which is above the national expectation. They manipulate numbers mentally with good understanding of relationships. For example, they understand that $18 - 9$ leaves 9 because 18 is double 9. They understand the composition of 100 and apply that to problems, dividing numbers of people and things into groups of ten.
10. In science in 1999, teacher's assessments put the attainment for the 7 year olds at about the national average; there was no high attainment at level 3. The average grade for Carlton Hill is in line with the average for like schools. In science lessons this year the attainment of the 7 year olds meets the national expectation. This is a sound achievement for them. They can understand what experiments are, carry them out, with support, and can record their own findings. For example they experimented at melting chocolate and showed, in their predictions, that they understood what the effects of heat and cold would be.
11. The results for the **11 year olds** are not as strong. Compared with national averages in 1999 the Carlton Hill average points in mathematics and science were very low and in English were well below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the high levels was very small. Performance has been low compared with schools nationally over the last four years in all three subjects.
12. In comparison with similar schools in 1999 Carlton Hill results are below average in mathematics and science and average in English. Taking account of their difficulties, this was satisfactory achievement in English and science but not in mathematics. Whilst some difficulties were out of the school's control, like the number of pupils in the cohort with special educational needs and the number who left or joined during the year, there was also disruption in the school's provision due to staff absence. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies was difficult because of the need to ensure that temporary and permanent teachers were appropriately trained and improvement in the teaching for these subjects was not as swift as it might have been.
13. The school had set itself informal targets for junior results in 1999, which it did not meet. Statutory targets are set for 2000 of 60% level 4s or above in English and 57% in mathematics. These are challenging and progress towards them is limited. The pupils in the top year group are relatively the weakest at literacy and numeracy, having had the most disruption and the least benefit of the new strategies. They have good teaching now and as much extra resource as possible, with booster classes after school for those who scored low in the infants, and additional adults to support groups. The pupils' confidence is low and their previous learning is not well consolidated. Class teacher changes before this year disrupted the continuity of their learning and the school's management was not strong enough to counter the effect. There is a high proportion in the year group with special educational needs. For all these reasons their current attainment in lessons is not sufficient to ensure that the targets will be met.
14. The picture for succeeding junior year groups is better; their attainment is well supported by good teaching also. They benefit starting earlier in their education with the new strategies and their attainment in their lessons meets the national expectation for their age groups.
15. In English in 1999 the proportion of 11 year olds at Carlton Hill who gained the expected level 4 or above was well below the national average and so was the proportion that gained a good level 5. Compared with similar schools the proportion of level 5s and the proportion of level 4s were average. The achievement was sound. In their lessons this year in English the 11 year olds meet the national expectation in speaking and listening. They achieve well in class discussion when they discuss poetry and stories with insight, and evaluate the work of their classmates sensibly. They meet the national expectation for reading: they can read selected books accurately and with understanding. Their writing does not meet the national expectation because, although they write grammatically and logically, they do not produce enough sustained writing.
16. In mathematics in 1999 the proportions of Carlton Hill 11 year olds who gained level 4 were very

low and, for level 5, well below the national average. Compared with like schools the proportions of level 4s and level 5s were below average also, indicating unsatisfactory achievement. In the lessons this year the pupils are not meeting the national expectation and their achievement is hampered by lack of confidence in past learning. They can add and subtract to 20 and can double numbers. They apply that knowledge and skill to 100, although they are insecure when they work to 1000. They understand what a kilogram and a gram are and can add weights. They have difficulty in talking about what they are doing, in naming operations and in applying their skills to problems.

17. In science in 1999 the proportion of 11 year olds gaining level 4 was well below the national average and there were no level 5s. The results were below average compared with like schools. This year, Year 6 are not meeting the national expectation. They can understand a fair test, predict the outcomes of experiments and use scientific language and measures. They can record findings although not always accurately. They lack scientific knowledge.
18. The younger juniors are more secure in all three subjects. In English, Year 5 can write ably in narrative and non-narrative contexts. They can write stories and poems expressing their thoughts and feelings. They can write in different genres such as writing myths and legends. They are able to summarise factual writing by identifying the key phrase and use dictionaries to find out meanings of words. Lower attaining pupils read appropriate texts accurately with good understanding. They can use phonic clues and correct their own mistakes. Higher attaining pupils read appropriate texts with good expression and are able to use inference and deduction to extend their understanding of what they read.
19. In mathematics, Year 5 are more competent than Year 6, able to multiply and divide confidently and challenge themselves to try this with large numbers. In science, Year 5 are attaining more highly than Year 6. They can make investigations independently and make decisions for themselves about how to carry them out. They are confident and knowledgeable enough to set one effect in an experiment against another.
20. In their **information and communications technology** lessons the infants and juniors meet national expectation and demonstrate sound achievement. By the age of 7 the pupils can use a computer and control a mouse carefully, play games, and word process. When they reach 11 the juniors can use their word processing skills in sophisticated ways, draw graphs and seek information on a CD ROM or on the Internet.
21. In **religious education**, the 7 and 11 years olds meet the expectation of the local syllabus. This is good achievement for them as they have sound knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and of religious experiences.
22. In **art** attainment is above the national expectation for 7 and 11 years olds. They achieve well with a broad range of media, drawing and painting with confident detail, able to print on silk and produce individual and restrained designs in batik work. They respond sensitively to the work of other artists and express some of the delight and emotion of, for example, Klimt in their studies of his work. In **physical education** the pupils can meet the national expectation at 7 and 11. They achieve at age 7 an understanding of different purposes in their movement and can practise singly and in pairs to improve. They worked in one lesson to mirror each other and made a sound attempt to concentrate and follow a lead. By 11 the pupils achieve very good control over their movement. They work sensibly with floppy balls, working out how to adapt to them and control them.
23. In **history** the standards for 7 and 11 year olds meet the national expectation and their achievement is sound. By 7 the pupils know about their own family past and can compare some features of Victorian Britain with the present. By 11 they have learned how to do their own research and know about the Tudors.
24. In **geography** and **music** the infants attain the national expectation and their achievement is sound. For the junior pupils there was insufficient work available at this stage of the year to make a judgement.

25. In **design and technology** the 7 year olds work meets the national expectation. They achieve satisfactorily, making models and designs which really work, like the fruit bowls they made from their construction kits, which do hold fruit. The juniors show some good work and achieve well in their lessons. They can think about the function of various artefacts and relate that to the way they are made.
26. There have been differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the infants, over the past four years, with girls gaining better results than boys in all three subjects tested and a greater difference between boys and girls scores than nationally. In the juniors no difference has been apparent. No features in the school curriculum or teaching could be seen which might cause the inequality.
27. Pupils with **special educational needs** and those **learning English as an additional language** make good progress due to the careful and plentiful support they receive. The **gifted and talented pupils** are appropriately catered for throughout the school. In the junior classes they make particularly good progress in reading and mathematics where work is well prepared to match their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

28. Overall pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good, and are a strength of the school. The under fives want to learn, although they lack confidence. Infants' and juniors' attitudes are very good and have a very positive effect on their learning. The pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school and about their class work. In most lessons they are interested and involved in the tasks they are set. They enjoy learning and like to talk to visitors about what they are doing. Classrooms are usually hives of purposeful activity. Many hands are usually raised to answer teachers' questions. Pupils organise themselves appropriately in groups, where they co-operate and concentrate well. For example over 30 pupils in two teams and with only one ball worked very well together in one physical education lesson.
29. Behaviour is good in classes and in the playground, although movement around the school is sometimes less orderly. There is a calm working atmosphere in most lessons. Pupils respond well to produce good work and know that this will be rewarded by merits and awards. They understand the consequences of poor behaviour and what action the staff will take. In design and technology lessons they handle tools carefully and tidy up quickly at the end of the lesson. They listened carefully to the assembly on bullying and they knew what they should do if this occurs.
30. The pupils respect the values and beliefs of other people, and know that they can hurt or support them by what they say. "It hurts them inside" is how infant pupils explained what happens if you say cruel things to others. Parents particularly value the good teaching of tolerance and the positive attitude to different cultures. Pupils respect each other's cultures, as they did in one class when the other pupils listened intently when two Muslim boys described rituals in their religion concerning death. This respect means that there are few incidents of racial harassment. Pupils with hearing impairment from a nearby school find a welcoming atmosphere with pupils willing to learn some sign language in order to communicate with them. Pupils at Carlton Hill learn at an early age how to respond in a friendly manner to people with disabilities.
31. Pupils are well able to work independently, and also take on responsibility like that of looking after the library. Parents recognise that pupils from different years mix well and older pupils look after younger ones very well. Children under five have developed good social skills, shown when they all patiently waited for everyone to be served with some cake before eating. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Teachers are seen as friendly, caring and willing to help.
32. Attendance is unsatisfactory as it has remained consistently at approximately ninety-three percent since the previous inspection. Although most pupils are happy to attend regularly, a small minority of parents keep children at home for activities such as shopping or the child's birthday. The attendance rate is also adversely affected by one or two pupils' going on extended holidays to the family's country of origin, or when parents book cheap holidays abroad during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

33. The teaching and learning for the under fives are sound and for the infants and juniors the good teaching is leading to good learning. There is consistency in the quality of the teaching in the two departments as there was at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is generally good in English, mathematics, religious education, where questioning develops understanding well and is sound in science, design technology, information technology, physical education with good features. In music, teaching is satisfactory for the infants and in geography it is good. Not enough lessons were seen during the inspection to make a judgement for the juniors.
34. The teaching for the school as a whole has improved since the last inspection. There was 80% satisfactory or better teaching last time and 10% very good, against 96% and 13% this time.
35. Strengths of the teaching this time are: the use of questions; the teaching of literacy and numeracy; the provision of different work for pupils of different prior attainment; the teachers' high expectations; the work of the learning support team; the ability of the adults to manage the pupils' behaviour well and support their independence. Weaker areas are lesson planning for subjects other than literacy and numeracy, feedback to pupils on how to improve and inconsistently set homework.
36. At the last inspection teachers' questioning skills were identified for improvement. Questioning is a strength of the teaching now. In the best lessons the teachers name pupils they expect to answer, targeting individual learning needs. Boys and girls and pupils and all the ethnic groups in the school are well taught and the range of different questions supports their different learning styles. The teachers use closed questions to assess pupils' accuracy in knowledge or computation and use open questions to help them develop their understanding. For example:
- "How would you find out how far away you could be and still hear a pin drop?"
- Was a question during the week where pupils had to think but where they were ultimately able to answer correctly:
- "You would have to keep moving away while someone else dropped pins."
"You would have to move away in measured steps of a metre each time."
"You would have to drop the pin from the same height each time."
37. The plentiful use of questioning has spread into all subjects due to the influence of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The two new strategies are being rigorously implemented throughout the infant and junior departments, with good teaching for the two subjects throughout. In the nursery class suitable preparation for the strategies is made.
38. The teachers in the infants and juniors are planning their literacy and numeracy lessons with care and have helpful pro formas to use, which ensure that every section of the lesson is prepared. The good planning helps to keep the pace of the lessons brisk. Teachers know that they have a lot to cover and watch the time carefully. They explain tasks clearly so pupils know what they have to do and can enjoy getting on.
39. The only part that is not well planned is the plenary session at the end of each literacy and numeracy lesson. Some teachers prepare well at this point to sum up the day's learning or move the class' thinking on; one of the best plenaries involved pupils in thinking how they might set a task for other children which would help them to learn what this class had just learned. Other teachers do not plan the plenary session and fail to use the time as effectively as they could.
40. For literacy and numeracy, in every class the teachers are providing different levels of work for pupils at different stages. For example, in one good numeracy lesson, all had to count in even sized steps larger than one. One group counted back in 2s and dealt successfully with 0 and then negative numbers; one group counted on in 3s and 5s; one group counted on in 5s, including a pupil learning English as a second language who had help from her teacher and a peer to understand her task. In Year 6, where there are particular concerns about learning needs, each

of the three groups had a different task and a different adult concentrating just on their learning.

