

INSPECTION REPORT

ESSEX PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Newham

Unique reference number: 102763

Acting Headteacher: Mr Richard Lucas

Reporting inspector: Miss Savi Ramnath
21334

Dates of inspection: 11 - 14 February 2002

Inspection number: 195815

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sheridan Road
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Ms Margaret Burrows

Date of previous inspection: 25 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21334	Miss Savi Ramnath	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements What should the school do to improve further?
9883	Mr Brian Silvester	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3143	Mr Robert Allen	Team inspector	Geography Music	
20457	Mr Brian Fletcher	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Physical education	
22028	Mr John Paul	Team inspector	Foundation stage	How well is the school led and managed?
20877	Mr David Pink	Team inspector	English History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28200	Mr Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Design and technology Science	How well are pupils taught?
19861	Mrs Kusum Trikha	Team inspector	English as an additional language Art and design Religious education	The provision for and standards achieved by pupils from traveller backgrounds

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Essex Primary is a very large primary school for pupils aged between three and 11 and with a separate Nursery of 174 children who attend part-time and three who attend full-time. There are currently a thousand pupils on roll with four classes of the same age in each year group. Most pupils live close to the school. Approximately 91 per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic origin and a significant number of these pupils come from homes where English is not their first language. Thirty-nine per cent of these pupils have been identified as needing additional support in English and nearly half are at an early stage in learning to speak English. This is a very high proportion of the pupils on roll. Nearly half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, well above the national average. Twenty per cent of the full-time pupils are on the register of special educational needs, thirteen of whom have statements setting out the specific provision to be made. This is average for schools of this size. On entry to the Reception classes, most children are assessed as being well below the expected levels. Many have had no pre-school experience and a significant number do not speak or understand English well. Twenty four per cent of pupils have refugee status and about two per cent are from the traveller community. In addition, high proportions of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual time. Since the last inspection there has been a significant turnover of staff, including the current acting headteacher, recruitment being a problem. This has adversely affected standards. The school has also become involved in a number of projects, including the Manor Park Achievement Zone initiative, which is designed to help raise standards.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school that is improving in very challenging circumstances. It has many good features and some requiring attention. Teaching is good in English and mathematics and pupils are achieving satisfactorily from a low start. The school is well led and managed and the acting headteacher has made a very good start in implementing changes to address the factors that have led to low standards in the past. All staff work well together and are committed to improving the quality of their teaching. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and this is beginning to improve the rate of progress that pupils make.
- The strong leadership and management of the acting headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant head teachers have focused successfully on raising standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Induction procedures for staff new to the school are excellent.
- Good provision for pupils' moral and social development results in good behaviour, attitudes and relationships.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Good levels of care and guidance are provided for pupils.
- The school promotes a high degree of harmony and friendship between pupils of diverse cultural backgrounds.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education and in foundation subjects¹ that are below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The organisation of the curriculum to ensure that legal requirements are met in all subjects.
- The provision in the Nursery, which does not prepare children well enough for the next stage of learning.
- The quality of the provision for pupils who are at the early stages of English language acquisition.
- The attendance levels which are below national averages.

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

¹ Subjects other than English, mathematics and science

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since then, there has been a period of instability due to changes in the leadership and staffing. Consequently, many pupils experienced considerable disruption and discontinuity in teaching, which led to a sharp fall in standards in English, mathematics and science and in a number of other subjects. Although overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, the school has made good progress in the areas of improvement noted in the last inspection. The school development plan has been reviewed and is used effectively to help guide the school forward. Although the curriculum has been reviewed it remains unsatisfactory. In an effort to raise standards the school appropriately has spent more time on English and mathematics resulting in insufficient time for some subjects of the curriculum. Much work has been undertaken in assessment and the information gained is used well to plan future work in English, mathematics and to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. The management structure has been reviewed and senior managers are fully involved in the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning in some areas of the curriculum. The school now meets legal requirements for sex education and the act of collective worship. Apart from addressing the key issues from the last inspection the school has improved its performance in other areas effectively. The quality of teaching has improved, with a much higher proportion of good or better teaching, and staff development has much improved for all staff. The school now has good leadership and stability in teaching staff. The acting headteacher is aware of the need for further progress and is in a strong position to achieve this. He has the commitment of staff and the support of governors.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point² scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools ³	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E*	E	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	E	E	D	B	
Science	E	E	D	C	

The performance of the pupils in Year 6, in 2001, was below the national average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. When compared with similar schools, results are more favourable and are above average in mathematics, average in science but below average in English. Results in the subjects, taken together, have been consistently below the national average for the past three years. The school's challenging targets were exceeded in 2001 and progress towards achieving the targets for 2002 is good. Test results for seven-year-olds in 2001 were well below the national average in mathematics and very low in reading and writing. When compared with similar schools, results were above average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing. The teachers' assessment in science showed that pupils' performance was well below the national average when compared with all schools. Low standards in science were partly due to the school's focus on literacy and numeracy, pupils' lack of understanding of scientific terms, and their limited English, which affected their performance. Although test results at the end of Year 6 indicated that boys performed slightly better than girls, inspection evidence shows little difference in their performance.

Many children enter the Nursery with poorly developed language and social skills. They make limited progress in the Nursery and good progress in the Reception classes. Despite this, many children do

² Average points score - pupils' levels in National Curriculum tests are converted to points and used to compare a school's performance with schools nationally and with similar schools.

³ Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

not reach the national targets for this age group, except in their creative development. Consequently, many children start Year 1 below the levels expected in the key skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

According to inspection evidence, pupils in Year 6 are achieving below the expected level in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) whilst those in Year 2 are at the level expected in mathematics, below in science and ICT and well below expectations in English. In all other subjects, pupils achieve the expected standards at the end of Years 2 and 6, except in geography where they are below expectations and history where standards are well below expectations. In music, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. In religious education, standards are below the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for both seven and eleven-year-olds. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily and make good progress when support is provided, while those at the early stages of learning English do not always make the necessary progress because their needs are not always met. The school has not yet identified any pupils as gifted or talented. Standards across the school are getting better in English, mathematics and science. This is partly because of the numerous initiatives, which have been put into place to address weaknesses but have yet to have an impact on the standards. However, overall standards are affected by the low attainment on entry in language, numerous staff changes, which disrupted pupils' learning, poor attendance and the high turnover of pupils throughout the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils like coming to school. They listen carefully and have good levels of concentration. Some pupils are passive learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour, including that of the youngest children, is good. Most pupils behave consistently well in lessons, assemblies and around the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, and most respond well to the opportunities they are given. Pupils get on well with the staff and with the other pupils from different backgrounds.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. In spite of satisfactory monitoring, many pupils do not attend school regularly. This affects their learning. Attendance in the Nursery is poor.

Most pupils have good attitudes to learning. They follow established routines well. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions upon others and the respect they show for the feelings of others is good. Relationships between pupils and with adults are good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and has improved significantly since the last inspection. There are more examples of good and very good teaching and far fewer examples of unsatisfactory teaching.

Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is good. This is partly due to the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of science and ICT is unsatisfactory

because pupils are not helped to develop their experimental and investigational skills in science and not all aspects are taught.

The strengths in the teaching, that lead to good learning, include: the way teachers manage pupils; ask questions and share learning intentions with pupils; use resources; and demonstrate good subject knowledge. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the purpose of the lesson is unclear. Planning and tasks take insufficient account of the needs of pupils and the pace of the lessons is slow. As a result, learning is limited. The teaching and support of pupils with special educational needs are well met in lessons when support is provided. The teaching of pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition is unsatisfactory and their needs are not always well met. The needs of the higher-attaining pupils are generally met well in English and mathematics, although the school has not established procedures for identifying and supporting pupils who are talented.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. The curriculum is broad but not well-balanced, as not all aspects of ICT, science and religious education are taught. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage ⁴ does not always take note of the Early Learning Goals in order to ensure that learning is relevant. Satisfactory use is made of the local area and visits to enhance the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Systems and procedures for identifying and placing pupils on the register of special educational needs are good. The quality of support provided when pupils are given extra help outside their class is good. In some lessons, the needs of pupils are not always met when specialist help is not provided.
Provision for pupils from traveller families	Satisfactory provision is made for these pupils, enabling them to have good access to the full curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)	Unsatisfactory. There have been recent improvements, but the lack of training in meeting the needs of these pupils limits the provision. Class teachers, many of whom are from overseas, do not have sufficient understanding of the learning needs of these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory, overall. Good role models and a clear code of behaviour ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of moral responsibilities and behave well. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides a caring, supportive environment for its pupils, with good arrangements to ensure their health and safety. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall, although underdeveloped in some subjects.

