

INSPECTION REPORT

ST DOMINIC'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southampton Road

London

NW5 4JS

LEA area: Camden

Unique reference number: 100039

Headteacher: Miss Helen Bell

Reporting inspector: Mrs Ros Scherler
21565

Dates of inspection: 5th – 9th March 2001

Inspection number: 194786

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Southampton Road Kentish Town London
Postcode:	NW5 4JS
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Jeremy Attlee
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21565	Mrs R Scherler	Registered inspector	History Geography	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's results and achievements <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9163	Mr G Humphrey	Lay inspector		<p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
2318	Mr M Cox	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
20063	Mr G Slamon	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31566	Mrs L Palmer	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation stage Science Design and technology Art	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school was founded in 1862 by Dominican Sisters and the present school was built in 1932. It became a primary school in 1958 and the nursery was added in 1971. The school is Voluntary Aided and works in close partnership with the adjacent parish church.

There are 340 pupils on roll, 39 of whom attend the nursery full time, making this a larger than average primary school. More than 30 per cent of pupils are from ethnic minorities, the main group being Black African from Sudan and the Congo. There has been an increase in the number of refugee pupils admitted to the school recently. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language (28 per cent) is very high. Twenty five per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs which is broadly in line with the national average. When pupils enter the school, their attainment is generally well below that expected for their age.

St Dominic's church and school are at the hub of the community and serve an area which is socially and economically disadvantaged. Most pupils live in the nearby council estates and the percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average.

The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in the nursery, reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils' attainment remains below the expected standard in language and literacy and in the mathematical areas of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage and in many important subjects at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Year 3. Progress speeds up in Years 4, 5 and 6 so that, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is generally in line with the expected standard except in English, information and communication technology and geography. Due to circumstances beyond its control, the school has recently gone through a period of instability following a rapid turnover of staff. New appointments have been made and appropriate structures and procedures are in place to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Staff work well together as a strong team, the school is becoming more effective and is now moving forward under the purposeful leadership of the headteacher. The vast majority of teaching is at least satisfactory and almost two thirds of it is good, very good or excellent. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher has a clear vision of the areas that need development and the Catholic aims and values are reflected in the life and work of the school.
- The overall quality of teaching and the high percentage of good, very good and excellent teaching is now promoting good progress, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The school's provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The implementation of the new behaviour policy has had a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strength of the school.
- The quality of music provision and the standards pupils attain are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are too low.
- The curriculum is unbalanced as some subjects are not taught in enough depth, the time allocated to them is insufficient and opportunities to develop links between subjects are not maximised.
- Resources to support information and communication technology, history, geography, art and the outdoor curriculum in reception classes are inadequate and the quantity, quality and range of fiction and non-fiction books are insufficient.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The change in leadership and the fact that the majority of teachers are new to the school means that the school has had to re-address many issues identified in the 1997 inspection. The quality of teaching has improved considerably and attainment in design and technology is now in line with the expected standard. The school has made sound progress in implementing the post OFSTED action plan.

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
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	C	E	D
mathematics	C	D	E	D
science	C	B	E	E

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

In the end of Key Stage 1 tests last year, pupils attained standards that were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics when compared to schools nationally. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in mathematics, below average in reading and well below average in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2 last year and compared with schools nationally, standards in English, mathematics and science were well below average. Compared to similar schools, standards were below average in mathematics and English and well below average in science. Last year, 50 per cent of Year 6 pupils were on the register of special educational needs and the quality of education provided across the school was affected by a high turnover of staff. The trend over time has shown gradual improvement except for the dip in 2000. The school has set challenging targets this year and teachers are committed to raising standards.

Inspection evidence indicates that, at the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils are on course to achieve the expected standard in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical, creative and personal, social and emotional development. However, standards are below that expected in communication, language, literacy and in the mathematical areas of learning.

At the end of Key Stage 1, whilst pupils are making satisfactory progress, attainment is generally below the expected standard in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and there is a lack of investigational and problem-solving work.

Teachers have worked hard this year to boost attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6, resulting in pupils making good progress. Pupils are broadly in line to achieve the expected level in mathematics and science at the end of the key stage. However, standards in English, particularly writing, and in information and communication technology, where pupils have few opportunities to use computers to support their learning, are still below the expected standard.

Standards in geography are below that expected at the end of both key stages. Standards in history are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils attain very good standards in music throughout the school. In art, design and technology and physical education, standards are in line with expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are generally satisfactory and often good. The majority of pupils enjoy school and show interest in their work. Some however, find it difficult to concentrate, which slows the pace of their own and others' learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, courteous and very aware of how their actions affect others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between all members of the school community are very good. Pupils are helpful and show respect for other's values and beliefs
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. However, it is improving and the rate of unauthorised absence is reducing.

Pupils respond well to the recently introduced behaviour policy which was developed after full consultation with parents, pupils, and governing body.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons; in 42 per cent of these teaching is good, in 21 per cent it is very good or excellent but in 4 per cent it is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is consistently good or very good in Years 4, 5 and 6 and lessons given by a specialist music teacher are excellent. Lessons given by the special educational needs teachers are good or very good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively by all teachers in English and mathematics lessons, but pupils are not given enough opportunities to put these skills into practice in other subjects. Whilst teachers usually match work appropriately to pupils' needs, there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and explain to pupils what they are expected to learn. Classrooms are well organised and routines well established in most classes. Teachers generally manage pupils well and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. In the few cases when teaching is unsatisfactory, lessons lack focus and fail to interest pupils and teachers' control of pupils is weak.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and includes a wide range of learning experiences during the school day and in out-of-school clubs. However, it is unbalanced as subjects such as history and geography are not taught in sufficient depth and a lack of resources restricts pupils' acquisition of skills in information and communication technology. The time allocated to these subjects is inadequate and the timetable for PE results in pupils having only one session of exercise per week. The provision for music is of a very high quality.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for special educational needs is very well led by two efficient co-ordinators and enhanced by a wide range of resources. Detailed individual education plans support pupils' learning and have appropriate targets that are reviewed and updated regularly. The learning mentor gives excellent support and has improved the behaviour of pupils experiencing difficulties.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Specialist teaching to support pupils at an early stage of English is very good and pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress in these lessons. Provision in lessons is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for spiritual development and pupils have many opportunities for reflection and to appreciate the beauty and wonder of the world. Moral development is very good; pupils are given a firm foundation in understanding the difference between right and wrong. Social development is good; pupils collaborate well in groups and contribute to the life of the school through the School Council and raising money for charity. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Whilst pupils are given the chance to learn about British culture through art and music, they have too few opportunities to learn about the richness and diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know their pupils well and provide a secure, caring and supportive environment. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored carefully and teachers regularly use their assessment of pupils' learning to guide their future plans.

The school works hard to involve parents and teachers make themselves available to meet parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the day. The school gives parents adequate information about the curriculum but pupils' reports do not provide sufficient information on pupils' progress to enable parents to help their children at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides effective leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team. The leadership role of the deputy is not, however, fully developed. Subject co-ordinators are developing their role and the school has satisfactory plans to prioritise subjects on a rolling programme.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use their professional skills in support. They comply with all statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's monitoring and evaluation of performance is developing and beginning to support the raising of standards. Staff have not, however, fully analysed data to target groups of pupils who may be under-performing or gaps in curriculum coverage.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is satisfactory and is appropriately targeted at improving educational standards.

Staff are appropriately qualified and deployed and there are satisfactory induction procedures for teachers new to the school. The accommodation is generally adequate but there is no outside provision for pupils in the reception class. This severely limits younger pupils' access to the curriculum. Toilet facilities are very

basic. The quality, quantity and range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library and classrooms is inadequate to promote an interest in literature. Resources to support history, geography and art throughout the school are insufficient. Computer hardware and software are inadequate to enable pupils to use the power of technology to support their learning. Resources for mathematics and science are good and for music they are very good. In all other subjects, resources are satisfactory.