41. Expectations are high for the pupils in literacy and numeracy. The teachers provide demanding tasks where the pupils have to concentrate and they do, rising to the challenge, discussing sensibly with each other about how to proceed. In two of the junior classes, targets are set for individuals or groups so that the pupils know exactly what they need to learn next and are motivated to achieve.
42. Literacy lessons are also usefully being used to deal with reading and writing for other subjects, such as religious education and history, which saves time and ensures skills are used across the curriculum. Literacy is well used in numeracy, science and design technology lessons where pupils read their tasks clearly and write findings.
43. The strengths of specific tasks matched to ability, extra provision for gifted and talented pupils, and high expectation are evident in other subjects, too, particularly design technology, science and religious education where the methods from the two national strategies are being carried over.
44. The teachers planning for the subjects apart from literacy and numeracy, however, is not of such consistent quality. It is weakest where activities are set without clear objectives or where objectives are not well related to the statutory requirements. This is particularly true in physical education, design technology, music, art and geography. Planning is strongest for the older infants and middle junior classes but the strength is not systematically shared.
45. Parents are worried about the provision for able pupils and results suggest that it has not been good for the juniors in the past. It has clearly improved and is sound now and is particularly good in mathematics and science, where gifted and talented pupils in the juniors often work alone or in very small groups with tasks that are much more taxing than for others.
46. Because their work is interesting and carefully matched to their needs, the pupils' concentration is good in most of their lessons. The pupils make a good effort intellectually and in their creative work. The only thing that really hampers some of them, particularly those in Year 6, is a lack of confidence because they are insecure with learning they did not fully master in the past. This is one of the reasons for the lower levels of achievement in the year group, although the Year 6 teacher makes every effort to reassure and re-explain.
47. The teaching and learning are consistently good in the reception year where frequent well judged explanation is given to the pupils, tasks are well matched to needs and pupils work quietly with understanding. Years 4 and 5 also have much very good teaching with a high level of preparation, which results in good pace and progress.
48. The learning support team work very well with individuals or groups during the lessons. These staff are well trained and are briefed in advance by the teachers so that teaching time is not wasted. They are competent and confident in their judgements about how to deal with the pupils, including those with special educational needs. Their role in assessing what pupils have learned is not as strongly developed but they have the capacity to be very helpful here.
49. The teachers and the learning support assistants manage the pupils' behaviour very well, motivating them with praise and encouragement, showing their genuine concern for them. An infant teacher, wanting a restless pupil near her in a story session, asked him to come "because I like having you near" and was at once obeyed.
50. Adults also support the pupils' independence. They do this by organising classrooms so that pupils can find equipment easily and preparing resources well in advance. They also help the pupils to help themselves by asking them what they think they should do rather than telling them. For example:

"Which operation will you use here? Will you add or multiply?"

51. Pupils work well independently as a little boy in Year 1 did when he had filled up his 100 square

with cubes as instructed: before going off he stood and counted his squares to himself.

52. During the lessons the teachers give good support but they do not involve the pupils in talking about progress as often as they could. When they mark work, they give praise but do not often tell the pupils what it is that they need to do to make the work better; this is an important weakness. Except in the two classes where targets are set, the teachers do not involve the pupils in self-assessment.
53. The pupils with special educational needs are well taught. All the adults dealing with them know what their learning targets are and give them good input. This is a good improvement from the last inspection when these pupils did not have enough attention from their class teachers. Learning support assistants are well briefed by the special educational needs co-ordinator about pupils' individual needs and how to support them and by teachers about the specific ways to help in their lessons. They know a lot about the pupils and contribute to the review of pupils' individual education plans. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from lessons by the special educational needs co-ordinator to give carefully targeted help to meet their individual difficulties. In these sessions the work is matched to their individual targets. Helpful resources are used such as computer software that puts symbols with typed words, reinforcing pupils ability to read, remember and understand the printed word.
54. The pupils who are learning English as an additional language also learn well, because their teachers provide them with appropriately matched work, and collaborative working with other pupils so they can see what to do. In lessons teachers and learning support assistants are aware of the needs of these pupils and give good support by checking that they understand, asking careful questions and helping with writing. They are also supported by special learning support assistants, who offer enthusiasm and reassurance as well as translation and language tuition.
55. The parents rightly think that the children make good progress at school. One thing the parents would like is more consistent homework provision. Everyone takes their reading book home and in one or two classes more, useful, work is set but this good practice is not consistently followed. Where standards are low and where the National Numeracy Strategy is suggesting useful homework, this is a weakness.

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

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

56. The curriculum is broad and balanced, providing a good range of learning opportunities for the children. The school now fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including requirements for information technology, design technology and the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, which were identified in the last inspection as not being fully met. A particular emphasis is placed upon the visual arts, which is very evident from the quality and range of pupils' work displayed around the school. This is very supportive for the pupils who are not very good at using language because it provides them with an alternative way of expressing themselves. There is an appropriate policy and provision in the lessons for personal, social and health education, although planning for it is not very full.
57. Learning for the under fives is linked to the national guidelines for nursery education and covers the recommended breadth. It is, however, not sufficiently well balanced because of the limited outside play and, for the nursery class, because of the regular use of the television and the lack of planning to encourage children to make progress towards specific goals.
58. The school's provision for the basic skills is effective and it is making good progress in implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. They are providing a clear framework for teaching and high expectations for the children. Termly and weekly lesson plans relate well to the objectives of the two strategies; the structure of the lessons is implemented as expected, although the lack of time for the pupils to do an extended passage of writing is not resolved. The National Numeracy Strategy has helped address the lack of opportunities for children to use and apply mathematics outlined in the previous inspection. Good use has been made of the national initiatives for additional classes in Year 6 and the Additional Literacy

Support for lower attaining pupils in Year 4. Learning support assistants have received additional training and the support given to children with special educational needs is good. The school is currently establishing means for teaching other subjects within the literacy and numeracy hours. All this is making a significant contribution to raising standards that will lead to improved results over time.

59. Planning for lessons has improved since the last inspection to give a clearer focus and improved reference to the progress children should make. There is however, still inconsistent quality across the school. Plans for some year groups are more specific than others.
60. Science, history and geography are planned through integrated topic work. In science, the children now have greater opportunities for experimental and investigative work, which was highlighted as insufficient in the last inspection, but the topic plan does not provide for a balance of subjects each term. That means there is sometimes a long gap when science is not taught, which interrupts the pupils' learning in this subject.
61. The schemes of work in many subjects, such as physical education, design technology, history and geography still lack detail: they do not show clearly enough what the children should learn each year in order for one year's learning to link to and build on the last. They do not refer sufficiently to the National Curriculum in setting learning objectives. However, these gaps arise because the school has been prioritising literacy and numeracy, which was the appropriate priority.
62. Some features of curriculum organisation are weak. There is no common timetabling system and timings within sessions are not always clearly foreseen. The school has not yet taken advantage of the detailed schemes of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum and Assessment Authority in many subjects; and school plans for the implementation of the National Curriculum 2000 are currently underdeveloped.
63. The school enriches and extends the required curriculum well, through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These include: additional after-school classes to improve attainment in Year 6; a variety of sports clubs, some taken by professional coaches; and other clubs to support the performing arts, such as drama and recorders. All the pupils have the chance to work with each other and none is removed from their peers for very long. There is equality of access to the curriculum and equality of opportunity for all. Boys and girls are equally involved in all areas of learning, assistance for children with English as an additional language is good, and children with special educational needs are well supported in their learning. Gifted and able pupils often have work provided which is more challenging than that for others in the class and have the opportunity to explain it to classmates.
64. Good use is made of the community through participation in local events such as the Brighton Festival, educational visits to the local area and students visiting from Brighton Art College. The school has a useful link with Hamilton Lodge School for deaf children, which is providing an opportunity for both sets of pupils to learn from each other. There are also sound, established links with secondary schools to support children's transfer to them each year.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

65. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and for their cultural development it is very good.
66. Spiritual development is promoted appropriately for all pupils in the daily act of collective worship. At the time of the last inspection this did not fulfil the statutory requirement and is improved now so that the statute is met. Acts of worship are well planned and provide opportunities for pupils to think about their own and others' experiences. There are quiet prayers, songs are sung and music is played as pupils enter and leave. On occasions visitors from religious faiths talk to pupils which helps develop their understanding of religion and faith. A weakness in the provision is that one member of staff usually takes assembly on their own, which

means it is more difficult to keep all the children focused and the experience of assembly is not shared with the staff.