The school has been teaching a limited curriculum in some subjects in order to concentrate on raising standards in English mathematics and science. This imbalance has had a negative impact on standards. Good use is made of outside agencies to support pupils with special educational needs. Attendance procedures are satisfactory. Procedures for finding out and recording how well pupils are doing in all subjects are developing. The school has established satisfactory links with parents.

⁴ Foundation Stage is the provision for children aged from three to the end of the Reception Year. QCA (Qualification and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals are sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good - the acting headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers, provides clear and purposeful leadership. They have a clear view of the way ahead and have systems to bring further improvements. Some key subject co-ordinators play their part well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory - governors are very supportive of the headteacher. They have an increasing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but have not ensured that the school offers a balanced curriculum. Their role in monitoring the work of the school is at present dependent on senior managers and staff. Some statutory requirements for the curriculum are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good - the school evaluates its performance well in a development plan and prioritises the areas for improvement. Good use is made of statistical data to target support where it is most needed. Procedures for monitoring development of teaching and learning are underdeveloped in some subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good - the school makes good use of its staffing and very widely spread accommodation. Great care is taken to ensure that all staff are given training to improve their expertise. Educational priorities are supported through good financial management. Best value is sought when making spending decisions.

Staffing is good for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation is inadequate because of the fragmented site, poor quality of the outside play area and mobile classrooms, limited library and ICT facilities, and the lack of a secure outside play area with large apparatus specifically for children who complete the Foundation Stage in the Reception classes. Learning resources are good in a number of subjects, but are unsatisfactory in ICT, religious education and history.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents are pleased with most aspects of the school, but they are especially content that their children;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like school • Behave very well at school • Make good progress <p>They are also pleased that the school;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a positive effect on their children's values and attitudes • expects children to work hard and achieve their best • is well-led and managed 	<p>A significant minority of parents expressed concerns over particular areas, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount and regularity of homework given to children • the range of activities outside lessons • the way the school works with parents • the way pupils' progress is reported

The inspection team endorses the positive views of the parents and their concerns about the range of activities outside lessons. Whilst parental involvement in the life of the school is satisfactory, the school agrees it must explore ways of improving this area. There has been some inconsistency in the implementation of the homework policy and the school is working hard to address this.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The previous inspection in 1997 reported that standards in English, mathematics and science for eleven-year-olds were below national expectations. However, standards for seven-year-olds in English and mathematics were at the level expected nationally and were below expectations in science. In nearly all other subjects, standards were at the level expected at the end of Years 2 and 6, except for history, geography, design and technology and religious education where no judgements were made for pupils at the end of Year 6. In some of these subjects, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Since then, standards have not been maintained or improved and have remained below the levels expected nationally.
2. Since the appointment of the acting headteacher in September 2000, numerous initiatives have been put into place to address these weaknesses and to improve overall standards. These include:
 - the appointment of new and experienced staff
 - induction and support procedures
 - implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and schemes of work in all subjects of the curriculum
 - rigorous monitoring of teaching and particularly teaching in English and mathematics
 - detailed analysis of National Curriculum test results and greater use of statistical data to target support in English and mathematics
 - improved assessment procedures for pupils who join the school other than at the normal time
 - staff training focusing on literacy and numeracy and improved planning in these areas
 - improved attendance
 - extra support given through booster classes, additional literacy support (ALS) and Springboard mathematics for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5
 - setting⁴ of pupils in mathematics
 - involvement in various educational initiatives

These are all beginning to have a beneficial effect on standards, especially English and mathematics, but have not had sufficient time to have an impact on standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 and in other subjects of the curriculum. Nevertheless, teaching has improved across the school and this has contributed to the improving standards. The planning of the curriculum has improved in English and mathematics and teachers are much clearer about what they want pupils to learn in the lessons.

3. There is a very wide range of attainment among children who enter the Nursery. A large proportion of children do not speak or understand English well, because this is not the language used in their homes, and their social skills are underdeveloped. Overall, their attainment on entry is well below that of children of a similar age. The children are given a secure start to school life. They make limited progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in the Reception classes. Despite this, many children do not catch up with nationally identified levels and few reach the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage⁵ in the recommended areas of learning except in their creative development. Consequently, many children begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 at levels lower than expected in the important areas of early reading, writing and mathematical skills.

⁴ Grouping pupils together into classes on the basis of the standards they have reached.

⁵ Foundation Stage is the provision for children aged from three to the end of the Reception Year. QCA (Qualification and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals are sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development

4. Current standards in English and mathematics were judged as showing improvements, although still below the level expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6, except in mathematics at the end of Year 2, which is in line with national expectations. Improvements have taken place because the school has implemented satisfactorily the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and has targeted additional support to help meet the needs of pupils in these subjects. In science and ICT, standards are below expectations and not all aspects of the subjects are taught. In all other subjects, standards are at the level expected nationally for pupils aged seven and eleven, except in geography where they are below expectations and in history where they are well below the standards expected. Low standards are partly because of the school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy, ineffective teaching in the past and limited resources. There was insufficient evidence of work to make secure judgements about standards in music although not all aspects are taught. In religious education, standards do not meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is partly because insufficient time is allocated to the subject. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, there are many factors that adversely affect overall standards and progress:
- a significant number of children start school with low levels of attainment in the important area of language, literacy and communication
 - about one-third of the children who entered the Reception classes have not attended the school's Nursery and a small but significant number has not had any previous Nursery or pre-school experience
 - approximately half the pupils in Years 2 and 6 are at the early stages of English language acquisition
 - ineffective teaching in the past, from which pupils have not had time to fully recover
 - numerous staff changes - 29 new teachers, including seven temporary staff, joined the school in the last two years. Of these, half have been at the school for 2 terms or less and thirteen are overseas trained
 - many pupils join the school at a later stage in their primary education and others leave part-way through the school – 20 per cent of the current Year 2 pupils joined the school in Year 1 and 41 per cent of the current Year 6 joined the school in the juniors
 - a small but significant number of refugees and asylum seekers who join the school at various times have not had the benefit of consistent school experience
 - a third of the pupils in Year 2 and a quarter of the pupils in Year 6 are on the special educational needs register
 - low rates of attendance by a significant number of pupils in all classes, including the Nursery and Reception classes
 - the school's focus on English and mathematics has resulted in below-average standards in other subjects of the curriculum
5. In 2001, the results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-old showed that pupils attained standards that were below the national average in mathematics and science and well below in English when compared with all schools. In comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, results are more favourable and standards are above average in mathematics, average in science and below average in English. Results, when compared with those achieved by the same pupils in the tests they took at the end of Year 2, indicate good progress. This is very good achievement considering that most pupils speak little or no English when they start school. Although overall standards in all three subjects have remained below the national average for the last three years, the overall trend has been in line with the national trend since 1996 and the table below shows the upward trend in standards for eleven-year-olds since 1999. This is clearly an improving school.

Percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above in Year 6

	English	Mathematics	Science
1999	38	52	53
2000	59	59	68
2001	66	71	79

6. In 2001, national test results showed that seven-year-olds attained standards that were very low (in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally) in reading and writing and below the national average in mathematics. When compared with schools with a similar pupil intake, results are better. Pupils' performance was above average in mathematics well below average in reading

and writing. There are no science tests for this age group but the teachers' own assessments showed standards to be well below the national average when compared with all schools and below average when compared with similar schools. Below average standards are partly due to the school's focus on literacy and numeracy, pupils' lack of understanding of scientific terms and their limited English, which affected their performance. When the end of Year 2 test results in reading, writing and mathematics for 2001 are compared with the previous three years, they show that results have remained at a low level. However, the table below shows the school's improving standards in reading, mathematics and science since 1999. Writing continues to be an area of focus for the school.

Percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above in Year 2

	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science
1999	59	67	70	66
2000	57	58	73	60
2001	65	58	94	73

7. Test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 indicate that boys attain marginally better standards than girls, which is against the national trends. This is partly due to the composition of the cohort, which had a higher percentage of more able boys than in previous years. However, in the work seen during the inspection there were no significant differences in their performance.
8. National Curriculum tests results are analysed and the information used well to set targets in English and mathematics. Plans are in hand to make greater use of statistical data in science. The school has set challenging but realistic targets for the pupils' performance in the English and mathematics tests in 2002. These are likely to be achieved and will help to close the gap between standards in the school and those in schools nationally. Targets were exceeded in 2001.
9. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a particularly beneficial effect throughout the school, as shown in the improving standards. This is evident in the current standards of the present Year 3, which are better than those of the Year 4 pupils at the beginning of the academic year. The additional literacy support (ALS) for lower-achieving pupils is also having a positive impact on standards. However, the withdrawal of pupils for additional support during these sessions is not sufficiently co-ordinated to ensure that pupils gain from these sessions as intended. Although pupils are introduced to appropriate vocabulary for the study of subjects, such as science and ICT, opportunities are missed to extend their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' numeracy skills are applied and developed satisfactorily.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the classroom and good and sometimes very good progress in withdrawal groups for literacy and numeracy. The progress these pupils make owes much to the prompt identification of problems and the sensitive support given these pupils. The quality of the Individual Education Plans (IEP's) is good. IEP's are accessible and easy to read, which enables classroom teachers and teacher assistants to plan the appropriate support programme. Pupils' individual targets are carefully set to match need. They are realistic and measurable. Pupils' progress towards their achievement is closely monitored. There are recorded gains in pupils' reading, writing and spelling and in numeracy. Standards attained by pupils for whom English is an additional language can be gauged from the whole-school figure, since a high percentage of pupils have English as an additional language. However, the progress made by pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and receiving targeted support is not sufficiently monitored. Also, the needs of these pupils are not always met because many teachers are not fully aware of their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Nearly all children in Nursery and Reception classes settle well and respond to their teachers promptly, sitting and listening when it is required of them. They behave sensibly and are usually kind to one another. When they first come to school, a few children are upset when they are left. Teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants are, however, skilful in dealing with this situation and, nearly always, these children soon settle into the routines of the day and become

more confident. Nearly all children join in the activities that are set up for them and enjoy learning.

12. Pupils are generally keen to attend the school and play a full part in its life. They have a good attitude to their work. Pupils listen carefully to their teacher, show interest in their work and have good levels of concentration. They are keen to answer questions and usually raise their hands before doing so. Pupils take a pride in their work, some of which is well-displayed around the school. There is no variation in the attitude of the various groups in the school. Some pupils are quiet, passive, learners and do not join in the whole-class part of lessons unless asked to do so by their teachers. In a few instances, where teaching is less effective pupils' attitudes are not as good as they might be. The pupils become restless, lose concentration and learning is affected.
13. The behaviour of the pupils, in class and around the school, is good. Pupils are friendly, welcoming and polite. Parents are generally happy with the standard of behaviour achieved in the school. Pupils value the property, values and beliefs of others. Bullying or racial incidents are infrequent and are usually verbal in nature. When they occur, speedy action is taken. The pupils concerned are interviewed, parents are contacted and proper records are kept. There were no exclusions in the last school year and there were none recorded at the time of the previous inspection.
14. Relationships, between pupils and between pupils and adults, are good. There is a wide range of ethnic groups in the school and they generally work and play together well. They are willing to share, take turns and show respect when for example, a pupil is reading her work out to the class. Teachers have a caring relationship with the pupils.
15. Pupils of all ages work and play together well. Older pupils take a caring approach to the younger ones. They work well in pairs and in groups: for example, pupils put up the physical education equipment together and consider others when using it. Parents are very pleased at the way pupils support each other. Teachers have a very caring relationship with the pupils.
16. The personal development of the pupils is satisfactory. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they have to take responsibility, but these opportunities need to be extended. Pupils have duties in their classes and some pupils act as monitors at lunch-time. A group of pupils produce the school magazine and some Year 5 pupils and some Nursery children produced murals for the Nursery. Under a 'Buddy' system, pupils are supportive of new entrants to the school. Life skills and self-esteem education is provided for all groups, especially pupils with special educational needs. Pupils show initiative by fund-raising for charities like the Blue Peter Appeal and UNICEF.
17. Attendance in 2000/01 was 91.4 per cent, which is well below the national average and therefore unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence in 2000/01 was worse than the national average. The attendance in 2001/02, to the time of the inspection, was 93 per cent. In the week of the inspection, attendance was 94 per cent, which equates to 60 pupils being absent each day. Attendance in the Nursery is not compulsory, but in the academic year up to February 2002 the attendance was 83 per cent, which is poor. In the inspection week as many as ten out of a class of 30 were absent. The main reasons for non-attendance are illness, extended holidays in term-time, religious holidays and some condoned absences by parents. There is a high turnover of pupils, 47 per cent in the last year, and this adversely affects the attendance figures because it sometimes takes time for a pupil to be officially taken off the register after they have left. Most pupils are punctual, with only a few arriving late. The unsatisfactory attendance has an adverse impact on the attainment and learning of the pupils concerned.
18. The previous inspection report stated that attitudes were positive, behaviour was a strength, relationships were good and that personal development was underdeveloped. It also stated that there was a lack of playground equipment and markings, and this has still not been remedied. Attendance at the last inspection was satisfactory and it is now unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although this is similar to the findings of the last inspection the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school has been reduced considerably, from twenty per cent to seven per cent, and the proportion of good and very good lessons has improved significantly from six per cent to sixty-four per cent. Since then, there has been a considerable turnover of staff. A high percentage of teachers have been at the school for two terms or less and many are overseas trained. Many of the factors that contributed to unsatisfactory teaching in the past are no longer significant weaknesses. The many initiatives mentioned earlier in the report are responsible for the improving standards. Teachers are hard-working and conscientious. They let their pupils know that they want them to do well. The climate in most lessons is one where pupils work hard and where relationships are good.
20. Good teaching in English, mathematics and art and design has a positive impact on pupils' learning. In the lessons seen during the inspection the teaching of ICT was good. However, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory because pupils have too few opportunities to use computers to enhance their learning and work is not always planned to meet the needs of pupils. The impact of science teaching is unsatisfactory, overall, because pupils are not helped to develop their experimental and investigative skills sufficiently and work is not always well-matched to their needs. In history and religious education, teaching is unsatisfactory because the required curriculum is not covered and work is not always sufficiently challenging. No judgement is made about the quality of teaching in music throughout the school and in design and technology in Years 1 and 2, as too few lessons were seen during the inspection.
21. In the last inspection, the teaching of children under five years old was satisfactory, but included a significant proportion that was weak. During this inspection, the overall quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes was also satisfactory, with an element that was unsatisfactory in the Nursery. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed in the Reception classes. Furthermore, no teaching was judged to be 'weak' so, overall, the quality of teaching has improved. In the best practice adults use available time well, sitting with groups of children talking to them continuously, and engaging their interest. This conversation extended their language well. In the Nursery, teaching was not as well-thought-out. For example, unsatisfactory teaching occurred when planning of activities was ineffective and resulted in weaknesses in children's pace of learning. Overall, not enough to use is made of stepping stones and Early Learning Goals to ensure that skills develop systematically from the Nursery and onwards from Reception classes. Too many occasions were observed when teachers were not directly working with children, neither leading an activity nor teaching. As a result, valuable opportunities to extend and enrich vocabulary were missed and progress was slower than it might otherwise have been.
22. The teaching of English and mathematics has benefited from the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Most teachers provide a good balance between whole-class and group activities and guided reading is good. However, teachers are not always sufficiently flexible in their use of the structure. For example, in a few lessons, pupils sit for too long and lessons are not always sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. Most teachers provide a good balance between whole-class and group activities and make effective use of the shared reading texts. Discussions at the end of lessons are often used well to review the main points of the lesson and teachers encourage pupils to contribute by asking questions such as, "How can we make our writing more interesting and exciting?" The teaching of numeracy is good. In Year 6, pupils are grouped by attainment for the numeracy sessions and this helps teachers to provide appropriate support and challenge. There is a suitable focus on the development of mental arithmetic at the start of lessons with regular, challenging, quick-fire questioning at the start of lessons. This helps to maintain pupils' interest and enables them to consolidate previous learning. Most teachers encourage pupils to explain their methods of finding solutions to problems and this is successful in helping pupils look for alternative ways of problem-solving.
23. Teachers demonstrate satisfactory subject knowledge in most areas of the curriculum. However, subject knowledge is good in English and mathematics, which have been the main focus for improvement. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher reinforced pupils' learning about symmetry by using the proper mathematical language. Consequently,

pupils were proud to use it when discussing shapes. Teachers question confidently and help pupils to focus on their objectives. In a Year 6 lesson on plants, pupils consolidated their knowledge of the parts of tulips both by being questioned and by having the chance to ask their own questions. Subject knowledge, overall, is satisfactory but is less secure in history, where teachers have very recently been recruited from overseas, and is developing in information and communication technology.