The composition and arrangement of classes, particularly mixed age classes, is not always conducive to the best educational provision. Timetables do not maximise the time available. The school applies the principles of best value when making spending decisions and has wisely used funding to provide additional support for older pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school promotes a strong moral code. • Pupils behave well and enjoy school. • School is welcoming and responds sensitively to parents' concerns. • Parents appreciate the improvements made and the leadership of the headteacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information on pupils' progress. • More consistent use of homework. • A wider range of activities outside lessons. • Higher standards and better progress. • Better partnership with parents.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Inspectors also feel that information on pupils' progress is not as good as it might be and that homework is insufficient, variable and dependent on individual teachers. However, the team is impressed by the range of out-of-school clubs and considers that the school does its best to involve parents. Pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress across the school and progress is often good at Key Stage 2 in response to the high percentage of teaching that is good or better. Standards are set to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Last year, test results at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that, when compared to schools nationally, pupils attained standards that were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in mathematics, below average in reading and well below average in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2 and compared with schools nationally, standards in English, mathematics and science were well below average. Compared to similar schools, standards were below average in mathematics and English and well below average in science. Last year, 50 per cent of Year 6 pupils were on the register of special educational needs and the quality of education provided across the school was affected by a high turnover of staff. The trend over time shows gradual improvement except for the dip in 2000. The school has set challenging targets this year, teaching is consistently satisfactory and often good and teachers are committed to raising standards. There is evidence of improved attainment and the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
2. Most pupils begin nursery with poorly developed speaking, listening and mathematical skills and their overall attainment is below that expected for pupils of this age. At the end of the Foundation Stage, they are on course to achieve the expected standard in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical, creative and personal, social and emotional development. Pupils learn about plants and living things, observe a bean growing and pretend to be people in the community. They run, climb, jump and use wheeled toys in the nursery but the lack of outdoor provision in the reception classes limits pupils' attainment. Pupils handle tools and equipment appropriately. They paint, draw and model and are beginning to represent scenes, objects and patterns. Pupils settle to tasks readily and are beginning to conform to class routines. Attainment is below that expected in communication, language and literacy. Most pupils have a limited vocabulary and immature speech patterns. Higher attaining pupils recognise a few words, identify sounds and letters and write their own names. Pupils' mathematical development is also below that expected. Pupils are beginning to sequence objects and numbers and identify concepts such as bigger, smaller, one more and one less. Pupils make good progress in the nursery and satisfactory progress in the reception classes. Good quality displays and learning resources and the consistently satisfactory and often good teaching create a positive attitude to learning. However, pupils low starting point means that their attainment remains low in important areas by the end of the Foundation Stage.
3. Standards in English are well below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing that are below average and writing standards are low. Many pupils find it difficult to listen and explain themselves clearly. Pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds to work out unfamiliar words but only half read with accuracy and understanding. Most pupils' writing skills are weak. They write simple words but have difficulty forming coherent sentences. In Year 6, pupils' attainment in speaking, listening and reading are average but writing standards are below average. Pupils explain themselves clearly and generally listen carefully. They read accurately with understanding and locate information in text books. Pupils write for different purposes and use grammar appropriately but have had insufficient practice in developing and refining their ideas.
4. Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. There is little evidence of pupils reaching higher levels at the end of either key stage. In Year 2, pupils use numbers to count on and back and identify multiples of 10. Their mental arithmetic and use of mathematical language is weak. In Year 6, pupils use different strategies to work out answers to sums using the four rules and calculate areas and perimeters. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measures is generally secure but their ability to interpret data and to apply their knowledge to solving problems is less well developed.
5. Standards in science are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. In Year 2, pupils classify materials in simple charts and tables but there is little evidence of scientific enquiry. In Year 6, pupils understand fair testing and decide on a selection of suitable tools and materials to carry out an experiment.

6. Attainment in information and communication technology is below the expected standard at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils use simple programs to write and to control a robot, but their keyboard skills are not well developed and this slows the pace of their work. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce, organise and amend their ideas and access information on the Internet. Attainment in geography is also below the expected standard at the end of both key stages. Whilst pupils are beginning to acquire some knowledge of their own locality, their knowledge of the world and the influence of geographical features on people's lives, is very limited. Attainment in history is in line with the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils in Year 6 have a broad understanding of life in Ancient Greece. However, attainment is below the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils have a confused knowledge of how people lived in the past. Attainment in design and technology, art and design and physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards in music are well above national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils sing, perform and compose music with enjoyment and skill.
7. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. Progress improves as pupils move up the school and is good in Years 4, 5 and 6. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully and pupils respond well to such challenges as identifying how authors create moods and working out mental calculations. However, pupils' experience of problem solving and investigations in mathematics and science is limited, and higher attaining pupils do not always reach their full potential. Teachers have worked hard this year to boost attainment and have focused appropriately on improving essential skills, which has improved pupils' progress. Progress in information and communication technology is inhibited by a lack of resources, resulting in pupils having too little time on computers to practise what they have learned. Progress in history at Key Stage 1 and geography at both key stages is unsatisfactory as pupils do not have sufficient time to cover topics in any depth. Pupils make very good progress in music in response to the high expectations and excellent subject knowledge of the specialist teacher.
8. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress across the school, especially when supported by special needs teachers. They are supported in class and by withdrawal in groups and get individual attention focused on their particular needs which are identified in their individual education plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The school has maintained the good attitudes, values and personal development noted in the last inspection. Staff have successfully overcome difficulties caused by a high turnover of teachers and a year group comprising a high proportion of disruptive pupils who have now gone on to secondary school.
10. Pupils' attitudes to school are almost always satisfactory and often good. The majority of pupils enjoy school, are keen to attend and show interest in their work. When pupils start school, many have under-developed social skills and a significant number of younger pupils lack the ability to concentrate and listen. They take time to settle into class routines. Teachers have to work hard to ensure that lessons run smoothly and constantly remind pupils of conventions such as taking turns to answer questions and not interrupting. The majority of pupils improve their attitude to work and school as they move up through the school. However, a minority of pupils have special needs linked to emotional and behavioural difficulties. On occasions, these difficulties cause disruption, which slows the pace of their own learning and that of others. Some Year 6 boys are immature and have poor attitudes to school and each other, but teachers have effective strategies to manage them and minimise the impact of their behaviour. In contrast, there are many examples of positive attitudes. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 have high levels of interest and enthusiasm in design and technology lessons and enjoy the freedom to use their initiative and take responsibility. They have the confidence to learn by experimenting and making mistakes. Pupils of all ages respond very well to music lessons and are highly motivated to improve their performance. Years 3/4 pupils persevere and are determined to succeed when learning a new swimming stroke.
11. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is generally good. Pupils are polite, courteous and very aware of how their actions affect others. They relate well to each other and towards adults. Staff treat pupils with courtesy and respect and this is reflected in the confidence and trust that pupils have

in their school community. There have been only three temporary exclusions in the last year, involving two boys, and this is a significant reduction over previous years. There were no incidents of bullying or harassment during the inspection. Older pupils have caring attitudes towards younger ones and understand their needs. Pupils respond well to the recently introduced behaviour policy and are keen to earn rewards and praise.

12. The school has a positive ethos, which reinforces Catholic values and expectations. Relationships are very good. Adults constantly remind pupils to think about the effect of their actions, and pupils are generally reflective and sensitive to the needs of others. They are proud to raise money for charity, to take part in community projects and to assist in the smooth running of the school. Class representatives take responsibility in the School Council and are able to influence activities at break-times, which supports their personal development.
13. Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. However, it is improving and the rate of unauthorised absence is now significantly lower than it has been in recent years. Punctuality is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons; in 42 per cent of these teaching is good, in 17 per cent it is very good and in 4 per cent it is excellent. In 4 per cent of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is consistently good or very good in Years 4, 5 and 6 and lessons given by a specialist music teacher are excellent. Lessons given by the special educational needs teachers are good or very good. The consistently good quality of teaching is a strength of the school and is beginning to raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 2.
15. Time and resources are generally used efficiently, but, on occasions, the pace of the lesson is slow and too much time is spent on discussion, leaving insufficient time for pupils to develop their ideas. Teachers organise their classrooms well and provide a purposeful learning environment in which pupils make progress and develop. Displays in classrooms and corridors support pupils' learning. Routines are well established and pupils know what is expected of them. There is good co-operation between teachers and communication throughout the school is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully in the short and medium term and regularly evaluate pupils' attainment and progress to guide their future plans. Year groups plan together, which ensures that pupils in parallel classes have an equivalent experience. In most lessons, teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn and revise concepts at the end in a plenary. Work is generally matched to pupils' prior attainment but higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and the use of specific targets to help pupils improve in some classes is a good feature.
16. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good and most teachers have high expectations of pupils' conduct. They generally manage pupils' behaviour well and have effective strategies to diffuse potential conflict. Teachers use a variety of rewards and praise to encourage pupils to do their best and to behave responsibly. They value pupils' responses, which develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
17. When teaching is good or very good, teachers use a variety of stimulating tasks to interest and motivate pupils. Teachers have a broad subject knowledge and explain tasks clearly. The pace of the lesson is brisk and teachers use questioning skilfully to extend pupils' thinking so that they develop their ideas. Pupils are encouraged to experiment, make mistakes and learn from experience. Good examples of this were seen in design and technology lessons at Key Stage 2. Teachers frequently revise concepts to consolidate pupils' understanding. In many mathematics lessons, the effective use of resources and the setting of deadlines helps pupils apply to themselves to tasks and to be productive. Excellent teaching is characterised by an enthusiastic delivery and the creation of a motivating atmosphere, which challenges pupils to do their best and reach high standards. In the few lessons when teaching is unsatisfactory, the organisation of lessons and the management of pupils' behaviour are not effective. Lessons lack focus and fail to interest pupils.
18. Teachers plan appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and organise work that is matched to the targets in their individual education plans. There is good co-operation between teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinators, who provide good support in lessons and

by withdrawing pupils from class for individual help. However, some teachers do not ensure that those withdrawn from class have full access to the work other pupils have covered on their return. Classroom assistants and nursery nurses provide sensitive support for groups and individuals but are not always utilised fully in whole class teaching sessions. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught effectively by the specialist teacher and fully included in class lessons.

19. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively by all teachers in English and mathematics lessons, but pupils are not given enough opportunities to put their skills into practice in other subjects. Homework is inconsistent, dependent on individual teachers, and parents and pupils are not always sure what pupils are expected to complete.