67. In religious education lessons there are good opportunities to learn from studying other faiths and from thinking about their own feelings. There are also good opportunities for pupils to explore spiritual issues during other lessons, for example, in an English lesson, pupils were exploring poems on death and reflecting on their feelings.
68. Provision for moral development is good, with school rules understood by all the pupils and their parents. The school promotes a clear moral code and works to raise pupils' self esteem. For example, in an assembly pupils were reminded to "treat others as you would wish them to treat you" and told clearly that name calling is unacceptable. In class "circle time" pupils have the chance to talk about their feelings and so learn to develop trust in each other. The teachers and learning support assistants, in their behaviour and relationships, are good role models for pupils.
69. Good opportunities for social development are planned in lessons for pupils to work with each other, share ideas and discuss their work together. Other good opportunities exist when older pupils help younger pupils at play times. Lunch time and play times are social events when pupils have the opportunity to talk to each other and play together. The good social behaviour of pupils at these times demonstrates the success of the school's provision for social development.
70. There has been unusual, helpful, recent work in the school to help a group of older pupils to use and understand language for social purposes. They have had extra teaching, which has successfully helped those who have difficulty organising language to improve their ability to sequence information, ask and answer questions appropriately and take turns in conversation, listening and responding correctly.
71. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils work in art is well developed and they study with genuine application the work of famous artists and the work of artists from other cultures. Good opportunities for visits outside the school to places of interest in the local area exist. The school is successful in reflecting the multi-cultural nature of Britain today in displays, resources and activities in the school, like the event when Bangladeshi parents sent in food for pupils to try.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

72. The school is a very caring institution which seeks support for its pupils wherever it can; but it is not as good at monitoring attendance or attainment.
73. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils is good overall and has a positive impact on pupils' attainment. The school provides a caring environment in which the individual needs of pupils can be well met. A strength of the school is its close links with other agencies that support the many pupils with social, linguistic or educational needs; these include Social Services, where there is good liaison for the protection of vulnerable pupils, the local health and dental services and the LEA's Educational Psychology Service. The school is fortunate in having good access to family and other centres nearby, as well as the effective support provided from the LEA for pupils and their families who have English as an additional language.
74. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. The special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers work closely together to identify pupil's difficulties and plan how to support them. An individual education plan identifies six specific targets for the pupil and these are shared with everyone who works with the pupil, including their parents. The targets are reviewed twice a year to note the progress that has been made and new targets are set. The school's register of pupils with special educational needs shows the good progress made by some pupils resulting in them requiring less support and moving down the stages of the register. A few pupils make such good progress they are taken off the register. Pupils who have statements of special educational need are provided with the support named in the statement and in some cases the school provides more support from its own resources. The school meets the requirement to review these statements annually. The special educational needs co-ordinator

works closely with the educational psychologist and other agencies to ensure that pupils needs are well understood and supported appropriately by the school.

75. The experienced specialist teacher from the local authority English as an Additional Language Service plans specific support for each pupil, in detail. She works closely with teachers and learning support assistants ensuring they understand the needs of these pupils and plans work for them to do. A bilingual support assistant works one day a week with the youngest pupils in the school and is available to support parents. This support is well used by parents and more of them are taking advantage of it. The English as an additional language teacher makes home visits to ensure good liaison with parents. Detailed records of the progress pupils make are kept and reports on their progress are sent home every term. When pupils with English as an additional language also have special educational needs the special educational needs co-ordinator and the English as an additional language teacher work closely together to ensure that both these needs are met and that all staff understand the difficulties and how to help the pupils.
76. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. The school's attendance is below ninety-five percent, which is now the minimum expectation for all primary schools. Good attention is paid to following up individual absences with parents but there is insufficient monitoring and analysis of overall trends in attendance. There is no regular collation and analysis of figures on a weekly or termly basis across classes. Guidance to parents in the school brochure about what constitutes authorised absence is misleading.
77. The school monitors and promotes good behaviour well. The behaviour policy is applied consistently and well. Staff and pupils are clear what the rewards and sanctions will be. There is good and appropriate use of praise to encourage good academic progress and behaviour. There is a regular achievement assembly when incidents of good behaviour, achievement and personal development are celebrated. There is no separate anti-bullying policy, but through assemblies, circle time and the general ethos of the school, pupils understand that bullying is wrong and know what to do if it occurs. The few incidents of racism that occur are logged in the school behaviour file so that they can be monitored. Speedy action is taken to ensure pupils understand the impact of racism on their classmates.
78. There are sound arrangements for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils in the school. There is good governor involvement in risk assessment which has ensured that there were very few concerns at the time of the inspection. It is, however, inappropriate for children under five to be walking upstairs when older pupils are moving downstairs at the same time.
79. The school has some sound strategies for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress but they are insufficient. There is a clear policy for assessment and record keeping and records are completed for reading, mathematics and science which provide an end-of-year level for each pupil. A helpful record and assessment of unaided writing is completed twice a year in all classes but until this year it has not been used to inform planning for future lessons. A very good writing assessment sheet has recently been introduced and is now providing valuable diagnostic information, which is contributing to the setting of pupil targets for writing in some classes. The records do not relate clearly enough to the objectives of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, although the school has plans to improve them. There are very limited records for other subjects and for monitoring behaviour and personal development. There are no particular arrangements to assess attainment and progress for pupils who enter the school during the junior years although the school identifies the difficulty of helping these pupils. Arrangements for the formal assessments for statemented pupils in Year 6 have not been as supportive as they could have been. None of these pupils has been disapplied from SATs tests, and none has had the extra time or support from a reader which would be allowed where needed. The school has improved arrangements for the coming year but results have been lower than necessary in the past because these arrangements had not been made.
80. There is little use of systematic formal assessment outside the statutory end of key stage National Curriculum tests, baseline assessment and the reading test required by the local education authority. There are sensible plans to introduce the optional national tests in Year 4 this summer. The school has insufficient data to track the attainment and rates of progress of year groups,

genders or minority groups.

81. The use of the existing records and test data is undeveloped. They are not used to provide an overview of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

82. The school's links with parents, including the quality of information supplied, are satisfactory overall with some good features, but there are some weaknesses. Annual reports to parents have improved since the last inspection and now have more emphasis on what pupils have achieved and the next steps for their learning. There are many other helpful provisions for parents. Parents of the younger children can use the Early Years' library. Information for parents who have English as an additional language is often translated for them, and translators are used for meetings; home visits are also made; and a bilingual support assistant is regularly available to meet parents in school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are actively involved in their child's individual education plan. However, a considerable number of parents responding to the OfSTED questionnaire and at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection had concerns. They did not feel that they received sufficient information about what their children learn. Inspectors agree that at present parents do not receive enough information about what the class will be doing to enable parents to be fully involved. There is some very good practice in Year 4 where parents are regularly informed about future topics and how they can prepare for them. This information is not consistently supplied throughout the school.

83. Generally, the parents are satisfied with the school. They recognise that the teaching is good, and think that their children make good progress. Another strength they see is a reflection of the school's aims: their children can be independent within the school's walls, mixing across the age groups, finding things they want to use and making sensible decisions about their work.

84. The parents also see some weaknesses. They do not think the school works closely with them, and inspectors feel there is a weakness here in spite of the school's good intentions and efforts. Parents' suggestions to the school, on issues such as the collection of crisp packets for books and uniform sweatshirts, have been rejected by staff and governors without an explanation of the reasons. Parents also feel that not all teachers are approachable. There are inconsistencies for example, nursery staff have time to talk as parents enter each day but do not have an interview evening; teachers of the junior classes are less accessible, upstairs, and cannot neglect their pupils to talk with parents when school is starting. On the other hand staff feel great disappointment when they make extensive preparations for class meetings on topics such as the numeracy hour, but few parents then have the confidence to attend. Parents attend well on occasions when they can see their own child's work or discuss their progress, such as at the Summer Exhibition.

85. Parents' attending the OfSTED meeting had other concerns such as the low standards for the juniors; and inspectors agree with these concerns. Parents also feel that there are low expectations and lack of challenge for the more able pupils. Having looked at this carefully, inspectors do not support this view although they see it may have been true until recently. A large number of parents are concerned with what they feel is the poor range of activities outside of lessons, including outside trips. Inspectors do not support this concern as there are a number of out of school clubs, and the school makes good use of the cultural opportunities available in the town.

86. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory, with some good features, but there are also some weaknesses. The parents support the home reading scheme and fill in the diaries to record what their children have read. There are some good initiatives. For example, a small number of parents attend an adult education institute course in school to help them brush up on their language and literacy skills. Two parents attend a Workers' Education Association course so that they can provide more effective assistance in the classroom. Parents contribute in many ways, including in class and making costumes for pupils for the Brighton Festival. The Friends Association holds lively social events and raise money for school activities. However, only under half of parents signed and returned the Home School

Agreement recently and very few attended the pre-inspection meeting.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

87. The leadership of the school is sound. It ensures that the school's aims are met for pupils to have good opportunities to be creative and to value themselves and each other. The school has made literacy a long standing priority and reading standards meet the national expectation throughout. There are equal opportunities for learning for all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. These things are achieved through clear documentary guidance and example from the head teacher and through interested, informal dialogue with teachers. A weakness in the leadership until recently was a failure to focus sufficiently on raising academic standards and to address the needs of the gifted and talented pupils. Recent concern about standards has caused the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to be added to the school's priorities. This is appropriate and with useful support from the LEA, is being well done.
88. Standards for oldest year group in the school have been and are still low. Some of the reasons for this are avoidable and some are not. Data shows that there have been in Year 6 high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and with formal statements of special educational needs and large numbers who have left or joined the school in their later junior years. These pupils may not score highly in their tests due to their needs or to the lack of continuity in their education. There is no complacency among staff or governors about these issues and the teaching for the juniors and for Year 6 is good. However, the school acknowledges that the teaching in the juniors has been weak in the past when several permanent teachers were on leave at the same time and temporary staff were used, who did not know the school's principles and practices. This has happened twice to the school over the last four years and resulted in loss of quality for the juniors. The school is responsible for that because management was not strong enough to address it effectively.
89. Energy and commitment are very evident among senior managers, teachers, learning support assistants and everyone who works in the school. They have adapted very well to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and demonstrated their capacity to succeed. Informal management structures have taken the school a long way in helping staff to work consistently for the pupils' benefit. The deputy head teacher supports the school well and often changes role to fill in another management post that is temporarily vacant. Informal induction arrangements for new staff are supportive. Teachers who share class-teaching jobs collaborate well to ensure continuity for their classes. The teachers who co-ordinate different subjects share information with each other and make sure that there are qualitative materials and equipment for the pupils to use. Many teachers on the small team carry heavy responsibilities as well as their class teaching work.
90. Unfortunately informal management is not enough and monitoring and evaluation are weak. In their management roles the teachers do not take oversight of the standards of attainment of the pupils, and no one systematically evaluates and feeds back to teachers about the quality of the lesson planning or the teaching. The management structure does not clarify who should do what in these areas of work and the deputy's role here is not clear. So the good practice, which the teachers clearly have, is not necessarily shared and weaknesses are not swiftly identified. The rigorous monitoring recommended by the last inspection report has not been introduced.
91. The work of the governors is sound. They are supportive, motivated by concern for the pupils and since the last inspection they have been visiting the school regularly to find out about its work. It is a weakness of their work that they have not been holding the school to account for progress with the action plan which followed the last inspection nor the school development plan. Reporting from the head teacher is not clear enough to guide them here and they are not questioning specifically enough to inform themselves. They and the head teacher have recently made good use of nationally provided data about their pupils' attainment and have begun to have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
92. The school development plan is a very bulky, hand-written document, covering 4 years, and key

priorities do not stand out clearly. The school has been slow to use information technology for management purposes and this document is an example of one that could be more professionally laid out on a word processor. The plan is not well enough costed to help governors set the budget, but they follow the head teacher's sound guidance. There are no success criteria on the plan to facilitate evaluation by governors or staff and governors cannot evaluate later the success of their spending decisions.