24. Competent teaching of basic skills is a good feature of a number of lessons, especially in art and design, English and mathematics. Teachers explain new ideas successfully and often provide good demonstrations and examples. In physical education, for example, teachers showed pupils what was necessary to develop better 'dodging movements' whilst keeping the body under control. However, pupils do not learn to apply research skills with increasing independence in science and history. Most teachers prepare pupils for their learning well by telling them the lesson's objectives in a way that engages their attention.
25. Planning has improved since the last inspection. The school has recently adopted published curricula for subjects other than English and mathematics, and this has assisted the planning process and ensured an effective whole-school approach. Teachers plan in year teams, and this ensures that pupils in parallel classes enjoy the same learning objectives. This common approach has led to more consistent teaching across each year group. However, the planning for subjects other than English and mathematics is less detailed, the learning objectives and specific skills are not consistently identified, and there is insufficient differentiation either to take account of the needs of the less able or to offer extension and challenge for the most able pupils. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language and of pupils with special educational needs are not routinely included in the lesson planning.
26. Teachers' expectations vary but are satisfactory, overall. In English and mathematics expectations are high. Here, and in some other lessons, teachers probe pupils' understanding with well-targeted questions. They make them think rather than relying on worksheets. They also expect pupils to work at a reasonable pace, often setting them a time-limit to get work done. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, the teacher ensured that pace in the discussion about *'The Prodigal Son'* was always brisk. This gave all pupils the chance to contribute sensitive ideas on how the father, the brothers and the returning son felt when he returned. Where expectations are low, teachers do not ensure that pupils are included in discussions, which is especially important to develop their speaking and listening.
27. Teachers' methods are satisfactory. Teachers make good use of pupils' own ideas, thereby rewarding initiative. In one lesson, on extended writing, the teacher made good use of pupils to demonstrate to the others what they needed to learn. Teachers recognise that class teaching is sometimes more efficient than setting up a process of discovery or holding a question and answer session. This maintained the pace of learning in a Year 6, lesson on sacred texts, for example. The teacher kept the pupils' focus on the broader picture by not getting bogged down with detail. Where factual information was useful, such as the background to *'The Good Samaritan'* he told them what they needed to know.
28. Most teachers manage pupils well and the positive relationships between teachers and pupils have a significant effect on pupils' attitudes to work and the progress they make. Pupils know they are valued and respond well to this. Teachers are both firm and caring. Their introductions and explanations hold pupils' attention well. They have a good rapport with pupils, which makes them want to learn.
29. Teachers generally use time well and, by good preparation and organisation, ensure that lessons proceed at a good pace. This keeps pupils interested in their work and results in good learning. Occasionally, when the pace dips, particularly in the middle section of lessons or when activities do not meet the needs of pupils, many begin to lose interest in the tasks set and the quality of learning is diminished. Resources are well-prepared. For example, in a Year 4 science lesson on switches, the teacher ensured that all pupils were included in the opportunity to handle circuits for themselves by having everything necessary ready and working. Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs.

30. Daily checking on pupils' progress is satisfactory, although there are weaknesses in some of the marking in many subjects. Where it is rigorous, pupils learn better and respond by improving their work because they receive specific guidance. Where it is less thorough, written comments have little depth and there is inconsistency in presentation and accuracy. Teachers' use of homework is satisfactory, either focusing on specific skills, especially in literacy and numeracy, or extending classwork. The inspection findings did not match the parental concerns, although the school recognises that there is some inconsistency in applying the policy.
31. The specialist teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These teachers have expert knowledge of a wide range of special needs and give precise, targeted support. Teachers plan in detail for individual need and carefully assess the progress of each pupil. Teachers have very positive attitudes and this markedly increases the self-esteem of the pupils, who are eager to learn and to show what they can do. Teachers assess progress very carefully, and steadily help pupils to build up basic skills. In the classroom, pupils are well-integrated but the planning for their needs is less precise and, consequently, pupils do not always receive the highly focused support they need. Teachers' assistants provide at least satisfactory support but are not always deployed where the need is greatest.
32. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are not always well taught. This is because teachers and support staff do not have a clear enough understanding of the learning needs of these pupils. However, where teaching is most effective these pupils are well supported in their speaking and listening skills. Teachers use a range of effective strategies such as questioning, modelling language and reviewing what has been learnt to develop pupils' English competence so that they take part in the full curriculum. However, this is not always the case and the needs of these pupils are not always met. This is because many teachers do not have the necessary skills and expertise to meet the needs of these pupils.
33. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the teacher's subject knowledge is not secure and tasks are not challenging enough. As a result, pupils do not make the gains in learning of which they are capable.

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

34. The overall provision for the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements for the National Curriculum with the overall coverage of subjects. However, there are areas for improvement in the provision. Too little time is allocated to music and religious education to ensure coherent development in these subjects and not all aspects of history geography and ICT are taught. The extensive withdrawal of pupils from lessons for special educational needs as well as additional classes in English and mathematics means that some pupils do not get their full curriculum entitlement. The school has made the decision to allocate a relatively large amount of time to the teaching of English and mathematics. This is appropriate given the needs of pupils in the school. However, better use could be made of this time by making English as an additional language provision more central to the whole school and by developing language and mathematical skills through other subjects of the curriculum.
35. The improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection is good. The curriculum has improved, considering that the expectations of the quality of curricular provision nationally have increased. It has improved significantly within the past two years. The total amount of teaching time has increased for all pupils and this is now close to the majority of schools. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been introduced successfully. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage matches national requirements and schemes of work are in now place for all subjects. The time allocation for science and physical education is appropriate. There is an effective, programme for teaching physical social and health education, including sex and drugs education.
36. All areas of learning that are laid down in *The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage* are taught in the Nursery and Reception classes. What is taught contains a sound balance between these areas. However, planning does not fully ensure that what is taught is relevant to all children, all

the time. The main reason is that long-term plans do not place sufficient emphasis on the stepping-stones⁶ in *The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage* and how they help to move children towards the Early Learning Goals. As a result, these simple steps that provide guidance on the order and development of young children's learning are not used enough to maintain steady progress. Skills, knowledge and understanding are, therefore, not acquired consistently and systematically.

37. The opportunities for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good. There is an extensive programme of support activities for pupils and this mainly involves withdrawing pupils for lessons. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), who are learning at the early stages, is unsatisfactory. Because of the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs and EAL, greater efforts must be made to assist all teachers in supporting and providing for these pupils in lessons within the classroom.
38. English and mathematics account for over half of the curriculum time. This is an appropriate decision made by the school. However, greater depth and understanding could be fostered by planning for the use of the skills learnt in these subjects in other subjects of the curriculum. This would create a broader curriculum, foster research skills and develop conceptual understanding, especially for pupils who are conversant in English but lack the higher level skills. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) is improving across the curriculum. In history, in Year 4, pupils are expected to search Internet websites. In English, in Year 6, pupils extend their learning of grammar through practising exercises on the computer. Insufficient numbers of computers hamper the development of ICT. The library has an insufficient stock of books to enable all pupils, in a school of this size, to develop their research skills.
39. The provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory. There are very few lunch-time and after-school activities for the pupils. However, improvements have been made in supporting the curriculum through visits and visiting speakers. Year 6 pupils visited France last year. A termly book fair and a weekly book club are held to promote reading.
40. Provision for special educational needs is especially good in literacy and numeracy. There are also withdrawal groups for speech and language, self-esteem and life skills, that help to address the complex needs of the pupils in this school. For numeracy, pupils in Year 6 are arranged in teaching groups according to prior attainment, and this is a significant factor in their progress. Good resources, centrally located and easily accessible, have a strong impact upon the quality of learning. Computer programs are used satisfactorily to support learning.
41. The access to the curriculum for all pupils is satisfactory. It is a socially inclusive school, which manages to raise social and personal esteem for all its pupils. It creates a harmonious community of pupils from very different backgrounds and experiences. Most of the pupils are learning English as an additional language and there is a significant number of pupils with a range of special educational needs. In order to improve equality of opportunity further a closer monitoring of the extra provision for special educational needs and EAL pupils would ensure that these pupils do not miss their curriculum entitlement when they are withdrawn for special lessons. Pupils needing additional classes to improve their English and mathematics often receive an alternative provision rather than an extra one. Again, closer monitoring of this provision would improve the entitlement of pupils. Many of the initiatives aimed at improving the quality of the curriculum are new and, as yet, have not had a chance to have an impact on the standards of pupils' attainment.
42. There are satisfactory links with the local community and organisations to enhance the curriculum. The school is part of an Educational Action Zone and through this has received support for refugee pupils. It is part of an Excellence in Cities initiative. Pupils make visits to local places of worship as part of their religious education course. Relationships with its main feeder secondary school are satisfactory and involve linked projects. Because of the excellent provision for training and support of its own teachers, it provides a good facility for the training of new teachers.