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

20. The school provides a broad range of learning opportunities that meet statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum. Provision in the Foundation Stage, based on all areas of learning identified in the Early Learning Goals, is satisfactory overall and good in the nursery. Music is a strength of the school. However, the curriculum is unbalanced as history and geography are not taught in sufficient depth and a shortage of hardware and software restricts pupils' acquisition of skills in information and communication technology. There has been some improvement in the curriculum for foundation subjects since the last inspection. This has been slow until very recently as the school has rightly focused on improving pupils' knowledge and understanding of English and mathematics.
21. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively throughout the school. There is evidence in English and mathematics lessons that they are beginning to have a positive effect and that standards are rising. Although teachers plan carefully in most subjects, they do not maximise opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum or to exploit other cross-curricular links. The exception is music, which successfully supports pupils' learning in other subjects.
22. The school day is in line with the nationally recommended teaching time, but time-tables are not efficiently organised and some lessons are too long while others are too short. Pupils have only one, often lengthy, session of physical education per week. This is often too long to hold pupils' attention and insufficient to develop a range of skills. The alternate, termly cycles of teaching art and design/design and technology and history/geography results in intermittent and patchy coverage between and within year groups. Not enough time is allocated to history and geography and the subjects are not taught in sufficient depth. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology have not been developed systematically and pupils have too few opportunities to practise what they have learned. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to build an appropriate curriculum based on national guidelines but new policies and schemes of work are not consistently implemented by all teachers. Appropriately, teachers are placing greater emphasis on investigations and problem solving in mathematics and science, but this has been under-developed in the past so pupils have a great deal to catch up.
23. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive good support from classroom assistants and specialist teachers, both in class and when withdrawn in groups. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good.
24. The school places appropriate emphasis on pupils' personal, social and health education. An annual health week makes pupils aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils learn about sex education and the dangers of drugs misuse with the involvement of health services and the community police officer. The programme ensures that all pupils are made aware of health and safety issues and given accurate facts as part of their preparation for adult life. However, the policy for this area of the curriculum has yet to be updated in light of recent requirements.
25. There is a good range of out-of-school clubs. Activities such as football, athletics, art, textiles, cookery, guitar, keyboard, choir and drama enrich pupils' experiences and add to their enjoyment. The school benefits from links with the British Conservation Trust of Volunteers, the Workers' Educational Association and the Maitland Park Gym, which enhance the curriculum and pupils' sense of community and citizenship. There are very strong links with the parish and members of the local religious community, who are involved in and support the work of the school. There is a good

partnership with receiving secondary schools and visits from secondary teachers help prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

26. Provision for spiritual development is good. The school provides pupils with a calm and peaceful learning environment. This supportive atmosphere forms a good basis for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed in assemblies and in opportunities for reflection and prayer, which form part of the school day. In other areas of the curriculum, such as English, science and music, there are good example of pupils being encouraged to consider their responses and feelings. Pupils learn of the beauty and wonder of the world by caring for animals and observing plants grow. Poetry on display, such as those describing pupils thoughts on autumn, show that they are given time to think and reflect. A good example of this was when one pupil wrote 'Autumn has touched the trees with her cold, damp hands curling round the branches'.
27. Provision for moral development is very good. The strong Catholic ethos and the school's aims, which stress respect for self and for others, provide a very effective focus for pupils' moral development. Values are fostered through the caring and supportive relationships, which exist between staff and pupils, and by the good example set by the adults who work in the school. The school's aims and behaviour policy underpin moral development and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. The importance of truth and justice are communicated through the school community's evident concern for them. Pupils are aware of the 'Shining Star' code of conduct and are praised and rewarded for their good behaviour. Parents are happy with the way in which this area of the school's provision has improved since the introduction of the new behaviour policy.
28. Provision for social development is good. The school works hard to provide pupils with relevant social skills. Pupils are frequently reminded that they are part of a community and are taught to respond to the needs of their peers in a thoughtful way. School Council representatives negotiate ways to ensure that playtimes and lunchtimes are sociable occasions. Planning, assisting in the construction of, and writing poetry about the rose garden in memory of a deceased school helper, are good examples of the school's rich provision. Shared assemblies, music making and performances further enhance pupils' social development. Pupils are offered good opportunities to contribute to and appreciate the local community through involvement with the parish and inter-school sporting competitions. Pupils raise money for charities such as Barnardo's and the Catholic Children's Society, which makes them aware of others less fortunate than themselves. An annual residential trip further develops older pupils' social skills and sense of independence. The only weakness in this area is that current Year 6 pupils have not had a range of opportunities over time to increasingly take responsibility and play a leading role in the school.
29. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and develop their knowledge of British culture and traditions by learning about Britain's past. They visit places of interest such as the Natural History Museum, the Millennium Dome, theatres and the National Gallery. Music contributes well to pupils' cultural development and pupils have some experience of music from other cultures. Although pupils are taught respect for all people, they do not have sufficient opportunities to learn about the diversity and richness of the range of cultures present in Britain today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good, in line with the judgements of the last inspection. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and provide a secure, caring and supportive environment. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting, and through the returned questionnaires, expressed the view that the school helps their children to mature and become responsible individuals. Health and safety procedures are diligent and include good provision for first aid. The school has a dedicated medical room that is staffed for part of the time by a qualified school nurse. Child protection procedures are effective, staff receive relevant training and there are well-established links with outside agencies.
31. Teachers provide appropriate personal, social and health education through the curriculum. All classes have Circle Time, which gives pupils opportunities to talk about problems, relationships and ways of resolving conflict. The programme is comprehensive, but does not currently include a scheme of work on citizenship and is not underpinned by formal policy documentation. Hygiene

practice is good and pupils are encouraged to take sensible precautions.

32. Policies and procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The policy includes very good procedures for dealing with incidents of unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying. Effort, good quality work and good behaviour are rewarded, rules are prominently displayed in all classes and there are clearly defined strategies for encouraging pupils to overcome difficulties. The learning mentor provides excellent support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and has been successful in improving these pupils' attitudes to school. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.
33. The procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' personal and academic progress are good overall and have improved since the last inspection. An initial assessment of pupils' previous knowledge and understanding is undertaken soon after pupils enter school and those with special educational needs are quickly identified. The use of assessment and the monitoring of pupils in the Foundation Stage are good and provide early projections for pupils' potential attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. The quality and use of assessment for monitoring the progress of pupils is satisfactory throughout Years 1 and 2. In Key Stage 2, assessment procedures are generally good. Information is used to project National Curriculum levels and to monitor the progress of pupils in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. Regular evaluations of lessons help teachers identify strengths and weaknesses of groups and individuals and these are used effectively to plan future work. The school does not, however, rigorously analyse data to target groups of under-performing pupils, particularly those who have the potential to reach higher levels. Little use is made of assessment data in the preparation of the annual progress reports for parents.
34. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is reviewed regularly in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Targets are specific and measurable and there are regular consultation meetings with parents to discuss progress and set new targets. The school complies fully with the statutory requirements for pupils who are on the Special Educational Needs Register, co-ordination of this aspect is good and pupils make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also well supported and make satisfactory progress in lessons and good progress when they are taught by a specialist. The school is educationally and socially inclusive and every member of the school community is valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned completed questionnaires agree that the school promotes a strong moral code and that pupils behave well and enjoy school. They consider the school to be welcoming, responsive and sensitive to their needs. Parents appreciate the improvements that have been made under the leadership of the new headteacher. The inspection team agrees with these positive views.
36. A significant number of parents felt that there was a lack of consistency in the setting of homework and that the range of activities outside of lessons was limited. Parents were also concerned about the progress pupils make, educational standards, the quality of partnership between school and parents and the information the school provides on pupils' progress. Inspectors agree that the information provided on pupils' progress is not as comprehensive as it should be and that homework is insufficient, variable and dependent on individual teachers. In contrast, inspectors judge that other concerns are without foundation. Pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress across the school and progress is often good at Key Stage 2. Standards are rising in response to the effective teaching. There is a good range of out-of-school clubs and pupils take part in many community activities. The school does its best to involve parents in the educational process, but only a minority becomes actively engaged.
37. Annual reports on pupils' progress outline effort and achievement. However, they provide no real measure of attainment in relation to national standards, other than reporting results of national tests at the end of the key stages. There are no targets to guide parents on what is expected and how to help their child improve, and no facility for pupils to assess themselves or for parents to make a written response. Informal opportunities for parents to talk to teachers are good and teachers make themselves available in the playground at the beginning and end of the day. There are also regular parent consultation meetings.