93. The school has allocated its budget sensibly following its perceptions of need. Governors supplement the funding the LEA provides for special educational needs with more money from the budget which is one of the reasons why the provision is good for these pupils. More than usual is spent on learning support assistants whose work is very successful in fulfilling its title, so that the spending decision is working well. No funding is allocated to monitoring and evaluating which is a weakness.
94. The governors' work is sound in applying some of the principles of best value. Whilst they do not challenge themselves on the success of their spending decisions they do, led by the head teacher, consider strongly the moral basis for what the school is doing. They do not always provide what parents want for that reason. Their recent consultation with parents has been informative, and caused thorough debate in the governing body about collecting junk food wrappers and expecting school uniform. Governors review the satisfaction given by services they buy but do not seek competitive tenders as they choose LEA services, supported as they are by specialist knowledge and experience.
95. The teachers have a good range of qualifications and experience, particularly in English. All the teachers and learning support assistants are female which gives the girls a strong role model for achievement; the boys do not fare so well in these terms. The provision of accommodation is good, with light classrooms and terraced play space. This provides a better sense of security for the pupils than many playgrounds do. Corridor space and specialist rooms are appropriately used for small group work. Budgeting ensures qualitative materials and equipment are well supplied for all the subjects and for the under fives. There is a well-organised library housing a good selection of books. Classrooms have two or three computers each which is not enough for whole-class information technology teaching but the older pupils already have protected access to the Internet and a computer suite is to be established within the next year.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

96. The school should:

- Raise standards for junior pupils by:
 - continuing to refine its careful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, as the school development plan intends (Paragraphs 39 and 41)
 - ensuring that, in English, all the pupils do more non-narrative writing and the junior pupils apply sustained effort to their independent writing, and finish their work (Paragraphs 115 and 118)
 - in mathematics, ensuring that the pupils understand and can describe the operations and procedures that they use to calculate and solve problems (Paragraph 133)
 - in science, ensuring that pupils maintain their ability to experiment but also regularly add to their science knowledge, particularly physical processes. (Paragraphs 145 and 146)
- Support the parents and pupils' understanding of their learning by:
 - clarifying to all the pupils what their targets are, as is being done in some classes (Paragraph 79)
 - letting them know exactly how well they are doing and what they have achieved

(Paragraphs 39 and 52)

- telling them what they need to do to improve (Paragraph 52)
- sharing termly objectives with parents, as is being done in some classes. (Paragraph 82)
- Improve the provision in the nursery class to favour better use of the outside space and more confident speaking rather than listening, and reduce television time. (Paragraphs 100, 104, 105)
- Clarify the priorities on the school development plan, and ensure that:
 - the plan focuses on raising standards (Paragraph 92)
 - success criteria are clear and relate to pupils attainment (Paragraph 92)
 - the head teachers' reports for the governors relate to the aims and success criteria so that governors have an oversight of progress with the plan. (Paragraph 91)
- Establish a staffing structure and rigorous system for monitoring and improving the quality of lesson planning and teaching, which ensures systematic feedback to staff. (Paragraph 89 and 90)
- Ensure regularly analyse attainment of year groups to clarify strengths and weaknesses and allow governors and senior managers oversight of the standards throughout the school (Paragraphs 80 and 81)
- Improve pupils' attendance by:
 - clarifying for parents what is authorised and what is not (Paragraph 76)
 - identifying trends and seeking to address them. (Paragraph 76)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. Paragraph references are in brackets.

- Lesson Planning (44)
- Role of learning support team in assessment (48)
- Science in topic work (60, 146 and 156)
- Timetabling (62)
- Use of QCA schemes of work (62)
- 1 member of staff alone in assembly (66)
- Under fives' group upstairs when older pupils coming down (78)
- Insufficient assessment (79)
- No disapplication for statements (79)
- Liaison with parents (84)
- Contribution of parents (86)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	13%	46%	37%	2%	2%	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	198
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	92

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	72

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	39

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	47

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	9
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	25	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83	87	83
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	9
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	25	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83	84	83
	National	82	86	87

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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	14	18	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	5	8
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	14	11	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44	34	50
	National	70	69	78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	10	9	8
	Total	16	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50	50	50
	National	68	69	75

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	8
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	16
Chinese	2
White	166
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	404852
Total expenditure	406483
Expenditure per pupil	1815
Balance brought forward from previous year	6491
Balance carried forward to next year	4860

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	148
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	40	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	30	64	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	52	7	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	50	13	8	0
The teaching is good.	41	50	2	2	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	37	30	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	41	41	14	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	43	9	5	5
The school works closely with parents.	24	36	21	17	2
The school is well led and managed.	27	43	18	7	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	57	7	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	36	16	11	23

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 97 Most of the under fives are in the nursery class and 13 were in the reception class during the inspection. They all attend school for half of the week.
- 98 The children are not on course to meet all the expected standards for 5 year olds but given their attainment on entry they are achieving well. They are all exceptionally good at creative work. By the time they are five, their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematics and science are likely to be satisfactory. They start in their classes with some weaknesses in their learning, particularly in language and literacy and physical development and many of the children have special educational needs. They are unlikely to meet the national expectation for 5 year olds in these areas.
- 99 In their **personal and social development**, the children know they are cared for in school and are very co-operative with all the adults who help them. The teaching is always sound with adults giving and communicating sympathy and understanding. The children are not all confident but they are sensitive to each other's needs, as when a little boy who had managed to change his own shoes found the shoes of one of his classmates who was upset, and carried them to her. They almost all can put on their coats and fasten them up. The children share well but ask adults for help with taking turns. The adults are compassionate and sort out disputes but do not provide the pupils with the strategies they need to do it themselves.
- 100 In **language and literacy** the children start in the nursery with below average competency and are unlikely to meet the national expectation at 5 years old. Their teachers work hard with them and the teaching is sound overall. The strength for the teaching and learning is that the adults help the children to experience reading and writing which is meaningful to them. The children understand what writing is for, make marks and start to read appropriately, recognising their names and looking at books purposefully. They know letter names and a few sounds. Their ability to speak coherently is weaker. They listen attentively and accept what they are told but offer little. The teaching is not demanding enough here. For example, the children had a birthday card to send to a staff member so that they could enjoy being caring, but not enough was asked of them so they did not think of anything to write in it.
- 101 In **mathematics** the children are meeting the national expectation and the teaching is good. They enjoy and join in with number rhymes and can sort objects on the table. They are learning to recognise numbers and match one to one. In the nursery, they have made a study of the birds they can see from their window and as part of that work two higher attaining children have made a block graph of the different kinds of birds - a complex mathematical exercise for their age in which they were well supported by their teachers. Reception children can read numbers and count carefully, working to meet their teacher's expectation for calm and accuracy.
- 102 In **knowledge and understanding of the world** the children's experience is wide and their attainment is appropriate. They can talk about their observations and record them well. The nursery children have studied the behaviour of ice inside and outside and with dye in it, and have photos to remind them. The provision of the photos is a very good strategy of the nursery teachers to allow children to reflect and discuss experiences. The teaching in both classes is good. In the reception class the teacher used careful questions to help the children express what they knew about electricity in the home and she helpfully recorded the answers on a flipchart to show that they were valued.
- 103 The work on display shows that standards of **creative development** and the teaching there are very good. All the children have plentiful experience of paint, pastel and other varied media. An outstanding collection of nursery paintings shows observations of the birds outside the classroom window where detail and colour are vividly recorded. The reception children have

also produced sensitive work after looking at the work of other artists. The teachers make sure they regularly use a wide range of media.

- 104 In their **physical development** the children use small tools and wheeled toys with increasing skill. They are aware of space but do not move very confidently in large spaces. The teaching is sound but there is a weakness in the provision for outdoor play which relates to their physical development and the other areas of their learning. As during the last inspection, insufficient outdoor work and insufficient breadth of activity is offered. Both classes do structured physical activity in the hall, which is better suited to older pupils. Both classes go out for a fifteen-minute break each day when they use a range of small apparatus and wheeled toys. They do not have long enough outside to develop a sustained purpose and they tend to carry out short actions only, like having a ride on a bike. The play space is too crowded and they cannot determine the length of their activity for themselves. Even fifteen minutes is too long for some individuals, as was the case during the inspection for a little girl who stood voluntarily isolated for most of the break.
- 105 The curriculum in both the classes is appropriately and carefully planned. In the nursery class, the strength of the daily plans is that they show curriculum coverage well but a weakness is that they do not show which child needs to do what. The curriculum is unbalanced by the time spent on trips to an upstairs room in another part of the building to watch television twice a week. The time spent coming and going is out of proportion with the value of the activity and alternative ways for the children to practice concentration are available in their classroom. In the reception class work in the lessons is matched well to individuals' learning needs.
- 106 Assessment and record keeping are sound but could still be improved. Nursery records are kept of the children's social and personal development and staff have sound plans now to extend to all areas of learning. These are not kept for the few under fives in the reception class, although academic records are maintained.
- 107 Whilst all the staff try hard to make informal relationships with those parents whom they see, the nursery does not provide a formal interview for the parents about their children's progress during the year, as the rest of the classes do.