⁶ Descriptions of how children should make progress, contained in *The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage*

43. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. There is satisfactory provision for spiritual development through subjects such as science, as well as through assemblies. Collective worship takes place in a calm and respectful atmosphere and offers pupils' opportunities to say their own prayers and reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. In assemblies, spiritual development is enhanced by lighting a candle to enable pupils to reflect on themes such as '*homelessness*' and '*togetherness*'. The school now meets the statutory requirement of a daily act of collective worship, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Displays in classrooms and in shared areas celebrate pupils' achievements in various areas of the curriculum, raise their self-esteem and acknowledge their contribution to school life. Although limited by time, pupils study a range of faiths in religious education and examine successfully artefacts such as the Qur'an. Awe and wonder are experienced by Year 1 pupils, looking at the effects of a magnet on metal.
44. There is good provision for pupils' moral development. Moral issues are regularly dealt with, both in and out of the classroom. Through circle-time, issues such as bullying, honesty and classroom rules are discussed and reinforced. This is reflected in the strong work ethos of the school, as school rules are well known and generally obeyed. Teachers use rewards and sanctions effectively to promote good behaviour. Through caring relationships with pupils, all adults promote values of honesty, fairness and truthfulness. Some elements of distinguishing between right and wrong come from stories from the Bible, for example, the story of '*The Prodigal Son*'.
45. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to work well together in class in many subjects, such as art and design, literacy and science, and play amicably in the playground. Relationships between pupils, and all staff involved in the life of the school bring a strong sense of community and shared ideals and are important factors in securing pupils' good attitudes to behaviour and self-discipline. This is reinforced through infant assembly, for example, on '*Who owns the school?*' Pupils understand through discussion with teachers that they all own the school and have responsibilities to fulfil. Pupils are encouraged from the beginning to take responsibility for their belonging and equipment and to share in putting things away in their proper place. In the infants there are purposeful opportunities to take responsibility, such as helping with the registers, holding the door to enable their peers and adults to pass. In addition to this, junior pupils willingly take on the responsibility of scraping plates in the dining-hall, sorting out books in book-corners and being teachers' helper in the classroom. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Stories are used effectively to teach pupils about care, concern and empathy. For example, in Year 6, pupils learn the value of being a good citizen and doing good to others through the story of *The Good Samaritan*. Pupils value opinions and are polite and courteous with adults and with one another.
46. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good and has improved since the last inspection. The understanding and appreciation of the multicultural nature of society has been fostered through displays, for example, on the life style of the Travellers' community. There are good opportunities for pupils to appreciate the diversity of home languages, such as Panjabi and Gujarati, through signs, and writings by pupils. For example, in Year 6, pupils use their home language to design a poster to warn their peers about drugs. In assembly, music by Bengali artists is played in the background to create an ethos for contemplation. In classrooms, dual-text books and dual language tapes, reflecting the cultural heritage of pupils, are made available to pupils. The school's visit to the Royal Festival Hall to watch performances has further enhanced the cultural development of pupils. Moreover, discussion with pupils has revealed that Year 6 pupils enjoyed their trip to France last year as it gave them an opportunity to experience and value cultural diversity. However, the headteacher has acknowledged that the school could do even more to raise all pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures in Britain, and he plans to address this.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and give them good support and guidance. The school has a health and safety policy and a member of staff has health and safety responsibilities. The local education authority (LEA) completes safety checks termly on the physical education and

playground equipment and annually on the buildings and grounds. The school has identified some health and safety concerns, and these are in the process of being tackled. The school has four fully trained first aiders. The nurse and the dentist visit the school to carry out checks. The school has a trained counsellor and makes good use of the LEA's Child and Family Consultation Service and the Education Psychology Service.

48. The school has an appropriate child protection policy. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is responsible for its implementation. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SENCO, Reception teacher and learning support teacher have received training. All staff have copies of the policy and new staff are informed of child protection procedures and processes as part of their induction. Teaching assistants are given child protection training as part of their LEA training. Plans are in place for all other adults in the school to have child protection training.
49. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The personal development of the pupils is monitored by their class teachers and other members of staff and reference is made to it in the pupils' annual reports. The Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are an important part of the support for personal development of the pupils with special educational needs (SEN). No formal records are kept for non-special educational needs pupils.
50. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Attendance is monitored by the office staff, the headteacher and class teachers. A weekly, monthly and termly review of attendance is completed. If there are any concerns, letters are sent out to parents. If this is not successful a further letter is sent and on each occasion a printout of the pupil's actual attendance is included. The educational welfare officer (EWO) visits weekly, makes home visits and reviews cases causing concern. The school's two learning mentors follow up non-attendance issues. The school awards certificates for full attendance by pupils but there are no class awards or awards for improved attendance. The school does not have a system of contacting parents on the first day of absence, if the pupil is away without any known reason.
51. The schools' procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. There is a behaviour policy, which contains a suitable range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour. Pupils contribute to class rules, and the school's rules and consequences are well understood by the pupils. The behaviour rules are prominently displayed in the classrooms. The behaviour policy is generally consistently applied across the school.
52. In the previous inspection report it stated that pupils were well known to staff and that there were good procedures for recording and monitoring behaviour, bullying and first aid, and this is still the case.
53. The schools procedures for assessment were a key issue in the report on the last inspection. While there was some improvement in the period immediately following that inspection, the progress made towards more effective measures of assessment to support pupils' achievement during the last 12-18 months has been particularly noticeable. There is room for further development, however, and progress in the wider use of assessment has still to be made. In the assessment of progress in English and mathematics a powerful battery of tests is in place. Apart from the national statutory tests and the base-line tests on entry, the school applies externally provided tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as other tests focused on literacy and on reading. The setting of individual targets for pupils is in its early stages, and will be introduced progressively across the curriculum, where they do not already exist beyond English and mathematics, alongside formal assessment procedures at the end of each unit of work. Assessment is strongly led by a teacher on secondment to the school from the LEA. He has developed a very useful database in order to track pupils' progress, and this can be used, for example, to analyse the achievement of particular groups so that targeted teaching strategies may be applied. The lack of such information up to the very recent past has been a significant weakness. However, with the clarity of vision about the school's needs that now exists, and the involvement and understanding of all co-ordinators in formal and informal procedures, the use of assessment to promote pupils'

achievement is developing strongly towards being securely in place. It is good evidence of the way in which the school has already improved and is likely to continue to do so.