38. The quality of information the school provides on the curriculum, related topics and other activities is satisfactory. For example, the school recently organised presentations on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and also provides Family Learning courses. The home school agreement clearly defines the expectations and responsibilities of the school, parents and pupils. Parents, pupils and governors were consulted during the recent review of the school behaviour and discipline policy and parents feel that behaviour has improved with the introduction of the new procedures.
39. There is an active Parent Carer Association that organises fund raising and other social events. There are strong links with the Parish Church of St Dominic, with parents and pupils participating regularly in special services of celebration and day-to-day acts of worship. Overall, the impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school and the contribution they make towards the learning of their children is satisfactory. This continues to make the positive contribution to pupils' attainment and personal development reported at the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The headteacher provides clear and purposeful leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior members of staff. Despite a period of instability following a high turnover of staff, the senior management team has worked hard to develop systems and procedures to improve the quality of teaching and learning. New appointments have been made, standards are rising, staff work together as a strong team and the school is well placed to move forward. The headteacher has a clear vision of the areas that need to be addressed and the Catholic aims and values are reflected in the life and work of the school. She has been effective in maintaining and developing a very positive ethos through her own high profile and example.
41. The leadership role of the deputy headteacher is not yet fully developed. The deputy has only one day per week to undertake administration and management duties. This limits the opportunities for her to monitor teaching and learning and offer advice, or to work with the headteacher on strategic management.
42. Key stage leaders work efficiently with the headteacher and deputy headteacher as a senior management team. Meetings are productive and managers are effective in monitoring attainment and supporting groups of staff with their professional development. The role of subject co-ordinators is being developed appropriately. A two-year cycle of monitoring is planned to enable co-ordinators to gain oversight of their subjects and to observe class teaching. With the support of a member of the parish community, some analysis of the attainment of one year group has been undertaken to identify pupils who need additional support. Staff have not, however, fully analysed data to target groups of pupils who may be under-performing or gaps in curriculum coverage. The headteacher recognises this and has identified it as an area for improvement.
43. The governing body is well informed and has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors use their various professional skills well to support management and administration. Governors regularly accompany the headteacher to observe specific aspects of provision and report back fully to relevant committees and the full governing body. The school development plan has appropriate targets for action and time scales, and governors are generally aware of how the plan is being implemented. They do not however, formally evaluate the impact of spending on outcomes in relation to the quality of learning and standards. Governors' written aims make no reference to raising attainment. The Governing Body complies with all statutory requirements and the act of collective worship is a strong feature of the school.
44. The match of teachers and support staff to the requirements of the National Curriculum is satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and deployed. The school has recently experienced a rapid turnover of staff, but new appointments have been made and the situation is now more stable. There are appropriate procedures to assist teachers new to the school. The provision for supporting newly qualified teachers is satisfactory. They receive support from a mentor and have a structured induction programme with appropriate non-contact time. However, they are not adequately monitored or supported in the classroom.
45. A new performance management policy, including appraisal procedures supported by classroom

monitoring, is currently being implemented. The new policy complies with the latest statutory requirements. There are good opportunities for the professional development of all staff. The school also provides places for training student teachers and work experience opportunities for pupils in secondary education.

46. The accommodation is satisfactory and there are sufficient classrooms for the number on roll. There are also additional rooms that are used for music, special educational needs and small group work. Halls provide adequate space for physical education, assemblies and lunch time. The school is cleaned and maintained to a satisfactory standard, although some areas are in need of refurbishment and toilet facilities are very basic. The main weakness is the lack of outside provision for pupils in the reception class. This severely limits younger pupils' physical and creative development which are integral parts of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A wide range of good quality displays celebrates pupils' achievements, stimulates interest and records additional activities.
47. Externally, the building is in satisfactory condition and has been much improved since the last inspection. The site provides limited hard surfaced areas for games and recreation. There is a landscaped garden and an environmental studies area, but several small-grassed areas are currently under-utilised. The site benefits from a number of mature trees that provide shade and a pleasing outlook from inside the building. The management of the site and accommodation is satisfactory.
48. Overall, the range of learning resources is unsatisfactory. The quality and range of computer hardware and software are inadequate and insufficient to support pupils' learning. Resources for history and geography are unsatisfactory and there are not enough materials in art to cover the full range of skills and techniques. The quality, quantity and range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library and classrooms are inadequate and not sufficient to promote an interest in literature and to research information. Learning resources are satisfactory for physical education and the Literacy Hour, good for mathematics and science and very good for music. There are also good learning resources to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs.
49. The school has effective financial management and administrative systems. The senior administration officer is well trained and makes an effective contribution to the smooth running of the school. A Local Education Authority financial audit confirmed good practice in all areas of financial administration. Regular budget reports enable the headteacher and finance committee of the governing body to monitor and control expenditure. Members of the finance committee apply their professional skills effectively to support the headteacher. Financial planning is satisfactory and targeted appropriately at improving educational standards. The school used funding wisely to reduce class sizes for older pupils. However, income and expenditure are not linked closely enough to the school development plan to ensure priorities are resourced appropriately in the medium and long term. Specific grants are used efficiently for their dedicated purposes. The management team ensures that the best principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied effectively.
50. Good use is made of computers for financial administration. The use of information and communication technology to record, maintain and analyse pupils' performance and to support teaching and learning across the curriculum is not well developed. Timetables do not maximise the teaching hours available, particularly in support of foundation subjects. The composition and arrangement of classes, particularly mixed-age classes, are not always conducive to the best educational provision.
51. The change in leadership and the fact that the majority of teachers are new to the school means that managers have had to re-address many of the issues raised in the last inspection. Despite several setbacks, the school has made satisfactory progress in implementing the post OFSTED action plan. Taking into account pupils' attainment on entry, pupils' at least satisfactory and often good progress, the school's ethos and the quality of teaching and learning, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to improve standards of attainment and the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- Raise attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology by:
 - extending opportunities for writing and ensuring pupils practise their skills in other subjects; (*paragraph 81*)
 - ensuring that teachers give pupils more opportunities to use and apply their knowledge of mathematics to solve problems and handle data; (*paragraph 85*)
 - introducing more investigative work in science; (*paragraph 93*)
 - allocating sufficient time to the teaching of information and communication technology and ensuring that computers are used to support pupils' learning across the curriculum; (*paragraph 119*)
 - analysing data to ensure that under-performing groups and individual pupils are identified and supported; (*paragraph 42*)
 - challenging higher attaining pupils with extended tasks; (*paragraphs 78, 85*)
 - making more effective use of homework. (*paragraphs 79, 88*)
 - Ensure that the curriculum is balanced by:
 - revising the timetable to ensure that all subjects are allocated appropriate time; (*paragraph 22*)
 - ensuring that history and geography are taught in sufficient depth; (*paragraphs 22, 111, 114*)
 - maximising links between subjects. (*paragraph 21*)
 - Ensure that resources are sufficient to support the curriculum by:
 - extending the quantity and range of hardware and software to support information and communication technology; (*paragraph 119*)
 - improving the resources to support history, geography and art; (*paragraphs 101, 111, 114*)
 - providing opportunities for pupils in the reception classes to have access to an outdoor curriculum; (*paragraphs 66, 68*) and
 - extend the quantity and range of good quality fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms and the library. (*paragraph 81*)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:

- Develop the role of the deputy headteacher. (*paragraph 41*)
- Review the composition of mixed age classes. (*paragraph 50*)
- Extend opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of other cultures. (*paragraph 29*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	17	42	33	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	301
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22	129

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	81

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	90

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8
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
	2000	19	21	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	8	19
	Girls	17	13	18
	Total	32	21	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (83)	53 (87)	93 (91)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	14	14	15
	Total	30	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (87)	78 (93)	80 (59)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (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
	2000	20	22	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	12
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	22	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	52 (76)	52 (68)	60 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	15
	Girls	14	13	16
	Total	22	22	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (55)	60 (71)	74 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	56
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	189
Any other minority ethnic group	22

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.9
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	152.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

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

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	2	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	18	1
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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	798,638
Total expenditure	798,701
Expenditure per pupil	2,322
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,271
Balance carried forward to next year	7,208

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	310
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	29	7	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	50	28	14	7	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	36	9	9	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	40	22	12	3
The teaching is good.	47	36	9	5	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	24	19	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	26	7	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	29	19	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	40	34	14	9	3
The school is well led and managed.	40	36	10	9	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	43	7	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	24	19	12	14

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

53. Most pupils begin nursery with poorly developed speaking and listening skills and their overall attainment is well below that expected for pupils of this age. Pupils generally make good progress in the nursery class, particularly in creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, in response to focused teaching. However, on entry to the reception classes, attainment remains low in many areas of learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the reception classes, but, by the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils' attainment in communication, language and literacy and mathematics is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Most are on course to achieve the expected standard in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative, physical, personal, social and emotional development. In both the nursery and reception classes, good quality displays and learning resources stimulate pupils' curiosity and promote a positive attitude to learning. Teaching is usually satisfactory, and in the nursery it is often good. Good teaching is characterised by staff using questioning that challenges pupils' thinking and giving pupils opportunities to listen and discuss. Support staff provide effective supervision and sensitive help for pupils.
54. Teachers in the Foundation Stage plan effectively together to ensure that pupils make continuous progress. They are clear about what they expect pupils to learn and provide activities to develop and reinforce concepts. Most activities are practical and relevant and newly appointed staff are moving away from a dependence on worksheets. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully through regular observations and samples of work. Assessment procedures are good and teachers use the results of their assessments to plan future work. Not all staff have received training on the new orders for the Foundation Stage and there is no up-to-date policy. However, overall provision is satisfactory in practice and in the nursery it is good. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership and has a clear vision for improvement. She has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching, but effectively oversees the planning process.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Most pupils are on course to reach the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage.
56. Many pupils start school with immature personal, social and emotional skills. They make satisfactory progress throughout the Foundation Stage by working and playing together in a secure environment. In the nursery, they are encouraged to work co-operatively and enjoy showing pictures of themselves sharing toys and a birthday cake. They think about others while gazing at a lighted candle during prayer time. Pupils settle to tasks readily, concentrate and remain interested for reasonable periods of time. They make choices about the food they will eat at lunch-time. Relationships throughout are good. Pupils greet each other in the mornings and the majority separate happily from their parents or carers. In the reception class, pupils are beginning to conform to class routines. They know where to put their belongings and help with tidying up at the end of lessons. Some, however, find it difficult to work without direct supervision.
57. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers organise their classrooms effectively, resources are easily accessible and this helps pupils select tools and materials. Activities are planned to meet the needs of all pupils which encourages them to stay on task. Staff generally manage pupils well, are skilful in diffusing potential conflicts and have appropriate expectations for behaviour. A good example of this was in a reception class when an adult intervened in a dispute in the flower shop and pretended to be an angry customer. In the nursery, the calm working atmosphere encourages pupils to work and play together co-operatively and to respond appropriately to activities. In the reception classes, pupils are given responsibility to help with tasks, for example taking the register to the office. Routines, such as pupils matching their names with a job for the day, support pupils' developing literacy skills. On some occasions, teachers in the reception classes spend too much time managing pupils' behaviour and allow sessions to become very noisy.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Pupils do not reach the national expectations in the Early Learning Goals in communication, language