ENGLISH

- 108 Standards of attainment in English are close to national expectations by the end of the infants but below national expectations by the end of the juniors. Poor attainment in some years is related to low attainment on entry and the significant number of children who have statements of special educational needs and are learning English as an additional language
- 109 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum Tests indicate that standards have improved for the infants, particularly in reading. Although standards have risen over previous years for the juniors at Carlton Hill, they did not rise, as standards did nationally, in 1999. Implementation of the National Literacy Strategy improved results for the nation but the staff disruption at Carlton Hill in 1998-9 slowed adoption of the strategy there. The school has recovered from that problem now, but standards for Year 6 at the school are still low.
- 110 In 1999, the majority of 7 year olds attained the expected level 2 or better in reading and writing. A high proportion attained the higher level 3 in reading, but no pupil reached this level in writing. This achievement for these pupils is good. In comparison with similar schools, very high number of pupils gained level 2 in reading and writing and a very high number gained the higher level 3 in reading. Although there were no pupils at the higher level 3 in writing, this is in line with similar schools. The test information also highlights that girls generally reach higher levels of attainment in English than boys, however, there was no evidence during the inspection, in the teaching and expectations of what pupils can do, which identified clear causes for this.
- 111 In 1999, less than half the 11 year olds attained the expected level 4 in English, with only a few gaining the higher level 5. When compared with similar schools, this is around average and the achievement is satisfactory for these pupils. The proportion of children with English as an

additional language and with statements of special educational needs was high for this group of children so that the progress from the age of 7 to the age of 11 was well below that of local schools.

- 112 Standards in **speaking and listening** are broadly in line with national expectations. Most 7 year olds can talk clearly and confidently to the rest of the class and in groups on a variety of subjects. They use varied vocabulary and speak clearly. They are attentive and have good listening skills. They are courteous and show sensitivity when listening to their peers. Higher attaining pupils show awareness of different contexts and can adapt what they say to the listener.
- 113 By the age of 11, most pupils can describe and evaluate the work of another class member and show insight and clarity in their discussions of poetry and stories. Higher attaining pupils discuss feelings, express opinions and develop persuasive arguments in their lessons with confidence. For example, in one lesson on extracting important facts from a text, pupils confidently gave opinions and reasons as to which words were essential to the meaning and which were not.
- 114 Children enjoy **reading** and are interested in their books. Many begin school with a very scant experience of books and stories, and the level of their reading skills are very varied. Higher and middle attaining pupils make good progress but for many lower attainers, acquiring basic skills and phonic knowledge is much slower. Standards for 7 year olds are better than the national expectation. Pupils can read simple texts accurately and use phonics, contextual clues and word knowledge to work out unfamiliar words. The high attaining pupils read a range of texts fluently and with understanding, using a good variety of strategies to help them. Standards for 11 year olds are in line with national expectation. Pupils read appropriate books accurately and show a good understanding of what they have read. Higher attaining pupils read confidently, with fluency and expression. They show a well-developed understanding of the subtleties of style, character and plot. All the pupils have access to a wide range of reading material and are helped to make appropriate choices in the texts they select. They use the school library, which is a very good resource, and many also use the local library. Reading diaries are completed and usually have constructive comments and encouragement from parents and teacher. The teaching of reading is good in literacy lessons. Pupils have good opportunities to share a wide variety of texts, reading together and reading individually. Their knowledge and understanding is extended skilfully through well-planned lessons and careful questioning. Parent helpers effectively assist by listening to children read regularly.
- 115 Levels of attainment in **writing** have improved considerably for middle and lower attaining infants. By the age of 7, most pupils write with a correct basic grammatical structure. Their ideas are extended and developed logically. Common words are spelt correctly but handwriting is joined inconsistently. Some higher attaining pupils produce writing that is varied and interesting. It is well organised with a consistent use of paragraphs. A range of punctuation is used correctly and handwriting is clear and joined. There has also been improvement for lower junior classes, but standards for the pupils approaching 11 are still below national expectations. By the age of 11 most pupils can communicate meaning clearly in their narrative writing and produce a variety of news, stories and poems with interesting vocabulary. In one class, the children had written rhyming poems on food based on "The Sandwich" by Tony Bradman. Simple words are usually spelt correctly and there is a strong link with their knowledge of sounds. Pupils make sound progress in developing structure in their work, although they have fewer opportunities to extend their skills in non-narrative writing. Higher attaining pupils write clearly in sentences, using the correct punctuation. Their handwriting is joined and legible. They are often able to spell polysyllabic words correctly. Their written work is organised and shows a clear, logical extension of their ideas.
- 116 A variety of interesting work is displayed in many classrooms. For example, poems about what they would put in a magic box and the children's own versions of myths and legends from around the world show the children's abilities to describe and imagine. Children also contribute pieces of work to class books such as "The Sultan's Elephant-An Adjective Alphabet" and "Celebratory Poems". They are also encouraged to make their own books, many of which are displayed in the library. This enhances their understanding of writing for difference purposes and audiences.

- 117 Some progress has been made since the last inspection. The skills of planning and drafting writing are taught through the literacy hour and pupils now have a drafting book. Work is written in rough, reworked and prepared as a final copy well in some classes, although these strategies are not consistent across the school. There are also better links between grammar and comprehension work and their own writing through planned tasks in the literacy hour.
- 118 Pupils throughout the school do not always develop and extend their independent writing for sustained periods. There are also still variations in expectation for some older pupils. Work is often unfinished and marking is inconsistent. There are insufficient evaluative and constructive comments to give pupils the necessary feedback to improve their work. Some writing is also inadequately focused on specific targets for the children.
- 119 The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been undertaken well and it is making an important contribution to raising standards across the school. It provides a clear framework for teaching and has raised expectations for many pupils.
- 120 Teaching and learning were good overall. Much of the teaching had notable strengths. Lessons are well planned and had a clear focus. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use classroom management skills to maximise children's learning opportunities. They create a secure environment for pupils who lack confidence. A stimulating variety of texts are chosen and used effectively to provide a vehicle for the children to extend their knowledge and understanding of language. Imaginative learning activities engage the children, sustaining their interest and concentration. Pupils are given opportunities to work collaboratively and are encouraged to exercise responsibility in their learning. There are weaknesses in some teaching where lessons are insufficiently focused on clear learning objectives or there is no planned plenary to conclude the lesson and reinforce what the children have learned. Activities are also not always sufficiently well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils within the class. Children with special educational needs are taught well through appropriately matched tasks and good use of classroom assistants to support their learning in the classroom. For example, in one class pupils were helped through skilful questioning by the classroom assistant, to write sentences to describe aspects of "Little Red Riding Hood". In another, pupils were supported in playing a game to find rhyming words, in which they took turns and read the words ably. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by specialist staff and are included successfully in class discussions by their teachers, who carefully match questions to each pupil's level of understanding. The drama club gives pupils a good opportunity to extend their skills in reading scripts, speaking in character and projecting themselves to an audience.
- 121 Children's attitudes to learning are very good. They show interest in their work and show initiative and responsibility in independent work. They are able to reflect on what they do and share their ideas with others. For example in one lesson, pupils were asked to practice the parts of a play script on their own. In others, pupils independently prepared factual written work to present to younger children and shared their thoughts on poems about death.
- 122 English is also well supported through other subjects. For example, in mathematics and design technology, pupils were able to read out their tasks clearly when asked to do so. In religious education pupils were writing and evaluating each others summaries of a chosen charity. They were also reading poems on death and researching the funeral rites of the major world religions. In physical education younger pupils were able to draw and write about their lessons.
- 123 The co-ordinator manages the curriculum area well and is providing valuable information for the staff. There are good resources throughout the school. The library is very well stocked with a wide range of material, including books in languages spoken by pupils learning English as an additional language. The early years library area has a good selection of appropriate reading books and picture books.
- 124 As part of school target setting process, English targets have been set which are focused on clear curricular targets. Some of these are evident in the classrooms, for example the key curricular target to write notes and summarise from reading was clearly observed being taught in

literacy. This is beginning to bring a much clearer focus to identifying strengths and weaknesses and is improving pupil performance. Although there has been some monitoring of standards in the subject, there are no systematic formal arrangements for this.

MATHEMATICS

- 125 Standards in mathematics are good for the 7 year olds but the picture is more complex for the juniors. Year 6 last year and again this year have suffered from discontinuity in teaching and their attainment remains unsatisfactory. Over the rest of the juniors standards are satisfactory for the national expectation.
- 126 Attainment data for the infants in 1999 shows that 37% Carlton Hill infants, more than the national average, attained high levels and 17%, also more than the national average, only reached low levels. There were fewer Carlton Hill pupils than average at the middle level. This data and inspection evidence suggest that able and average pupils were well taught and learned well and that there were a large group of pupils with special educational needs who were helped to do their best.
- 127 The average score for Carlton Hill infants has generally been above the national average over the last four years even though base-line data suggests that generally pupils are below average when they start. This represents an improvement from the time of the last inspection when results were below the national average. Data also suggests that girls in the infants are usually better than boys at mathematics but no reason for this could be seen in the teaching during the inspection. The teachers ensure that both genders have their attention and they use a range of teaching strategies so that different learning styles are supported.
- 128 Compared with other schools that have difficulties similar to Carlton Hill's, this school's infants' results are very good. This is borne out by achievement seen in their lessons during the inspection. Their attainment was better than the national expectation.
- 129 Year 2 pupils can add and subtract to at least 10, and apply learning well to larger numbers; for example, many could count backwards from 96. Most have a good understanding of dividing by 10 and the higher attaining group could apply this in problems like this one:
- "If there are 50 people on a train divided equally among five carriages how many in each carriage?"
- 130 All the infants apply their mathematics sensibly and try out different approaches to problems. Year 1's application of their mathematics is also good; they could talk about how to divide big numbers into smaller ones and they could show what they did with sensible diagrams.
- 131 For the juniors the 1999 SATs results were very low compared with the national average; only 34% of pupils gained the expected level 4. There was very little high attainment at Level 5. At the inspection in 1996, test results were also below average. While the school's results have improved since then the rate of improvement is below that for schools nationally.
- 132 Carlton Hill juniors' results were also below average last year when compared with those of similar schools. Achievement for the 11 year olds has been unsatisfactory in recent years partly because the year groups had many special educational needs and many pupils left or arrived during the junior years. Also, the last inspection found some unsatisfactory teaching in mathematics with a limited range of teaching strategies and a lack of challenge. Recently the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced and has had a very positive effect on the teaching. Still the current Year 6 are not meeting the national expectation in their lessons; they have similar difficulties of special educational needs and mobility and the added problem of staff absence in 1997-9. This brought discontinuity in the quality of the teaching whose effect the school's management was not strong enough to counter. The other year groups in the juniors are benefiting from the National Numeracy Strategy earlier in their education and are achieving relatively better. They are meeting the national expectation which is an improvement since the last inspection

133 The current Year 6 are working on the National Curriculum level below that which pupils of their age would normally be expected to reach. They can mentally add and subtract numbers to 20 and with encouragement go on to 100. They understand place value to 1000. They are learning to add decimals and transfer them to fractions but many are not secure with this yet. Average and more able pupils can double numbers. The class generally understands what kilograms and grams are and most can add the weights of items in shopping basket together mentally or with pencil and paper. They have experience of appropriate shape and space work, can name and understand what two dimensional shapes are, have measured perimeters, have practised drawing angles and identifying reflective symmetry and the more able have looked at rotational symmetry. For their data handling they can interpret block graphs and have experience at defining median and mode. They are learning slowly, managing to discuss and overcome their mathematical difficulties but only with strong teacher support. Few are able to name the four operations which makes it hard for them to choose the right one to use. Three things are holding them back:

- many lack confidence because their learning has been insecure in the past;
- many, including the large proportion in the class with special educational needs, are slow in their practice work and do not always do enough in a lesson to consolidate their learning ;
- they are weaker at applying their mathematics than they are at calculation.