54. In the Nursery and Reception classes, records of what children achieve are kept in each child's file. These files build broad pictures of what they understand and can do. However, what is recorded is sometimes very anecdotal and, when this is the case, is of limited use in future planning. The early years' co-ordinator is aware of this and plans exist to use a system that is more closely based on the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Parents are generally supportive of the school and the links between the school and parents have a sound impact on the pupils' learning. The quality of the information provided is satisfactory. Regular newsletters and information letters are sent out. Use is made of the local Refugee Education Team to translate standard letters into the first language of the various ethnic groups in the school. Staff and older pupils also translate for parents. Use is made of the school's notice boards to provide information for parents. Information meetings are held for parents, on curriculum matters like Standard Assessment Tests (SAT's), and there has been a workshop for parents on homework. Parents are given information on how to help their child with mathematics, English and reading. Parents who are new to the school are informed satisfactorily about the life of the school. Not all the required statutory information is supplied in the prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents.
56. The parents' views of the school are satisfactory. The school's links with its parents have a sound impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning, at school and at home, is satisfactory. The school has a home/school agreement and about half the parents have signed it. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the school through the homework book and reading diary. The school makes good use of the LEA's Child and Family Consultation Service and also their Independent Parent Support Service.
57. In the parents' questionnaire, prior to the inspection, the parents' view of the school was satisfactory. There were, however, some areas of concern. A significant minority of parents did not think that there was an interesting range of extra-curricular activities, and the inspection evidence supports this view. A significant minority of parents did not feel well-informed as to how their children were getting on. The parents have two opportunities a year to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. The pupils' annual reports tell parents what their child knows, understands and can do, in all subjects, but do not generally explain how they can improve. Parents are sent regularly the results of their child's tests. The inspection evidence shows that the information supplied on progress is satisfactory. A significant minority of parents did not think that their child had the right amount of homework. The school has a homework policy but the provision of homework across the school is inconsistent. Overall, the homework provided for pupils is satisfactory. A significant minority of parents did not think that the school works closely with them. The school recognises that there is a need to improve links with parents and to build up closer relationships.
58. In the Nursery and Reception classes generally, good relationships exist between parents and teachers. The parents of all children who join the Nursery are invited to meet teachers individually to discuss how their child's entry to the school can be as smooth as possible. Both formal and informal opportunities to talk about children's progress, and arrangements to come into class to work with them if necessary, are made. Adequate and appropriate information about progress is also passed on.
59. Although, few parents help in the classroom the school now employs many of the parent volunteers. There is no Parent-Teacher Association but some fund-raising for charity does take place and parents do support this. Parents are invited to special events, like religious celebrations. Parents are supportive of the school's book fairs, which provide resources for the school. Parents and pupils are involved in the 'Kick Start' project after school.
60. In the previous inspection report it stated that the partnership with parents was satisfactory, and this is still the case.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. At the time of its 1997 inspection, the school's aims and values guided its work well, but did not contain a strong enough focus on raising standards. Few teachers were aware of the school's data about attainment or had strategies for improving it. Financial management was incoherent, as the school had no governors' committee to help with setting and monitoring the budget and developmental planning was not linked closely enough with financial planning. These weaknesses led to issues about the school's management structure, delegation of responsibilities, co-ordination of what was taught and the uses of assessment to check how pupils were progressing. After the inspection, the school made a start on improving these features, but frequent staff changes, including several at the level of senior management, impeded this development considerably. However, since their appointments, the present acting headteacher and his permanent deputy head have introduced a renewed sense of purpose. Strong and successful emphasis have been placed on improving pupils' attitudes to the school, the quality of teaching and introducing the full recommendations of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
62. The acting headteacher and key staff provide good leadership and management. The acting headteacher, supported by his deputy, communicates a particularly clear vision of the school's future direction. It includes raising standards by ensuring that what is taught matches requirements in the National Curriculum and improving the quality of teaching. A good start has already been made on these aims, so they are now more satisfactorily reflected in the work of the school. For example, many improvements in planning the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been made, including the introduction of additional literacy and numeracy groups for individual pupils who need it. Furthermore, training of staff and careful monitoring and support of teaching have contributed to improvements in the school's literacy and numeracy strategies. For this reason, teaching and what is taught now matches the national recommendations closely. As a result, standards are beginning to rise. The school's management structure has been redesigned and a more effective system has been introduced that offers much better chains of communication between senior staff, subject co-ordinators and classroom teachers. This structure includes a tier of senior management that consists of the deputy head and three assistant heads, to which the acting headteacher can delegate key responsibilities with confidence. For example, the school's programme of in-service training for teachers and systems for monitoring the curriculum are dealt with at this level, providing good links between these two important aspects. In the context of this very large school, cohesive delegation of this kind is beginning to prove effective, identifying weaknesses and then removing them with appropriate training. Subject co-ordinators are increasingly effective as training improves awareness of what the role entails and the co-ordination of special educational needs is good, leading to good provision.
63. The school's governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. Governors are generally clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses and understand that standards can be raised further. They are very supportive of the acting headteacher and senior staff, sharing their vision of further improvement. A more effective structure of committees has been established, including a finance committee. This committee monitors expenditure closely and its chair, who works in the school's office, has a good knowledge of the current financial position. Governors have recently been more successful in attracting and appointing permanent teachers to vacant posts. However, there is less certainty about how to check whether decisions have the effects that are intended. In this respect, they are too dependent on the school's senior staff for information, rather than seeking it for themselves. Similarly, preparation of their annual report to parents is too dependent on the acting headteacher. The latest report does not contain information about how the school has improved since its last inspection, which is a statutory requirement.
64. Special educational needs provision fully reflects national practice. The knowledge, commitment and organisational skills of the special educational needs teachers are the foundation for good provision. The development plan for special educational needs takes full account of the need for closer contact to be made between class teachers, learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school tries hard to involve parents at every stage of the process. Many parents attend the annual review. The quality of information for parents is good. At secondary transfer, contact is made with SEN departments in order to pass on information

and establish continuity of care. Provision for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language is not as well managed and is in need of improvement. A detailed action plan has been written, but this only becomes effective in April 2002 when the budget is devolved to the school. At present there is no one with the focused overview that this important area needs.

65. Good systems for monitoring and improving standards, teaching and what is taught have been introduced recently. The acting headteacher, key co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science and officers of the local authority have been involved in observing lessons. Feedback and advice on what might be improved is given to teachers after observations have taken place. This approach has clearly been effective, as the overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. However, the role of subject co-ordinators in other areas remains under-developed. Informally, staff support their colleagues with advice and are aware of some aspects of the subjects from discussions, looking at pupils' work and displays, but they have not yet had time to work alongside them. The school's strategy for performance management is developing satisfactorily, and action to set and meet targets for improvement has also been good. For example, systems for the assessment of pupils' knowledge and progress are used well to adapt planning in English and mathematics, and are beginning to improve in science and other subjects of the curriculum. Use of assessment in this way was a key issue in the last inspection. The school identified provision for children in the Foundation Stage as a particular target for improvement. Inspection findings support this aim. Action to implement changes has now begun. A co-ordinator for the early years has been appointed. She has begun to work co-operatively with teachers in the Reception classes and, as a result, teaching methods and planning in this age group have clearly improved. She has good ideas to refine planning further, ensuring better use and understanding of the stepping-stones in the Nursery, as recommended in *The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage*. Other appropriate targets for improvement include spreading some of the good assessment practice in the core subjects, to others across the curriculum, and continuing to improve the use of information and communication technology. Identification of weaknesses, coupled with strong action to correct them successfully, is steadily improving morale and recruitment and retention of staff looks more robust. As a result, overall commitment and capacity to continue with further development is now strong at all staff levels. In common with many schools in inner cities, staff mobility is high and several new teachers join it each year. Senior staff have responded positively to this feature. They have introduced excellent systems to induct new personnel. These systems include information about the composition of classes and pupils; prompt training in the teaching of literacy and numeracy; monitoring of teaching and early support to correct any identified weaknesses. In the case of newly qualified teachers, all these features apply as well as systems of mentoring and guidance that are locally and nationally recommended. Such clear procedures to ensure that new teachers are effective as soon as they arrive are potentially useful in the training of student teachers.
66. Resources are managed effectively, including funding. Decisions are made based on the use of information about the school's future needs and governors are informed of such decision-making. For example, money was set aside to improve opportunities for training teaching assistants and for increasing their availability when class teachers identified a shortage of this type of support. Administrative staff are efficient and contribute much to the smooth running of the school. Electronic records of what is ordered, and of deliveries and payments, are kept up-to-date. These systems provide relevant, up-to-date financial information for staff and governors. Best value is sought by comparing prices in different catalogues; seeking quotations for repairs or maintenance works, and taking relevant professional advice about the quality of proposed purchases. Computerised systems for checking pupils' attendance are also in place. The school does not yet possess a computer suite, which restricts the uses of new technology to support what is taught and its effectiveness as a tool for research. Funds provided for specific purposes are recorded under separate budget headings and are spent legitimately, including what is provided for pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those from backgrounds with a travelling culture. This and last year's budgets have been set with levels of expenditure higher than the school's income. However, there is no difficulty, as the difference can be met from surpluses accrued in previous years and sources of new funding that have not yet been received.

67. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally adequate. The school has a full complement of teaching staff, and co-ordinators take responsibility for subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Teachers are allocated to classes for particular reasons, which is another example of good management. In Year 6, for instance, owing to the importance of the National Curriculum tests to both pupils and the school, teachers were deployed for their effectiveness with this age group and for their teamwork, supporting each other with planning and shared expertise. Learning support staff match pupils' learning needs satisfactorily. Owing to the high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language, teaching assistants are employed to support in this area. However, their effectiveness is often dependent on their own personal skills, rather than expert information about how to support pupils with little English. Other ancillary assistants are available to support pupils with special educational needs effectively. Indoor accommodation is generally adequate for teaching the National Curriculum, although computer facilities and the library are inadequate, and accommodation for music is unsatisfactory. Exterior accommodation, however, is unsatisfactory in several respects. The surface of the playgrounds is cracked and pitted in many places, which restricts pupils' play, as well as reducing usefulness for physical education, including running, small ball games and other sports. Lack of marking on these areas is another factor that reduces the effectiveness of their use. The mobile classrooms are old and are some distance from the main building and if it is raining pupils get wet each time they attend assembly, the hall, for physical education lessons or when they need to use the toilets. Exterior areas for children in the Foundation Stage are also inadequate. The Reception classes lack an area of their own and the Nursery has inadequate apparatus for climbing and balancing, and little shaded space. Availability and general quality of learning resources are generally sound, although shortages of historical artefacts limit pupils' understanding of how to use first-hand evidence to gain knowledge of the past. Similar shortages were found in geography. Resources are generally well kept, and stored either in classrooms, or central cupboards where they are available to all staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

68. The school has a number of important weaknesses that need to be overcome as a matter of urgency. In their work to raise standards and improve the quality of education at the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now
- (1) Continue to improve standards in English, mathematics and science by
 - providing regular planned opportunities for pupils to speak in structured situations, to develop their research skills and to write extensively
 - ensuring that opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are fully utilised
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in everyday situations and to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems.
 - offering more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their scientific skills more effectively
[Paragraphs 20,98, 99, 110 and 114]
 - (2) Raise standards in information and communication technology by
 - developing teachers' confidence and skills through in-service
 - providing the necessary resources to teach ICT effectively
 - increasing the quality and range of opportunities for pupils to use ICT across the curriculum
 - developing procedures to assess and record pupils' attainment and to ensure that the information gained is used consistently to assist planning to meet the needs of all pupils
[Paragraphs 20, 103, 112, 116, 126, 133, 138, and 143]
 - (3) Review the organisation of the curriculum to ensure that all subjects can be taught in sufficient depth and that statutory requirements are met for religious education, ICT, history, geography and music
[Paragraphs 4, 20, 128, 134, 139, 147 and 153]

- (4) Improve the provision for pupils who need additional support in learning to speak English as an additional language by
- training all staff in the teaching of pupils with English as an additional language
 - ensuring that the curriculum meets their needs
 - monitoring the progress of the targeted pupils more rigorously
[Paragraphs 10, 32, 37, 71 – 73, 106 and 108]
- (5) Raise standards in the Foundation Stage by
- ensuring that all teachers understand the use and implications of the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals in planning activities and lessons
 - improving strategic planning of the areas of learning, using the stepping stones and Early Learning Goals to ensure that skills are built progressively from the Nursery and onwards through the Reception classes
 - improving assessment so that it is firmly based on the stepping-stones and can be used to formulate individual targets and programmes for all children
 - continuing to improve provision of resources, classroom layout and outside apparatus for physical development for both Nursery and Reception classes
[Paragraphs 3, 21, 36 and 79 - 92]
- (6) Increase the consistency of the quality of teaching by
- continuing to develop assessment procedures and ensuring that information gathered from assessment is used consistently to assist planning to meet the needs of all pupils
 - where there is a need, improving teachers' expertise and confidence through appropriate in-service training
 - ensuring that teachers' short-term plans identify more precisely what pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and those who are not fully fluent in English, are expected to learn and do by the end of the session
 - extending the monitoring of teaching and learning practices so that all subject leaders gain a better understanding of their area of responsibility
[Paragraphs 21, 23, 25, 53, 65, 111, 122, 126, 137, 138 and 159]
- (7) Continue to take further measures to improve pupils' attendance
[Paragraphs 17 and 50]

In addition to the key issues the governors should consider the following additional less significant issues for inclusion in the action for

- ensure the consistency in the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work so that comments encourage pupils and inform them about ways to improve their work *[Paragraphs 30 and 116]*
- continuing to seek ways to improve the quality of the accommodation, including the outside play area which has a negative impact on learning *[Paragraphs 67 and 101]*
- raise pupils awareness of the diversity of cultures in Britain *[Paragraph 46]*

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

69. The school has sufficient provision through the single regeneration budget and ethnic minority achievement grant for pupils who are at various stages of acquiring English. However, support staff are not always used effectively in raising the standards of achievement of the pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition.
70. Standards of work for EAL pupils seen are below the national expectations. Pupils who are at early stages of learning English are often withdrawn from lessons in order to learn English. This excludes them from lessons in which they can listen to good role models of English and develop an understanding of the subject. It also results in unsatisfactory progress in these subjects.

Others who can access the curriculum-related tasks make slow progress in subjects like religious education where in-class additional support by teaching assistants is limited to pupils new to English.

71. Throughout the school, teaching assistants are not always used effectively. They were observed in supervising pupils listening to the teacher during whole-class sessions. No lessons were observed in which the teaching assistants prepared pupils for literacy and numeracy sessions by giving them, for instance, the topic-related words, and explaining the technical vocabulary like 'gnat' by using sentences. In some cases, the small group activities do not often relate to the overall objectives of the lesson. For example, in a Year 3 literacy session the teaching assistant was observed playing word-matching games totally unrelated to the mainstream activity of changing tenses.
72. Although the majority of pupils work hard, the targeting of specific groups who need additional language and curriculum support is unsatisfactory. Teaching assistants have not yet been trained to support pupils other than those who are at an early stage of learning English. Thus, they cannot raise the standards of achievement of pupils in various subjects by blocking in-class support for those who can access the curriculum but still need to be extended in their language. Although teaching assistants carry out an assessment of all EAL pupils' language stages, these assessments are not updated consistently.
73. The EAL co-ordinator has satisfactory knowledge of the strategies that enhance language learning of ethnic minority pupils in the school. She has been co-ordinating this aspect for one term and has introduced assessment procedures for all EAL learners. She has put together a comprehensive action plan outlining priorities, such as language development across the curriculum, and equipping mainstream teachers with a range of strategies and materials appropriate for accessing the curriculum. Mainstream teachers' planning of individual lessons does not take into account their needs, for example, through revised grouping and materials related to the language needs of pupils. Moreover, provision for EAL pupils is currently being reviewed by the LEA. The ethnic minority achievement grant (EMAG) has not been devolved to the school and the LEA deploys support to the school. This period of transition has an impact on the efficiency with which EAL is co-ordinated in the school.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS FROM TRAVELLER BACKGROUNDS

74. There is satisfactory provision for 17 pupils who are from Irish and Roma-Gypsie background, and are currently attending school. Pupils are integrated into the mainstream and receive targeted in-class support from two teaching assistants and a teacher funded through the Traveller Support Grant.
75. The majority of pupils from traveller backgrounds are well settled in the school community and work well with their peers in all subjects. For example, in a Year 4 art lesson, one pupil from traveller background fully participated in a small group activity aimed at evaluating the photographs taken in the previous week. Pupils have individual assessment plans, which inform planning for support for their diverse needs. For example, two pupils in Years 4 and 5 were working on the target of understanding and using number bonds to 20. Despite interrupted schooling, and although the majority of traveller pupils are at a level below the national expectations in most subjects, they make satisfactory progress as the work is differentiated to meet their individual needs.
76. The teacher for traveller pupils fosters home-school links on issues related to admission, attendance and access to education. She works closely with the Roma Support Service if interpreters in languages such as Polish are needed to increase the accessibility of information for parents who speak English as an additional language. She uses artefacts and materials from the support service to raise the awareness of pupils and staff regarding the ethnic background and life style of pupils from the traveller background. She also works closely with mainstream teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator in monitoring and reviewing the level of support for traveller pupils.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	123
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	27	49	36	9	0	0
Percentage	2	22	40	29	7	0	0

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

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)	87	739
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	335

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	200

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	865

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	229
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	206