- and literacy by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage.
59. Most pupils enter the nursery with poor speaking and listening skills and many speak English as an additional language. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils listen well during prayer and register time in the nursery and while practising the 'Letter of the Week' in reception classes. In the nursery, pupils responded to good questioning by recording their ideas on a tape recorder after a trip to the museum. Higher attaining pupils in the reception classes speak in sentences and ask questions of each other, but they have immature speech patterns. In the nursery, pupils are beginning to recognise their names on a name chart. In the reception classes, most pupils know how to handle books, are aware that print conveys meaning and follow print from left to right. They use pictures to talk about a story, but are hampered by a limited vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils in the reception classes recognise a few basic words and many are beginning to identify sounds and letters. They sort jumbled sentences with support. In the nursery, higher attaining pupils write their names and make marks to support their emergent writing. The majority of pupils in the reception classes form recognisable letters to write and are beginning to copy underneath an adult's writing. They hold a pencil correctly and apply appropriate pressure.
60. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good focused teaching in some sessions. Staff have good subject knowledge and planning for most areas is thorough. Learning objectives are identified clearly and activities are matched appropriately to pupils' needs. Satisfactory strategies promote pupils' speaking and listening in whole class sessions. However, there is sometimes insufficient adult intervention in group work and key questions and vocabulary are not included in planning. Classrooms with labelled displays and high profile print promote language development and word recognition. In the nursery, there are good opportunities for pupils to access books. Referring to books is part of the culture. For example, books about dinosaurs were placed alongside 'Small World Play' and a member of staff read 'Funny Bones' to a group working on clay figures. Pupils' reading skills are promoted in group reading sessions but many pupils, especially those who have little support at home, have insufficient regular times to share a book individually with an adult. Opportunities for writing are good. All classes have writing areas, which enable pupils to select paper and tools to write and create their own books. These are linked to the role-play areas, for example, the flower shop and the travel agency and pupils take full advantage of these experiences. Careful teaching of pencil hold has had a positive effect on promoting skills and teachers create imaginative ways to practise letter shapes. For example, in a reception class pupils practised the letter 'h' by using wet chalk to make rainbow letters and traced over well-presented laminated letter shapes.

Mathematical development

61. Pupils do not reach the national expectations in the Early Learning Goals in mathematics by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage.
62. Pupils enter the nursery with very limited knowledge and understanding of mathematics. In the nursery, pupils recognise familiar colours and sort objects into sets using this as a criterion. They understand the concept of bigger and smaller and identify a bottle that holds the most water. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities in reception classes to use practical resources to count and add. For example, one reception class used plastic food to add the number of slices of bread and fillings to make simple sums. Pupils are beginning to use mathematical language, such as 'plus', correctly and sequence simple patterns of beads. They enjoy activities and many understand one more and one less. Most pupils count to 10 and beyond and some higher attaining pupils accurately add two and two mentally. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in nursery and reception in developing their skills. However, their low starting point means that their attainment remains below that expected at the end of the Foundation Stage.
63. Provision and teaching is generally satisfactory but there are weaknesses. There are too few opportunities in the nursery for pupils to count and use number across the curriculum. Pupils do not make as much progress as they might when there is a lack of adult intervention in group activities. Sessions in both reception classes are sometimes rushed and the noise level is allowed to rise. On occasions, teachers change activities too quickly, resulting in pupils having insufficient time to engage with the task and learn in any depth. Some good questioning, for example, 'Is this a pattern, why?' and 'How could you create a different pattern?' promotes learning well. Teaching assistants provide appropriate supervision for groups. There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs. In the reception classes, the co-ordinator plans with teachers and follows up class work, giving pupils effective opportunities to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of basic

concepts. Pupils make good progress in these sessions.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. Pupils are on course to reach the national expectations in the Early Learning Goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage.
65. Pupils in the nursery enjoyed travelling in a coach through London on their trip to the Natural History Museum to learn about dinosaurs. They were fascinated by dinosaurs in ice shapes on their return. Pupils use their senses to explore the outside area and have opportunities to dig and grow plants. In the role-play areas, pupils act out parts in the 'Travel Agent' and the 'Deli' and experience aspects of the community in which they live. Pupils in the reception classes are interested in the growth of a bean and use magnifying glasses effectively to observe tadpoles. Some identify parts of a plant correctly. Pupils take care of goldfish and higher attaining pupils understand some of the conditions necessary for life. They select programs on the computer, use simple programs and are keen to work with technology.
66. Planning and provision in the nursery for this area of learning is good. Pupils make good progress from a very low level of basic knowledge on entry. They build on this knowledge through a wide variety of activities provided in a stimulating and imaginative way. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual awareness through teaching them about the wonder of nature. The quality of teaching is usually good in both the nursery and reception classes, but the lack of a designated outside area for reception pupils limits the breadth of curriculum that can be offered. Whilst pupils are given opportunities to discover and explore, adults do not always intervene in activities sufficiently and consequently miss opportunities to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Physical development

67. Most pupils are on course to reach the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their physical development by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage.
68. Nursery pupils have access to a satisfactorily resourced outside area and have good opportunities to run jump, climb and control wheeled toys. They make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. Pupils have appropriate awareness of space and suitable fine motor control. They dig sand and scoop split peas to fill containers. They roll and manipulate malleable materials, for example play-dough and clay, using appropriate tools. The reception class has no access to an outside area and this limits opportunities for some areas of pupils' physical development to play times and physical education lessons. Teachers make good provision for developing pencil control and pupils develop control of a mouse on computers. Pupils improve their cutting skills in the role-play area by cutting paper to wrap flowers. In general, pupils are confident in their movements and handle tools and equipment appropriately.
69. Pupils enjoy physical activities and respond with enthusiasm. They generally work well together and share and take turns. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and all classrooms provide a relevant range of activities to develop pupils' skills. The outside area in the nursery is in need of attention as the hard surface is worn and the track lines are faded. Wheeled toys sometimes disrupt other activities and would benefit from a designated track.

Creative development

70. Most pupils are on course to reach the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their creative development by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage.
71. Pupils' creative skills are low when they enter the nursery and they make good progress during their time in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils paint, work with clay and create three-dimensional models using recycled materials. They are beginning to represent what they see and what they imagine in recognisable patterns and shapes. Pupils use various materials to create a collage and they emulate the style of Jackson Pollock. They often choose to play musical instruments and know how to shake an instrument to produce a sound with some degree of control and rhythm. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their singing skills, including during prayer time. Pupils in reception classes chant nursery and number rhymes as a whole group.
72. Pupils have good attitudes to this area of learning and concentrate well. Attractive displays stimulate

pupils' interest and teachers prepare a wide variety of activities to promote pupils' development. The quality of teaching is good. Creative activities are used effectively to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. For example, a clay activity linked to the dinosaur visit gave pupils an opportunity to explain what they saw at the museum, make models and use books to support their work.

ENGLISH

73. In the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000, standards in reading were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Standards in writing were in the bottom five per cent nationally and well below those of similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Few pupils attained higher levels at the end of either key stage. The trend over time has been variable, with a significant drop in standards last year. This was due to disruption in pupils' learning after many staff changes, and the fact that there was a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. Some pupils enter school with little or no English.
74. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English are well below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in speaking, listening and reading that are below average and writing standards are low. In Year 6, pupils attainment in reading, speaking and listening are average but standards in writing are below this. Pupils' attainment in reading has improved since the last inspection because of the increased emphasis on this aspect. Standards in writing are lower than they were when the school was inspected in 1997. The school now undertakes some analysis of results to identify weaknesses in provision and has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. The headteacher and subject co-ordinator, with the support of the Local Authority's advisory teacher, have monitored teaching to help ensure consistency and have reviewed teachers' planning. In consequence, teaching is better than it was at the time of the last inspection and pupils are now making better progress than they were then. Teaching and learning are supported well by the recently implemented behaviour policy.
75. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average skills in language and literacy, despite the satisfactory progress they make in the Foundation Stage. Across the school, most pupils learn to listen carefully to teachers and to follow instructions. However, some pupils at Key Stage 1 find listening difficult and are easily distracted. Teachers are generally successful in engaging the interest of pupils of all abilities during whole class sessions. Pupils readily join in discussing the shared text, and teachers give good encouragement by appreciating their answers. As a result, most pupils try hard to explain themselves clearly, but pupils in Key Stage 1 have a small vocabulary which limits their ability to express themselves freely. In Key Stage 2, pupils' confidence in speaking increases as a direct result of the very good relationships established by teachers with their classes. A good example of this was observed in a shared class assembly where pupils spoke to the rest of the school using precise language. Teachers speak clearly so that pupils who have special educational or language needs are fully included and involved. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 3/4 lesson where the teacher held the interest and attention of all pupils as they suggested similes to describe the main character in a book. Suggestions such as 'Her eyes are like flaming fires' showed that pupils had listened carefully and thought deeply.
76. Reading development is supported by progressively graded reading materials and by careful monitoring of pupils' progress. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are systematically taught the relationship between letters and sounds and pupils employ this knowledge to work out unfamiliar words. However, only half of pupils in Year 2 read simple passages with accuracy and understanding. They express opinions of poems and stories by identifying their favourite aspects. Teachers focus effectively on guided reading groups during literacy lessons, but many pupils receive insufficient individual attention to develop expression in their reading. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read longer texts accurately and with understanding. They know how to skim text to find information. Higher attaining pupils identify crucial features, themes and characters and know how authors create a mood. This was observed when pupils discussed their group reader 'The Odyssey' and when pupils identified elements that developed suspense in 'The Shadow Cage'.
77. Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 are low and are below average at the end of Year 6 but are improving. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils write familiar words but have difficulty forming coherent sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation. Appropriate attention is given to developing pupils' handwriting skills and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils write in a joined and legible style. Standards

in spelling throughout the school are weak but improving through regular practice. Greater emphasis is now being placed on giving older pupils an increasingly wide range of purposes and audiences for writing. There are satisfactory examples of stories, plays, character studies, poetry and persuasive writing. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 write well, using interesting paragraphs to develop their ideas. They use punctuation correctly and strategies such as personification to create a mood. Other pupils do not always use words adventurously or for effect.

78. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are appropriate. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 and progress speeds up in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils enjoy reading and many use the local library to support their learning. The emphasis on teaching basic skills at Key Stage 1 is beginning to have an effect, but many pupils continue to need direct supervision from an adult to develop their writing. Over-long introductory sessions result in pupils with poor concentration in Year 1 and 3 losing interest. In addition, there is sometimes insufficient time for pupils to fully develop the writing task in other year groups. When teachers set pupils specific, personal targets such as 'Consolidate the use of paragraphs and use speech marks consistently', pupils understand what they need to do to improve. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are given carefully graded materials to meet their needs. They are also well supported by specialist teachers and classroom assistants both in class and when withdrawn for individual help. This ensures they make good progress.
79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 and is good or very good in Years 4, 5 and 6. Specialist teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is very good and the teaching of special educational needs by the co-ordinators is at least good and sometimes very good. There has been a significant improvement in the overall quality of teaching since the last inspection, when teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Teaching is now more consistent because of improved monitoring procedures and better use of assessment information to guide future work. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and teach basic skills well. They plan effectively for the range of abilities within the class. When teaching is good or very good, teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and use an effective range of strategies to organise and manage pupils. Humour is used to good effect and relationships are warm and encouraging. A good example of this was in a Year 5 lesson when pupils enjoyed reading a humorous poem. The teacher's explanations are clear and pupils know what they are expected to learn. Routines are well established and pupils move from one activity to the next without fuss. These strengths featured in a Year 3/4 lesson on similes to describe 'Metal Miss'. There are, however, weaknesses in teaching in some classes. These include inefficient timing, which allows pupils too little opportunity to develop their work, and a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Classroom assistants are not always used effectively in whole class sessions. In addition, a lack of focus on the writing task occasionally results in pupils being left to their own devices for too long. Homework is not consistent or used systematically to support pupils' learning as they move up the school.
80. Classroom assistants are generally used effectively to support groups and individuals with special educational needs during the main activity and there is good support from the co-ordinators. The learning mentor provides excellent support for pupils experiencing difficulties. Her lively presentation and very good relationships motivates pupils to try hard and do their best.
81. The co-ordinator, who is the nursery teacher and also manages the Foundation Stage, provides positive leadership. She works closely with the Local Authority's advisory teacher, and has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards, particularly in writing. However, her workload is too large and she has difficulty in meeting informally with staff in the rest of the school. The school has sensible plans to share her role with a Year 6 teacher. The recently appointed co-ordinator for the library also has satisfactory plans to improve pupils' independent reading. Whilst group reading books to support the Literacy Hour are of good quality, the range, quality and quantity of books in the library and classrooms are unsatisfactory. The use of information and communication technology to help pupils plan, draft and amend their work is inconsistent and not well developed. Teachers do not maximise opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills in subjects such as history and geography. Assessment is used constructively to help teachers plan for groups and individuals and marking of pupils' work is generally helpful and thorough.

MATHEMATICS

82. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, standards were below average compared to

- schools nationally but in line with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were well below the national average and below average compared to similar schools. Few pupils achieved higher levels at the end of either key stage. The trend in results over time has generally been upwards and in line with national trends, apart from a decline at the end of Key Stage 2 last year. This was due to a high percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs taking the tests and the fact that there was considerable turnover of teachers in Year 6.
83. Standards observed during the inspection indicate that pupils' attainment is below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and that few pupils attain higher levels. Pupils have a sound grasp of shape, space and measures and developing skills in number and algebra. However, they are less confident in the application of mathematics and in solving problems. At the end of Key Stage 2, there is an improvement in performance since last year, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and standards are broadly average. Mathematics has been given greater attention and pupils who are underachieving benefit from additional classes to improve their learning. In addition, teachers ensure that pupils learn effective strategies to calculate and that they use appropriate mathematical vocabulary. The school is well placed to achieve the challenging targets it has set for Year 6 pupils this year. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has ensured that progress in the subject has been satisfactory since the last inspection.
84. In Year 1, pupils have appropriate recall of number bonds to 10 and position and order numbers using a number square. They are beginning to identify patterns in number to assist them with addition and subtraction. Pupils in Year 2 count and manipulate numbers, such as counting on and back and calculating multiples of 10. However, they have limited confidence and work at low levels for their age. They identify and use halves and quarters and work with shapes satisfactorily, but their mathematical language, reasoning and ability to solve problems are not secure. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise quick mental recall on a regular basis.
85. Many Year 3 pupils have weak basic number skills and are not accurate working with numbers greater than ten. In Year 4, pupils have greater mental agility. They multiply single digits by 6, 7, 8 and 9, using a variety of strategies to work out answers. They use multiplication grids well. In Year 5, pupils work on shape and measures with confidence and accuracy. In Year 6, pupils develop a good understanding of calculating area and perimeter using the appropriate formula. They are confident to evaluate how well they are doing and have good recall of previous learning. Higher attaining pupils use simple algebra to find solutions to challenging questions. Pupils have an understanding of different strategies to calculate using the four rules and find equivalent fractions and percentages. Pupils' knowledge of number and of shape, space and measures becomes more secure as they move up the school. However, their ability to interpret data and to apply their knowledge to investigate and solve problems is not well developed and this restricts pupils from achieving higher levels.
86. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 from a low level on entry. Progress improves as they move through Key Stage 2 and is good in Years 4, 5 and 6, particularly when they are asked to recall number facts to find solutions. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress across the school, especially when supported by special needs teachers. They are helped in class and when withdrawn in groups and receive individual attention focused on their particular needs. However, some teachers do not ensure that those withdrawn from class have full access to the work covered in the lesson on their return.
87. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are generally good across the school and they enjoy mathematics lessons. During group activities, younger pupils at Key Stage 1 are often unable to work without supervision from the teachers and other adults. Attitudes are generally better at Key Stage 2, although a minority of boys in Year 6 have poor concentration. Teachers use supportive strategies to involve them to ensure they remain on task.
88. The quality of teaching of mathematics is always satisfactory and half of it is good. One lesson in Year 6 was judged to be very good. Teaching at Key Stage 1 and Year 3 is satisfactory. It is strongest in Years 4, 5 and 6 where it is consistently good. All teachers plan thoroughly and structure their lessons in line with the Numeracy Strategy. They know pupils well and organise activities that meet the needs of most, but work is not always challenging enough for higher attaining pupils, particularly at Key Stage 1. Teachers generally manage pupils well, but some raise their voices inappropriately, which heightens the noise level within the class. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and give pupils opportunities to try out different methods and explain their thinking. Marking and assessment procedures are comprehensive and daily evaluations of lessons are used effectively to plan future work. When teaching is good, brisk and challenging,

mental arithmetic activities give pupils effective opportunities to calculate and respond rapidly. Teachers give pupils time limits to complete their work, which helps pupils apply themselves to the task and be productive. Resources are used to good effect. Homework is not used consistently and varies with individual teachers.

89. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership, clear guidance for staff and enthusiasm, which is contributing to improvements in standards. Since the last inspection the role of the co-ordinator has been developed and there has been some monitoring of the curriculum and teaching. A governor recently carried out a monitoring exercise with the headteacher, and the headteacher and co-ordinator have provided support in the classroom. An appropriate action plan for the subject is identified in the school development plan. Staff have received relevant training, the Local Education Authority provides good support and the mathematics policy and guidelines have been updated. Resources for mathematics are good and used appropriately to enhance learning. The use of computers to assist learning is very limited across the school.