134 The school is seeking to address these problems with intensive support in lessons, where there are usually two and sometimes three adults working so that each of the three pupil groups has continuous support. The first two issues are being dealt with as well as the staff can; the last one would benefit from even more specific teaching.

135 In the rest of the junior classes attainment is satisfactory, with pupils working at the expected levels. Year 3 use their mental recall well to add and subtract to 50 and can make number sequences by counting on and back in threes, although they have to have the support of number squares to look at. One pupil was able to use negative numbers and an able and gifted pupil set herself a more challenging task with a pattern that involved multiplication and place value to 1000. Year 4 can do the same kind of work at a more complex level and are beginning to organise the layout of their work and check their findings. Year 5 made repeating number patterns using two operations, division and multiplication, and were confident enough to challenge themselves by starting with difficult numbers.

136 The pupils attitudes are very good. Except in Year 6 where confidence is lacking, they take pleasure in challenge and responsibilities. They use their information and communication technology skills in numeracy lessons. Reception pupils were playing counting games on the computer where they competently controlled the mouse and printed their work. Mathematics skills are well used in science where pupils make diagrams, graphs or tables to order the findings of their experiment. Informal designing in design and technology does not maximise the use of mathematics.

137 The teaching for the infants and juniors is improved since the last inspection. Teaching is good now, and very good for the oldest infants and middle junior years; this is reflected in the quality of the learning which is also good or very good. This is due to the hard work of the teachers and of the learning support assistants who are well briefed by the teachers to work with groups of pupils. The school's thorough adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy, with its clear lesson structure, has tangibly improved the quality of the teaching. The teachers are all planning carefully for each part of the lesson separately and setting clear objectives for the pupils' learning. They tell the pupils clearly what the objectives are, which enables the more confident pupils to take some responsibility for their learning. The teachers plan different tasks for groups who are at different stages, and provide appropriate challenge. The pupils, particularly those in Year 4 and Year 5, rise to the challenge well and will spontaneously try harder calculations than those set. The teachers ensure suitable work for both genders, pupils with special educational needs and who are learning English as a second language. All prepare the resources for the

pupils' tasks well in advance so that once the pupils start work their teachers can find and deal with individual misconceptions. The pupils read their task cards competently and use materials sensibly, with adult help where needed. All the teachers are reassuring about misunderstanding or error so that pupil confidence grows. They watch the time and keep the pupils working at a good pace.

- 138 In the best lessons teachers relate the mental practice at the start of the lesson with the learning later and keep reminding the pupils throughout of what it is they are learning today. They stress that mistakes are useful to help us learn, which helps pupils to grow in confidence and be prepared to challenge themselves. One teacher has a very good way of getting the pupils to show her with their hands whether or not they can answer a question. She does not necessarily ask any pupil to answer but keeps them all still and allows herself an oversight of the whole class while helping them feel it is acceptable to say you are uncertain. Not much use of number fans etc.
- 139 All the teachers question pupils about the mental strategies they are using, which helps pupils to clarify their thinking, but the teachers do not make as much of this as they might. They ask one, instead of several different, pupils and do not reveal different ways of solving each problem. Few teachers plan specifically for the plenary which closes the numeracy lesson and do not help pupils enough to be clear about what they have learned. Few set or review learning targets or homework with each child so they do not give the pupils as much power over their own learning as they could. They mark work to show when answers are correct but do not indicate how improvement can be made.
- 140 The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is generally good, with good use of the expertise of specialist LEA advisory staff and enthusiasm from the team at Carlton Hill. The school's mathematics co-ordinator has worked hard to consult and support colleagues and has been well supported by the deputy head to manage the initiative. They have ensured that teaching resources are well supplied to the classrooms. The only weakness in the management is the failure of the school to monitor and evaluate. They have not taken regular oversight of the standards in different year groups or made an analysis of the strengths or weaknesses in pupils' capabilities. Some monitoring of the teaching has been usefully carried out by LEA staff and this has had a positive effect on the quality and consistency. The school currently has no strategies to maintain this important work and it is not quite clear who in the management structure will do it or how they will communicate their findings back to colleagues or forward to the head teacher.

SCIENCE

- 141 Standards in science by the age of 7 meet the national expectation. In the current Year 6 they are unsatisfactory. In the other classes in the junior school standards are in line with national expectations.
- 142 The attainment data for pupils by the age of 7 in 1999 shows that their attainment was about average compared with schools nationally, because of the proportion of pupils who achieved a satisfactory level 2 (83%). No pupils attained the higher level 3, which is below the average. Compared with schools with a similar pupil group the pupils' results in science are about average. Information from the data also shows that pupils perform best in their work on materials and their properties and life and living processes and less well in their work on physical processes.
- 143 Last year the results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 were below the national average for the expected level 4 (50%) and very low in comparison to the national average for the higher level 5. The pupils' performance in science was below average in comparison with schools in similar circumstances. However, the improvement in science at Carlton Hill over the past four years has been above the national trend.
- 144 From work seen in lessons and from analysis of pupils' work the attainment of the current Year 6 is similar to the attainment last year and is below the nationally expected standard. There are a

significant number of pupils with defined special educational needs in the current Year 6 and, while their personal achievement is sound, their lower level of attainment affects the overall percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard. Even the hardest work done by pupils in Year 6 is at no higher a level than the most difficult work done by some pupils in Year 5. Pupils in Year 6 are building on less secure earlier learning and lack confidence.

- 145 By the age of 11 the majority of pupils are beginning to understand the idea of a fair test and make predictions about what will happen in an experiment. They use scientific language correctly, for example they use forcemeters to measure weight and record their findings in newtons. They record information in line graphs, for example to show the changes in the size of a shadow as a pencil is moved away from a light source. Some of their work presented in graphs, for example the points they plot, lack of accuracy making the information incorrect. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, explain their findings in simple sentences and diagrams.
- 146 These pupils are not as good at remembering science knowledge as they are at experimental and investigative science. In their lessons they regularly practice experiments but do not always extend their knowledge enough. This is partly because some experiments relate to design technology rather than science.
- 147 In all the other classes in the juniors both attainment and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They investigate whether a substance is soluble or insoluble and independently decide how to separate sand from water using resources they have been given. They understand the concept of a fair test and the higher attaining pupils further develop their understanding when they hypothesise for example, that while dissolving salt in hot and cold water the hot water is gradually cooling which may be affecting the results.
- 148 In younger year groups attainment is satisfactory when they sort materials into categories under headings such as changed, natural, recycled. They compare and categorise them according to their characteristics, relating them to everyday situations such as their use in building. Work done previously by these pupils shows they know the correct terms for the organs of the human body; they know the importance of eating the right food; and understand the basic concepts of human reproduction. The presentation of their work is very good with neat writing and careful diagrams.
- 149 The youngest pupils in the juniors understand that an object dropped on a hard surface makes a louder noise than when it is dropped on a softer surface. They are beginning to understand the idea of a fair test, for example one pupil suggested that the object being dropped should always be dropped from the same height and suggested using a metre stick to ensure this.
- 150 By the age of 7 pupils understand that science is about "finding out about things". They know that heat will melt chocolate and that cold will cause it to set again. They can find out that chocolate melts more quickly in their mouth than in their hand because it is warmer in their mouth. Younger pupils, in Year 1 identify the differences between materials such as wood, pasta and metal. They can record their findings in simple sentences and drawings. The youngest pupils in the reception class know that some everyday appliances use electricity and they can identify appliances in the home and at school that use electricity.
- 151 Teaching and learning are sound, with some good features. Most lessons are well planned and clearly identify what pupils are to learn and the activities that will be undertaken. Teachers plan interesting activities, for example when a group were asked to separate sand and water, and give pupils good opportunities to work together in pairs or groups to share ideas and learn from each other. Teachers use challenging questions that help pupils think, for example when a teacher asked a class of infants "What happens to chocolate when you hold it in your hand?" Classrooms are well organised, with good resources available to help pupils organise their own learning and work independently. Analysis of pupils' work and from observations in lessons shows that pupils make satisfactory or better progress in learning due to these well-organised lessons and learning opportunities.

- 152 Learning support assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to do the work expected. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported by both teachers and learning support assistants, who ensure they understand the work they are to do and offer help if necessary. In some classes, for example in Year 5, gifted and talented pupils have work set that challenges their thinking and encourages them to develop their skills in predicting, hypothesising and recording.
- 153 All pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour and work. They behave well, listen carefully to questions and explanations and work well with each other, which has a positive impact on their learning and achievement. The encouragement teachers give pupils to work independently, the well-prepared resources and the appropriate tasks help pupils to manage their own learning and support others in their learning.
- 154 Many teachers assess pupils' understanding and work effectively but this is inconsistent across the school. Where learning is less effective it is sometimes due to lesson planning not identifying exactly what pupils will learn, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson or where the work does not offer sufficient challenge to higher attaining pupils.
- 155 Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, although some issues identified have yet to be addressed. Pupils' progress, identified in the previous report as uneven and too slow in some classes is now satisfactory, although slower for the oldest pupils. Teacher confidence in science is more secure and the scheme of work is now being used throughout the school. Teachers now use questioning effectively to support and challenge pupils' thinking. The scheme of work has yet to be reviewed and continues to lack information for teachers on what to assess, how to do it and the resources to use. The subject co-ordinator is not monitoring teaching, although this need was identified in the previous inspection report, and remains a weakness. In addition, the co-ordinator has no clear understanding of the levels of attainment throughout the school and cannot therefore influence the pupils' progress. Science data from the end of key stage tests is not analysed to identify weaknesses or strengths so that these may be specifically addressed.
- 156 The school's curriculum plan shows that science is not studied during the summer terms. The result of this is that pupils do not necessarily do any work in science for up to five months of the year. This has a detrimental effect for some pupils who forget knowledge they have learned. The systems teachers use to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding are not consistent so that some teachers have a better understanding than others. This is one of the reasons why there is no overall understanding of pupils' attainment and progress throughout the school. The school has been slow to consider adopting the optional national scheme of work but will do so as part of the revision for the new curriculum in September this year. The school has good resources for teaching science and these are well organised and easily accessible to teachers.