SCIENCE

90. In the teacher assessed tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, standards were below the national average but in line with those in similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were well below average compared to national standards and similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving higher levels was well below average at the end of both key stages. The trend over time is generally upwards apart from a significant fall in standards last year. This was due to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 and disruption caused by a high turnover of staff.
91. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 remains below average. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are attaining within the average range and are making good progress in response to the effective teaching. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory as teaching has improved.
92. At Key Stage 1, pupils investigating growth have some understanding of the conditions necessary for life, identify plants and plot them on a map of the rose garden. Lessons and resources are well prepared, for example a map of the rose garden and 'My Seed Diary'. However, pupils have poor recording skills and find it difficult to explain what they have learned because of a limited vocabulary. Pupils classify materials using metallic and non-metallic properties and use graphs and charts to record their work, but there is little evidence of scientific enquiry.
93. Attainment remains below average in Year 3 as pupils' speaking and listening skills limit their ability to describe observations and some unsatisfactory management of behaviour slows progress. In Year 4, good teaching strategies enable pupils to remember how they use a pipette for an investigation. A pupil explained that 'You put water in it and you squeeze it and a drop comes out'. With support, they describe a fair test and know that some things have to remain constant. In Year 5, pupils are beginning to use technical language to describe parts of plants, for example, stigma and stamen. They have a basic understanding of processes such as pollination, germination and fertilisation. Very good class management and delivery of the subject promotes pupils' learning. In Year 6, pupils explain fair testing and discuss the selection of suitable materials to carry out an experiment. Many pupils are aware of the aims of the task and explain how sound is made and how it travels. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils record their work in a variety of appropriate ways including graphs, charts and written reports. There is some evidence that teachers are now challenging pupils to use and apply their knowledge of scientific facts. However, this aspect has been under-developed in the past and pupils' investigative skills are limited. As a result, higher attaining pupils do not reaching their full potential.
94. Pupils have a lively interest in the subject, are inquisitive and remain on task when behaviour management is effective. They are keen to participate in practical tasks and collaborate amicably in groups. At Key Stage 1, progress is satisfactory but many pupils need a high level of supervision. At Key Stage 2, progress is good in response to the focused teaching. Pupils concentrate well and think things through in a logical way. Most pupils present their work neatly in a prescribed format and this helps them develop the relevant knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well with tasks modified appropriately to help them succeed. They contribute confidently to discussions as they know their views will be valued.

95. The quality of teaching in Years 1, 2 and 3 is satisfactory and it is good or very good in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers of younger pupils make appropriate links with literacy by sounding out words. They generally manage pupils well, but in one class, less effective strategies are employed which slow down the rate of pupils' learning. One lesson focused more on mapping skills than scientific discovery. Teachers of older pupils have good subject knowledge, plan lessons well and control classes effectively. They have high expectations of work and behaviour and tell pupils clearly what they are expected to achieve. They explain tasks thoroughly and employ a range of teaching methods to sustain pupils' interest and ensure that lessons move smoothly from one activity to the other. These features were present in a Year 5 lesson on the conditions necessary to enable plants to grow. Relationships are very good and teachers use praise effectively to support and encourage pupils to do their best. Marking of work is clear and challenges pupils' thinking.
96. The subject is led very well by the co-ordinator. She is enthusiastic, secure in her subject knowledge and has a clear vision for improvement. She has monitored the subject with support from a governor and identified areas for development. Assessment is under-developed but there are appropriate plans to address this. The co-ordinator has provided training for colleagues and put a progressive framework in place to improve the teaching of investigative science. The scheme of work, based on national guidelines, gives adequate coverage. Appropriately, the co-ordinator intends to modify this to make it more relevant to pupils in the school. Other plans, such as out-of-school classes to boost pupils' attainment, and the intention to hold a science week, are designed to raise the profile of the subject. Resources are good. There are no school targets for attainment in the subject, which means there is no quantitative benchmark for improvement. There is some limited use of information and communication technology to construct graphs and to record investigations, but teachers do not exploit links with other subjects. Too often computers are used as an 'add on' rather than a tool to support learning.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Due to the timetable, it was not possible to observe any lessons at Key Stage 1 and only two lessons at Key Stage 2.
98. At Key Stage 1, pupils use a range of media and techniques to explore, develop and represent their observations and ideas. Pupils print, weave to make a basket effect, combine materials in a collage and paint. They produce drawings of fruit and plants. Pupils use art to illustrate their work in other subjects for example a display of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and pastel drawings of light and shadow. At Key Stage 2, pupils are reflective and understand how to modify their work to make it more effective. A good example of this was in a Year 3/4 lesson when pupils discussed weaknesses in their work and how to improve their model of a giraffe. In another lesson in Year 5, pupils explained how swirling represented hair on a mermaid. Pupils investigate different processes such as smudging, dotting and drawing lines to create a specific effect and experiment with a variety of tools. They plan and develop their ideas and designs appropriately. By suggesting that their butterfly is best displayed in the rose garden, pupils demonstrate they understand how their design fulfils a need.
99. Pupils make good progress in lessons as they are well motivated. They explore and experiment in response to the high expectations of teachers, praise and encouragement. Pupils work happily together and suggest ways to collaborate. For example, pupils working on a sculpture of a butterfly using chicken wire and papier-mâché organised themselves so that two worked on one side and two on the other. They also make sensible observations about which tools and materials are suitable for the purpose. Evidence from displays and the scrutiny of work indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress over time.
100. The quality of teaching and learning was good in one lesson and very good in the other. When teaching is very good, the teacher's effective management of pupils' behaviour and warm relationships result in pupils paying close attention. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and models techniques effectively. She explains the task in a structured way and has clear objectives for the lesson, which focuses pupils' learning. There is good use of open questions and discussions to make pupils think about the best way to tackle a problem.
101. The scheme of work is appropriate, follows national guidelines and art is identified as an area to be

monitored in the future. However, art and design is taught alternately with design and technology on a termly basis and this results in a lack of depth of coverage in some classes. There is no art co-ordinator at present and no leadership or monitoring in the subject. There is little evidence that pupils study the work of famous artists or that they are introduced to the art of different times and cultures. Some teachers use technology to research information on sculptures, but computers are not used widely to develop pupils' creativity. Resources are inadequate and limit the breadth of curriculum that is offered. The two after-school clubs, one for art and one for textiles, enrich provision. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work in these clubs and produce work at home to prepare for activities at school. Clubs allow pupils opportunities to explore and pursue their own interests and benefit from the expertise and enthusiasm of teachers who freely give up their time.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, when the subject was an issue for improvement as the programmes of study were not covered in sufficient depth.
103. In Key Stage 1, pupils use simple diagrams and plans when designing and are beginning to evaluate their work. They know which tools to use and identify strengths and weaknesses in materials. For example, some pupils noticed that wheels came off when axles were constructed with straw. When they make moving vehicles, they know how wheels move and the difference between wheels and axles. In Key Stage 2, pupils work on a range of designing and making tasks using a variety of materials. In Year 3, pupils make a number book with moving parts for nursery pupils and use and apply their knowledge of levers. In Year 4, pupils extend their knowledge of levers and use cutting to make struts to illustrate a pop-up storybook. Pupils in Year 5 design and build vehicles with cam drives, work carefully with such equipment as a glue-gun and choose materials and tools. In Year 6, pupils design and make a pair of slippers. They plan carefully and explore suitable materials and designs for heels. They understand how to apply decoration.
104. At Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress but their lack of literacy skills hinders their ability to explain and record what they are doing. Some pupils draw pictures, others write simple sentences but most pupils writing skills are under-developed. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress in lessons, are well motivated and enthusiastic. Evidence from the scrutiny of work indicates they have made satisfactory progress over time. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject, participate fully and behave well. They support each other. A good example of this was observed when a pupil in Year 6 with poor cutting skills was helped by his peers. Pupils work carefully with equipment and use their initiative to make choices about materials and methods of working. They develop their skills by remaining on task, persisting with an activity and by being encouraged to modify their designs in light of their experience. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported to achieve their best and they make good progress.
105. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Teachers plan and structure lessons carefully and are clear what knowledge and understanding they want pupils to gain. They challenge pupils by giving them clear directions, asking them to explain their thinking and allowing them to experiment with ideas. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress and evaluations of lessons ensure that work builds progressively from one skill to the next. They organise their classrooms well and prepare resources effectively. Teachers' control of the class is good and their management of behaviour is effective.
106. This subject is well led by two co-ordinators who support teachers in their planning. The school follows national guidelines, which ensure that there is a structured programme of work. Resources are adequate. Design and technology is taught alternately with art and design and this results in patchy coverage in some classes. Year 6 pupils enjoy the after-school cookery club which is well organised and supports pupils' personal and social development. Pupils have very positive attitudes to work, cut and chop food carefully and are aware of health and safety issues.

GEOGRAPHY

107. Attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards have fallen since the last inspection, when they were judged to be in line with expectations.
108. In Key Stage 1, many pupils locate the United Kingdom on a world map and higher attaining pupils name other major countries as well. They know about the points of the compass but have little understanding of how these can be used. They have a satisfactory understanding of features of the locality and landmarks in London. In Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the geography of the surrounding area and plot their route to school. In Year 5, pupils survey a nearby street, discuss amenities with residents and come to sensible conclusions about measures to reduce traffic and improve facilities. They have some understanding of the water cycle. In Year 6 pupils have just started to record facts about world climates, features and populations. They are aware of topical issues such as the divide between rich and poor countries and where some raw materials are found.
109. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in lessons but their progress over time has been slow as

coverage of the subject is intermittent. Some younger pupils have difficulty concentrating and settling down to the task and their limited vocabulary and lack of recording skills limit their learning. Pupils' understanding of other countries and the impact of geographical features on people's lives is under-developed. They are beginning, however, to learn about the area in which they live and pupils in Year 5 present their findings in a mature way. When pupils are given tasks that interest them, they respond with enthusiasm and discuss issues collaboratively. Pupils respect each other's views, take turns and listen carefully.

110. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory but there are weaknesses as some explanations are confusing and pupils are not always sure what they are expected to do. One lesson was unsatisfactory. Management and organisation were ineffective resulting in a noisy atmosphere and pupils wasting time between activities. In the best lessons, there is a calm working atmosphere and routines are well established. The teacher intervenes appropriately to ensure that pupils remain focused and pupils are encouraged to think through and explain their ideas. A good example of this was in a Year 5 lesson following a survey of a local street.
111. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership within the constraints of the limited opportunities made available to her. She has identified ways to use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning but there is little evidence of this happening in practice. The policy is out of date and the scheme does not take account of new guidance. There has been no monitoring of the subject and time-tables do not allow geography to be taught in sufficient breadth or depth. However, monitoring of geography is identified in the school development plan and is due to take place in the summer term. Assessment is under-developed. Teachers sometimes identify cross-curricular links. For example, pupils learned about rivers when they studied history and teachers use pupils' country of origin or places they have visited to widen their experience. Resources are inadequate and most maps and atlases are out of date.

HISTORY

112. No lessons of history were time-tabled during the week of the inspection and judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with groups of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. Attainment is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and is in line with them at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have deteriorated at Key Stage 1 and maintained at Key Stage 2 since the last inspection.
113. There is very little evidence of history being taught at Key Stage 1. Work in books is at a low level and pupils are unable to recall elements of stories from the past. When studying the Victorians, pupils compare old toys with new ones and identify differences, but have a confused knowledge of how people lived in these times. Pupils' understanding of chronology is weak and their vocabulary relating to the passage of time is limited. In lower Key Stage 2, pupils study Invaders and have some knowledge of everyday life and the impact of settlement on England. Pupils in Year 5 use the Internet to research information on John Lennon and know facts about The Beatles and pop culture in the 60's. In Year 6, pupils use a range of sources to find out about life in Ancient Greece. They describe Greek Gods and write about the discoveries of historical figures such as Archimedes and Euclid. They write empathetic accounts while pretending to be a character in the war between the Athenians and Spartans. Pupils extract relevant information from texts and respond appropriately to questions about the past. Whilst pupils in upper Key Stage 2 are developing satisfactory historical skills and understanding, the emphasis in other year groups is on the acquisition of factual knowledge. Themes are not developed in any depth and this limits pupils' progress.
114. The time allocated to history is inadequate and coverage of the programmes of study lacks breadth and balance. Apart from Years 5 and 6, teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' investigational and literacy skills in the subject. Resources are unsatisfactory and insufficient to support learning. The two co-ordinators are aware of the deficiencies and have satisfactory plans to increase teachers' subject knowledge and to ensure the new policy and scheme of work are implemented more coherently.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards of attainment are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. At the time of the last inspection, the school was not meeting requirements for teaching the subject. The recent

appointment of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator has meant the subject is being given more attention. Most elements are covered, but not in sufficient depth. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved and some have received training. As a result, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

116. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 investigate various forms of presentation and explore a range of tools. They programme a moving toy and enter simple data into a computer to produce a graph. Pupils' keyboard skills are not well developed. This slows the pace of their work and limits the contribution the subject can make to extend their writing skills. Year 3 pupils observe information on the Internet about sculptures and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of what they are doing. In Year 4, pupils make, test and improve sequences of instructions to draw different shapes such as squares, rectangles and triangles onto the screen. As a result of the good teaching and pupils' interest, they go on to consider designing a house using a variety of shapes. By the end of Year 6, pupils produce, organise, amend and present ideas using information technology. They use CD ROMs effectively to access information and technology is used well to record, compose and play music. Data handling skills are a weakness.
117. Pupils enjoy working on computers and generally share and take turns. Basic skills are being taught in all year groups and pupils now make satisfactory progress in direct teaching sessions. However, the time given to these sessions is too short and a lack of resources means that pupils do not have sufficient access to computers to practise what they have learnt. Frequently, when a small group of pupils use computers, there is too little teacher intervention to build on pupils' skills. Progress over time has been unsatisfactory because teachers lacked confidence and expertise in teaching the subject in the past. Pupils in Year 6 have not had sufficient experience across all elements of the information and communication technology curriculum.
118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan effectively using national guidance. They identify what they want pupils to learn and explain tasks clearly. As a result, pupils understand what they need to do. Pupil management is good and this ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to learn without disruption.
119. The subject co-ordinator has good plans to develop the subject and she is determined to improve standards. There are satisfactory plans to develop assessment procedures to track pupils' progress. However, hardware and software are inadequate to support pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is not used fully to support other subjects.

MUSIC

120. The provision for and the standards pupils attain in music is a strength of the school. Pupils provide uplifting singing in assemblies and listen to a range of music drawn from different styles and cultures. Since the last inspection, standards in music have improved considerably, especially at Key Stage 1.
121. Pupils' attainment is well above the nationally expected level at both key stages. In Year 1, pupils explore dynamics and tempo by chanting a well known nursery rhyme and tap a 3/4 rhythm well. They use mouth sounds and body actions in their rendering of the 'Granny and Grand-dad's' poem and show a developing awareness of timbre and pitch. In Year 3, pupils listen to music by Saint-Saens and discuss how elements of the music have been used to create the animals represented. Pupils link this with their work in literacy on fables such as 'The hare and the Tortoise'. They use instruments and their bodies to illustrate large, small, fast and slow with an understanding of tempo, rhythm, intonation and posture. In Year 6, pupils perform rhythm patterns and confidently read notation when chanting from written scores. Pupils write their own music from rhythms provided by the teacher. Singing in lessons, assemblies and the choir shows a good sense of melody, shape, beat, pitch and expression. Most of the singing across the school features British Sign Language, which supports pupils' personal and social development. Singing also supports pupils' spiritual awareness and reinforces the Catholic ethos.
122. Pupils enjoy music lessons, make very good progress in lessons and concentrate well. They listen carefully and co-operate in groups, taking turns and sharing instruments. They behave very well and are proud to perform and demonstrate their achievements. They sing with joy and enthusiasm.
123. The quality of teaching provided by the music specialist is often excellent. Lessons are thoroughly planned and the teacher has high expectations of what pupils will achieve and how they will behave.

Potentially difficult pupils are managed effectively and are fully included in all activities, which raises their self-esteem. The pace of lessons is rapid and there is frequent revision of previously learned concepts. Activities are varied, motivating and stimulate pupils' interest. The teacher's very good subject knowledge and his excellent example support pupils' learning.

124. There is very good curriculum coverage. A wide range of after-school clubs, such as a mixed choir, recorders, electronic keyboard ensemble, drumming and guitar, enriches pupils' experience. The headteacher and Key Stage 1 special needs co-ordinator provide effective support and leadership for these activities. The guitar group performed well in the Year 6 Mass during the inspection. Pupils' personal and social development is further enhanced by performing for parents and in the community.
125. The specialist teacher provides strong and effective leadership, supported by a governor and the headteacher who carried out a monitoring exercise last year. He liaises with class teachers and provides links with the curriculum for each year group. Assessment is very good, units of work are graded and revisited and individual records are used to support planning and to write reports for parents. The only weakness is the lack of involvement of class teachers. They do not attend music lessons and have little input within their classes. Resources for music are very good and used well. Music explorer software is used to support composing on computers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. Attainment in physical education is in line with the nationally expected standard at the end of both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
127. In Year 2, pupils link a range of movements and work collaboratively in groups of three. They improve on their performance by observing and commenting on the work of others and recall, repeat and join their movements well. Pupils are developing an awareness of the importance of control and expression which supports their personal, social, speaking and listening development. Reminders about the attitudes of many who were off task hindered pupils' progress in a Year 1 dance activity. Pupils were very noisy and there were no opportunities for them to observe and comment on what they were doing. Little progress was made in this lesson.
128. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attain good standards in swimming and perform a variety of strokes with developing technique. Pupils in Year 5 recall their previous hockey skills well and improve on their techniques, holding the stick and controlling it correctly when passing the ball to each other. Pupils in Year 6 display satisfactory rugby skills, confidently handling, passing and catching the ball. Some, however, have difficulty in evaluating the performance of their peers constructively. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils' moral and social development is enhanced by working together as a team and playing to rules.
129. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in lessons by practising and improving their performance. Their attitudes and behaviour are generally appropriate across the school and pupils enjoy physical activity. However, attitudes are variable, depending on the way lessons are planned and by the quality of teaching. Pupils in Year 1 take a long time to settle and need constant reminders to stay on task. A core of boys in Year 6 can be dominant and argumentative. Their relationships with each other and as a group with girls are problematic, but the teacher works hard, manages them well, and reinforces the lesson objectives.
130. The quality of teaching is generally good but one unsatisfactory lesson was observed at Key Stage 1. When teaching is good, teachers have great enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject which motivates and inspires pupils to strive for better standards. Planning is thorough, organisation is effective and the content moves lessons along at a good pace. Activities are well selected to build on pupils' previous learning and pupils are given opportunities to evaluate their own and others' performance. When the teaching is unsatisfactory, planning is often superficial, subject knowledge is limited and the management of pupils' behaviour is not as effective as it should be.
131. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and clear guidance for staff and is appropriately revising the policy and scheme of work. The role of the co-ordinator has been developed since the last inspection and a monitoring cycle is identified in the school development plan. Resources are adequate. Overall, the school provides a broad curriculum, enabling pupils to build on their skills as they move through the school. However, provision is not balanced as lessons are not time-tabled efficiently.

Some lessons are too long to hold pupils' attention. Classes have only one lesson of physical education each week, which is insufficient to develop a range of skills and pupils who go swimming have no other physical activity during the term. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in out-of-school clubs including girls and boys football, cricket, netball and cross-country running. The school is successful in competitions with other schools in the borough.