ART

- 157 The school's aim of developing the pupils' creativity is well met. Although there was only one lesson in art during the inspection the plentiful display of pupils' work in the school amply demonstrates good attainment in relation to the national expectation and good personal achievement for the infants and the juniors. This is good improvement from the satisfactory standards at the last inspection.
- 158 The infants can produce vivid paintings and drawings with a sensitive attention to detail, for example, of the patterns on animals' skins. Year 2 had produced pictures of cats from memory where the more able were using the paint maturely to mass colour onto the paper rather than just to draw outlines. They, sensibly, are taught to complete their paintings by working on the background as well as the subject. Year 1 had jointly made a large scale winter scene with very perceptive use of different materials including lace, buttons, corrugated paper and polystyrene to convey the qualities of ice and snow, and had linked their work to literacy by identifying, beside the art, a list of the relevant adjectives. They also work well in plasticene to produce meaningful models. The infants draw sensitively with pencil and control the computer mouse well, as they did to make images of flowers which convey detail and a sense of their growth. The pupils look

carefully at other artists' work and deepen their understanding by trying out some of the colours and textures other people have used.

- 159 The juniors draw and paint well from observation, which they were not doing at the time of the last inspection. Year 5 displayed chalk drawings of fruit on a large scale with the detail of grape stalks and fig seeds clear and the mottled colours of the fruits thoughtfully conveyed. There is a strong theme of valuing artefacts from other cultures running through their work, with observations of saris, African sculpture and Chinese masks all showing detail of proportion and pattern, and helping pupils appreciate the work of other cultures. The chance to experiment with different techniques for printing has led to some imaginative use of colour and texture on some impressive silk hangings.
- 160 In one lesson Year 3 pupils were working calmly and reflectively to extend a detail of a William Morris fabric design. They did this with unusual application and appreciation of colour and form.
- 161 The pupils examine the work of other artists and often make detailed studies, based on a drawing or painting, which give them insight into the artists' intentions. After studying Miro, Gauguin, Klimt, Year 6 had conveyed the richness, delight and desolation of the originals with thoughtful application to detail and selection of pastel and paint.
- 162 The teachers plan a wide and interesting range of art activities for their classes but they do not consistently decide what exactly the objective of each lesson is. They do not always refer to the National Curriculum end of key stage descriptions.
- 163 The school has recently reduced the time it spends on art to give more for basic skills. At the moment the teachers and pupils are able to maintain high standards, partly due to the work of the learning support assistants who save them time by preparing learning materials. In the Year 3 lesson the assistant watched the pupils carefully as they were drawing and when they needed paint she brought it to them without fuss so that they could work continuously.
- 164 The pupils have rich provision to support their work. The position of the school on top of a hill, and its wide windows, give the classrooms a very light aspect, which supports motivation and concentration for art. Classes and groups can use the specialist art room, which is very unusual in a primary school, and the subject co-ordinator has worked enthusiastically to provide high quality media. Very high quality sketch books are available for every individual although the way in which they are used is still inconsistent with Year 3 and 4 taking best advantage. Good links with the local art college mean that students regularly work with the pupils, showing them techniques and processes they might not otherwise access. Software allows pupils to draw and colour images on the computer screen with increasing skill.
- 165 The art co-ordinator gives good informal support to colleagues by discussing art teaching with them. She does not take detailed oversight of attainment but she and the head teacher ensure a changing exhibition of work from each class in a stairwell which stimulates interest and shows the pupils how well their work is valued.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 166 In relation to the national expectation, the infants attain satisfactorily; but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement for the juniors. Personal achievement is good for the infants, who overcome some of their early difficulties with language in talking about design and technology tasks, and satisfactory for the juniors who show that they can do well with their opportunities.
- 167 The infants can use a range of equipment and materials meaningfully and understand the importance of the function of items they are making. Year 2 have recently been successful in producing, from various construction kits, fruit bowls which are all appropriately shaped and sized and really do hold fruit. By the time they are seven, the pupils can independently draw a design which is adapted for the function of the object they are working on. They can make a suitable choice of materials to use, for example, Year 1 are able to pick the best material for rain

hats. Year 2, designing lunch boxes, thought hard about what they needed to make them useful; they remembered the handles and one pupil put wheels on his!

- 168 In junior lessons the good skills of the staff ensure that the pupils attain well but the continuity of experience over the key stage is insufficient. The pupils show good understanding about how things work. Of the three stages of designing, making and evaluating their own products the first and last stages are not as evident as the middle one.
- 169 One of the school's key intentions is that pupils will analyse already existing objects to see how they are adapted to function. Year 3 worked with good concentration to analyse why a variety of picture frames were as they were and emerged with a good understanding, having found out a lot of information. All the year groups in the juniors can discuss and carry out a task to design and make something and Year 5 managed to produce a bridge design as instructed, but without any recorded planning.
- 170 The teaching is sound. Strengths are that the teachers use good methods, have high expectations and manage the pupils very well. The learning is good because the pupils benefit from all these and their attitudes to work are positive. The teachers organise their classes so that everyone gets on independently or with adult support; teachers plan tasks very carefully and use good open questions which help pupils to think about why certain materials and designs are suitable or not. The teachers help the pupils to behave very well also, so that they can work on practical tasks with concentration and without dispute. The pupils learn successfully because their tasks require an intellectual effort. They are given interesting, practical things to do and a chance to show their independence. Whilst the children do use their literacy and mathematics in their design and technology, they could do more of this if they did more formal designing and evaluation. The weakest part of the teaching is the lack of clear objectives for all the tasks. This leads to a weakness in the learning because the pupils cannot relate back to specific objectives and are not very clear about how well they are doing in the subject.
- 171 The work for the subject has improved since the last inspection in that more is being done, and pupils are enthusiastic. The weakness remains that the school lacks a scheme of work and is only now considering adopting the optional national one.
- 172 As during the last inspection, the teacher who manages the subject is supportive to colleagues and ensures good resources but does not monitor or evaluate the standards in the year groups nor the quality of the teaching. The provision of equipment and materials is good and includes a specially adapted area for food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

- 173 Standards of attainment in geography are in line with national expectations for the infants. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards of the juniors as no lessons were observed in these classes and much of the work in the topic framework is planned for the summer term.
- 174 Lesson plans, evaluation of displays and pupils' work indicate that teaching lessons focuses appropriately on the topics specified in the scheme of work. In the lesson observed, teaching and learning were very good. The pupils' understanding was extended through clear lesson planning, good classroom management and stimulating discussion and questioning. Most pupils demonstrated an awareness of places beyond their locality and some could understand the link between climate and the type of food grown.
- 175 Achievement is sound for infants and junior pupils. Younger pupils develop an awareness of their own locality through recording what they observe on walks in their immediate environment. They also have opportunities to observe and record the weather. Pupils in lower juniors develop their understanding of the locality well through recording landmarks on a map and plotting their route to school. They also look at links between weather and climate and learn about the water cycle. A display of a variety of different types of maps and atlases in upper juniors promotes older pupils' enquiry and understanding of maps and plans of different scales. Pupils with

special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress through the appropriate matching of tasks and the use of classroom support assistants to support their learning.

176 The humanities co-ordinator is currently absent and the head teacher is managing the role. The subject schemes of work and topic plan are not providing sufficient detail in terms of the progression of learning outcomes, to provide the necessary guidance to ensure breadth and continuity in the children's learning. There are sufficient resources to support the schemes of work and good use is made of the local area to support the pupils' learning in both geography and history. Older pupils in the juniors undertake a local history study in the summer term and visits have been made to Glynde village, Seaford beach, the Brighton Pavilion and the harbour at Newhaven. There was little evidence that progress has been made since the last inspection to address the issue of matching tasks to provide an appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils. The co-ordinator completes a useful action plan each year, which forms part of the school development plan. Although there is awareness of standards in humanities across the school, monitoring and evaluation is very informal. Plans do not focus closely enough on improving pupils' attainment in geography.

HISTORY

177 Standards of attainment in history are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of both the infants and the juniors. Although no lessons were observed during the inspection, evaluation of displays and pupils' work indicates that lessons have been appropriately based on the scheme of work. Achievement is sound for the infants and the juniors. They have undertaken a variety of topics, which underpin sound development in knowledge and understanding in history. In the infants pupils have gained a sense of chronology by plotting members of their family on a time line and have developed an understanding of the past through looking at family life, types of transport and toys in Victorian Britain to compare with the present day. In the juniors, pupils have extended their knowledge and understanding through studying a variety of historical topics such as life in the Tudor times, where they studied the family tree of the Tudor kings and queens, a timeline of Henry VIII's health as well as using pictures of the monarchs as sources of information for research. In some classes there is a lack of breadth in the work undertaken because of over-dependence on work sheets which do not provide sufficient opportunities for questioning, using sources of information or direct observation.

178 Good use is made of the local Museum and Library Service to extend the school's resources. For example, in one class an Egyptian stone tablet depicting life on the Nile was displayed to enhance the pupils' understanding of the importance of the Nile to the Ancient Egyptians and how sources of evidence are used to study history.

179 Links with other areas of the curriculum are usefully used in some classes, for example in English; children have looked at Anne Frank's Diary and written their own letters based on her experiences. This work also made good use of used factual information from the Internet.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

180 Standards in information technology by the age of 7 and 11 are satisfactory and are in line with national expectations. There is, however, an inequality in the pupils' starting points because pupils who have experience of computers outside school have more opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge of information technology. Pupils who lack this opportunity are working to consolidate their basic skills.

181 By the age of 7 pupils' achievement is good. They use computers with care, controlling a mouse well, playing mathematics or language games, using a word processor or creating pictures with a drawing programme. The portraits they draw on the computer show good control of the mouse and an understanding of how to colour the picture they have drawn. They use computers competently as part of their learning in other subjects, as when they programme a remote control toy to follow a pre-determined route in geography. They draw simple bar graphs well as part of work in mathematics. The youngest pupils use the computer to reinforce their learning of

letter sounds and names. They practise their counting skills when they count objects on the screen, using the mouse, repeating and deleting the image, to get the right number before printing their work. They are competent and independent when using computers.

- 182 By the age of 11 achievement is sound. Pupils competently use a computer linked to the Internet or CD ROM to search for information about subjects they are studying; for example they search for information about Islam for work in religious education. They use a word processor independently for writing or for displays, changing fonts, font sizes and colours. For project work they use an art programme to draw pictures and design headings and titles for their work. They draw graphs to show their findings in mathematics. Part of the work planned for them ensures that they consider whether the use of information technology is appropriate, for example deciding whether using the Internet to find the information they want is the best method. They sometimes use computers independently at break times to finish work. In Year 4, pupils independently used a drawing package to draw a design, colour it, make a stamp, print the design they had made and then saved their work. Other pupils used a computer in the literacy hour to complete an English activity by typing missing words into a word processed passage using a list of common spellings. Younger pupils control the mouse competently, use toolbars, enter text and find information from CD ROM. The youngest pupils in the junior school use the keyboard efficiently for punctuating a passage of writing, scrolling down and across the page using the scroll bars. They use a CD ROM to find out information about sound for a science lesson, confidently demonstrating how to load a CD ROM, use menus and icons and make on screen windows larger or smaller.
- 183 Pupils with special educational needs use a word processor that prints symbols above words to support them in reading what they have typed. This provides helpful visual clues that pupils can refer to help them work out individual words and to read complete sentences. It also makes typed work more interesting to read and to type which adds to pupils' interest in reading and writing. Other pupils also use the same software to produce simple label symbols to label their work, for example, in science.
- 184 At the time of the previous inspection lack of opportunities to develop, use and apply information technology across the curriculum were identified as a weakness. The use of information technology is now planned into lessons across the curriculum. The information technology co-ordinator has provided a whole day training for the teaching team. She also trains teachers individually to address their specific needs. Teachers are now much more confident in using it and planning it into other subjects of the curriculum.
- 186 Little discrete teaching of information technology was seen during the inspection. Information technology skills' teaching is done during lessons in other subjects but all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory. A strength of teaching is teachers' secure knowledge of information technology, enabling them to instruct pupils effectively, helping them to learn. They often plan for pupils to learn from each other, pairing pupils who are competent with information technology to offer support to less secure pupils. Demonstrations take place for the whole class around one computer, which restricts some pupils' view of the screen and makes learning more difficult but is the best that can be provided. Explanations are clear and questions are well used to make pupils think and understand. Teachers plan the use of information technology well to support learning in other subjects and computers are in frequent use in lessons in all classes. From the earliest years in the school when pupils play simple computer games, to the end of the juniors, pupils learn to use computers for different purposes and make satisfactory progress in developing their information technology skills and understanding.
- 187 The co-ordinator has secure knowledge of information technology, and keeps updated. The information technology skills of the support staff are currently less well developed than the skills of the teaching staff but there are plans to address this. The scheme of work is clear and helpful in identifying what pupils are to learn and where information technology can support other subjects in the curriculum. An area of weakness in information technology is the assessment of pupils' learning. There is a helpful record sheet for teachers to use to record pupils' achievement, but not all teachers complete it. The co-ordinator looks at teachers' planning to ensure information technology is planned appropriately but does not monitor the teaching of information technology systematically.

188 The school has sufficient hardware and software to teach information technology. The local education authority in the near future will provide additional computers. All classrooms are connected to the Internet and there are plans to develop a computer suite in the near future, which will enable more effective whole class teaching of information technology.

MUSIC

189 By the end of the infants, standards of attainment in music are broadly in line with national expectations. Pupil achievement is satisfactory overall. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards of attainment and levels of achievement by the end of the juniors. The infant pupils concentrated well and showed good listening skills when asked to identify sounds or guess songs from a few bars of music. They were able to clap rhythms and identify songs by listening only to the rhythm. They showed confidence in demonstrating long and short sounds on a variety of instruments. Pupils were able to share and use instruments sensibly, which was identified as a weakness in the last inspection. In recorder club, pupils were able to read simple rhythms and melodies. They showed sensitivity and control in their playing. Pupils also have opportunities to develop their musical abilities through violin tuition and keyboard lessons.

190 In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were satisfactory or better. The staff had good subject knowledge. Where teaching was good, the lesson was planned from the scheme of work with clearly identified learning objectives and the teacher challenged the pupils through the use of imaginative tasks, appropriate questioning and encouragement. However, teaching was weaker where pupils were not given good opportunities for new learning. One teacher taught three classes at once and learning objectives were not clear in the planning.

191 There are both strengths and weaknesses in the management of music. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has completed and implemented the scheme of work, which is providing a useful framework for curriculum planning and has helped improve teacher confidence. There are satisfactory resources to support children's learning through the scheme of work and the co-ordinator supports other staff with planning and resources. Some of the proposals in the school development plan have been complete, such as reviewing the scheme of work, introducing keyboard lessons and developing recorder classes. However, music has not been a priority this year so staff meeting time for curriculum development has been limited. The co-ordinator has not monitored teaching and learning in the classroom and although there is a detailed record of pupil progress in the subject, staff are not using it.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

192 The oldest infants and the juniors meet the national expectation in their work, which is a sound achievement for them and is an improvement for the school from the last inspection when the infants did not control and balance their bodies well enough.

193 Year 2 range quite widely in their attainment but all can make different shapes with their bodies and change them in swift succession. The more competent can mirror the activity of another person, team working with good control and observation. Most can practise and improve the quality of their work.

194 Year 6 work with exemplary control and during this inspection practised skilfully in pairs to throw and catch large floppy balls, which needed unusually careful management.

195 Sound teaching ensures a clear focus in all the lessons for both infants and the juniors and so that they understand that they are learning. In the infants an especially good feature of the learning is that one class has drawn and written about their physical education, using their literacy skills to register the importance of physical education and to begin to evaluate their work. In the juniors a strength is the teachers' ability to manage the behaviour of the pupils and motivate them to improve skills, so that the pupils stay on task and concentrate. Year 6 ended

their lesson on ball skills by playing a large scale invasion game in two teams of about sixteen pupils in each; they were in the fairly close quarters of the hall but managed to play with skill, teamwork and no dispute at all, despite their keenness to win.

- 196 The teachers plan their lessons carefully but the objectives they set are too simple as they do not always deal with the need for the pupils to plan and evaluate sequences of movements. There are lessons in the infants and juniors where teachers asked pupils to do this but practice is not consistent enough and the effect is inconsistent too. One class of infants did not do well as the teacher was not quite clear enough about what she wanted from them and had not structured the lesson enough. The juniors, when asked to do so, did evaluate and refine their movement but it was rather simple to start with. The oldest pupils, however, make a good effort in their work due to their teacher's high expectation generally and because of their own ability to concentrate and take responsibility for their performance.
- 197 The teachers organise the pupils well to get out their own apparatus. Year 2 were able to set up all they needed of stools, planks, mats and climbing frame, carefully supervised by their teacher.
- 198 The subject co-ordinator has reviewed her colleagues' lesson planning and is able to define some development needs for the subject. However, she knows that the school has to prioritise literacy and numeracy at the moment so that it would be inappropriate for her to take major action to improve physical education at this time.
- 199 The pupils have regular physical education and learn swimming in the juniors, as they should. The school makes good use of external support to provide tutors for extra curricular clubs and activities at different times of the year and also manages to attract gifts of sports equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 200 By the ages of 7 and 11 pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the age of 11 pupils know about key beliefs from faiths, for example that Buddhists and Muslims discourage excessive displays of grief if a person's death has been expected. They can compare death and mourning rites in the major world faiths. They research information about key people from different religions using books, CD ROM or search for information on the Internet. They know about some ceremonies, festivals, faith communities, acts of worship and some key beliefs of major world faiths. --They are beginning to ask important questions and compare beliefs in different faiths and relate this to their own lives. A pupil with special educational was achieving well when she showed that she knew that the Red Cross is a Christian organisation and the Red Crescent is a Muslim organisation and explained she is finding out about both of them.
- 201 The achievement for the infants and juniors is good, because they are thoughtful and use their language skills well in RE. Younger pupils in the junior school studying the Christian Eucharist thought about special meals they share and a Muslim pupil shared his own experiences of a meal to celebrate Eid. A higher attaining pupil correctly defined worship as "praising and looking up to someone". A pupil who had English as an additional language learned and remembered that the Eucharist is when Christians remember Jesus. The youngest pupils looked at photographs of churches and identified there the symbols of Christianity, enabling them to begin to understand that different symbols identify religions.
- 202 By the age of 7, pupils know about Jesus and his importance to Christians. They know that the Bible is special to Christians and they think about books that are special to them. They know that some people believe that Jesus is God's son. Work in their books shows that they are making progress in learning about festivals such as Diwali and in reflecting on people they trust. The youngest pupils in the school listen to a story of the Buddha and dictate to their teacher what they have drawn. For example, they explain that "Buddha is trying to make people peaceful" or that "I drew the person who was dead and put flowers on top".
- 203 The previous inspection report identified some weaknesses, including insufficiently consistent teaching to enable effective progress. This has been addressed and teaching and learning are

both effective throughout the school. Teachers' previously identified insecurity, lack of knowledge and confidence in teaching religious education, is improved.

- 204 The teaching of religious education is good and ensures that the pupils' learning is also good. The strengths of the good teaching are the use of interesting and appropriate activities, which engage pupils in their learning. The teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to share their thoughts and beliefs with each other which help pupils support and learn from each other when working in groups or pairs. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, ensuring that they listen to stories, explanations and questions carefully and think about what they are learning. They use artefacts to make explanations real, for instance one shared her own copy of the Bible with the class and another showed a communion cup when talking about the Eucharist. Their subject knowledge is sound and they use supporting notes or seek advice from the co-ordinator if necessary.
- 205 The scheme of work is based on the East Sussex Agreed Syllabus, which the school appropriately plans to review to ensure it meets the requirements of the recently published Agreed Syllabus for Brighton and Hove. The co-ordinator is well qualified and provides sound support for staff. She monitors teachers' planning informally to ensure it is matched to the scheme of work. However, there is no real structure for this so strengths or weaknesses in planning, which could inform improvement strategies, are not identified. There are appropriate resources, artefacts and books to support teaching in the subject. There is, however, no clear system for teachers to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education, other than by marking of pupils' work. With no system for assessment, teachers and the co-ordinator have no clear idea of what individual pupils, or pupils throughout the school, know, understand or can do. Without this information it is more difficult for teachers to plan what to do to develop pupils' learning or the progress that pupils are making. It also makes it difficult for the school to evaluate the success of teaching and the curriculum.