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	58	55	113

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	33	57
	Girls	37	34	49
	Total	73	67	106
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (57)	59 (58)	94 (73)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	49	45
	Girls	37	43	38
	Total	72	92	83
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	64 (62)	81 (75)	73 (60)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	64	55	119

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	38	45	50
	Girls	36	35	39
	Total	74	80	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (59)	67 (59)	75 (68)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	40	44
	Girls	20	31	35
	Total	43	71	79
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	36 (52)	60 (54)	66 (66)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	34
Black – African heritage	76
Black – other	2
Indian	170
Pakistani	186
Bangladeshi	138
Chinese	0
White	66
Any other minority ethnic group	41

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	39
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.1
Average class size	29.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	49
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1,338

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	567
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
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	£
Total income	1,883,342
Total expenditure	1,891,428
Expenditure per pupil	2,123
Balance brought forward from previous year	57,598
Balance carried forward to next year	49,512

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	34
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	29

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	7
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	923
Number of questionnaires returned	145

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	30	6	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	41	4	6	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	35	8	6	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	37	14	15	3
The teaching is good.	46	39	5	5	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	26	21	9	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	38	6	7	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	28	7	6	6
The school works closely with parents.	42	33	13	10	2
The school is well led and managed.	46	31	5	8	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	33	8	7	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	21	22	12	10

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

77. Currently, 138 children are on the Nursery's roll, attending for either a morning or an afternoon session in one of three classrooms. Another 118 are split into four full-time Reception classes. Children transfer into Reception classes in either September or January. However, several children attend erratically and records show that many miss several days. Clearly, when children are not at school they cannot take advantage of what is offered, their learning is adversely affected, and progress is slower than it might otherwise have been.
78. When children enter the Nursery, a high proportion come from homes where English is not spoken as the main language. Where English is the main language, often a restricted vocabulary and very short utterances typify children's speech patterns. In communication, language and literacy, which is judged in terms of English, attainment is therefore well below what is usually found. These weaknesses, understandably, affect attainment in other areas of learning. Overall, when they enter the Nursery, attainment is therefore well below what is usually found.
79. In the last inspection, the teaching of children under five years old was satisfactory but included a significant proportion that was weak. During this inspection, the overall quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes was also satisfactory, with an element that was unsatisfactory in the Nursery. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed in Reception classes. Furthermore, no teaching was judged to be 'weak' so, overall, the quality has improved. However, teaching is of much better quality in Reception classes than in the Nursery. This is because work is better match and needs of children. The recently appointed co-ordinator for the early years teaches a Reception class herself and is therefore directly involved in joint planning for all the Reception classes. As a result, planning is much clearer and is influencing teaching strongly in this age group.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. In both Nursery and Reception classes, teachers demonstrate good care of children, ensuring that they feel safe and secure. Routines are established in the classrooms, so they know what is expected of them and how to behave. As a result, children demonstrate similar attitudes towards each other and are kind, co-operative and helpful. In these aspects, they are likely to be close to the relevant Early Learning Goals by the time they begin the National Curriculum. However, especially in the Nursery, children do not collaborate in their work as often as is usually found. This weakness is partly due to children's restricted skills in speaking English, and partly because teachers do not plan tasks that are dependent on collaboration for success often enough. As a result, insufficient occasions arise where children need to share their experiences to carry out activities, show each other what they are doing, and adapt their actions accordingly. For this reason, children are not progressing fast enough towards Early Learning Goals that relate to social skills of this kind. These weaknesses are far less apparent in Reception classes, because teachers organise and supervise many different tasks that require taking turns, sharing an outcome, or playing a game with set rules. However, teachers missed the opportunity for children to change into a kit for physical activities in the hall. Opportunities to teach and emphasise hygienic reasons for changing were therefore also missed.
81. By the time they begin the National Curriculum, nearly all children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in terms of their behaviour, emotional development and understanding of what is right and wrong. Good teaching of these aspects contributes well to this learning. However, weaknesses in planning that take insufficient account of the stepping-stones mean that children are unlikely to match the goals that are associated with their social development.

Communication, language and literacy

82. For varied reasons, several children enter the Nursery with low communication skills, often using one-word answers to questions or short, colloquial statements. Other children, for whom

English is an additional language, have a very limited vocabulary in English. Overall, attainment on entry to the Nursery is therefore well below what is usually found. Overall, children make good progress in relation to these low starting points. However, teaching is often better in the Reception classes than in the Nursery. As a result, the rate at which children learn is slow when they first come to school, but speeds up later on when they join Reception classes. However, because some children enter a Reception class in September, whereas others wait until January, this difference in the quality of learning results in inconsistent progress. Nevertheless, support given by teaching assistants is usually good, and children with English as an additional language make progress at rates similar to other children of their age. In the Nursery, insufficient activities that require collaboration mean that progress in children's spoken language is not targeted enough and this feature leads to unsatisfactory teaching. Nevertheless, during part of a lesson that focused on sounds, the teacher used good methods that resulted in thorough learning of phonic skills. Even in this lesson, however, some opportunities were missed to extend children's vocabulary by questioning them about particular words and teaching them more precise alternatives to enrich their vocabulary.

83. In Reception classes, children are beginning to show an interest in books and stories. They listen well when teachers read to them. Good teaching methods are employed, adapted from the National Literacy Strategy. Higher-attaining children explain what characters do in these stories. In a good lesson, children were observed writing their own names on an exterior paved area, using water and brushes. This work provided a good opportunity for physical development, requiring children to practise their hand and eye co-ordination to succeed. Letters were usually neat, although not always accurately formed from the correct starting point. The teacher was clearly aware of this type of deficiency, and similar inaccuracies were being corrected in children's books. They concentrated well, especially when a teaching assistant offered appropriate praise, encouraging them to keep trying. In a group that was led by the teacher, learning was of good quality. Very good questioning helped children to acquire knowledge and skills that might be useful in a fruiterer's shop. At first, some of them found this activity very demanding, but by the end of the session, they wrote the names of several fruits in their books. Although often not correct, spelling and writing were recognisable.
84. When they write, children are beginning to show awareness of letters and a few higher attainers write simple sentences. Others make marks successfully on paper when prompted to do so. Despite good teaching, many remain at an earlier stage of development, and writing consequently requires much adult support. By the end of the Reception year, most are unlikely to reach the standards described in the Early Learning Goals. Results of base-line assessments support this judgement.

Mathematical development

85. Children's attainment in mathematical development is well below what is normally found in Nursery classes and below this in Reception classes. In the Nursery, for example, when using blocks to count, several children were accurate only as far as three. Although others went much further than this, they did not always say a number for each object, sometimes missing one out. A few higher-attaining children counted accurately to five, or occasionally ten. A nursery nurse supervised children on the computer very well. With her support, these children demonstrated that they could match one shape with another accurately and thereby dress an image on the screen. Generally, though, activities are not sufficiently adapted to the needs of individuals and planning takes insufficient account of recommended guidance. As a result, progress is not as rapid as it might otherwise be.
86. Good teaching was observed in Reception classes, where mathematical development is taught using methods adapted from the National Numeracy Strategy. This teaching helps to familiarise children with what will follow when they begin the National Curriculum. Nonetheless, overall attainment is still likely to be below what is described in the Early Learning Goals by the time children enter Year 1. For example, in a very good lesson, children were beginning to relate numbers up to ten in a game of "numerals bingo" and, although they matched the required number with what was indicated on a spinner, they did not always name it correctly. Higher-attaining children understand simple bonds, such as four and one, or three and one. However, very few were able to go beyond five. Good teaching was observed in another lesson. In the area outside, children drew dots on the ground with water, matching the numeral on a card. A

Nursery nurse supported them well with a lot of good specific language, helping them to learn basic skills successfully. Children are beginning to know the names of simple regular shapes and sort objects successfully, according to colour. Resources for mathematical development are not always good enough to support planned learning. In an otherwise good lesson, for example, a small group were confused when plastic blocks did not properly fit the trays that were provided to count them into.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. Most children enter Nursery classes with a very basic general knowledge. They learn about the immediate environment around the school. They use construction kits to make road and rail layouts, learning about different types of transport, such as trains and lorries. In a water tray, children learn about materials that float, pointing out that wood floats and that their toy boats are all made of plastic. However, children's records did not clearly show how many of them had acquired this knowledge, and who had not. On entering Reception, most children are beginning to understand ideas such as "this country" and "places a long way away", although very few children could give the names of any other countries when asked. In a good lesson, skills of observation were developed well, when good open-ended questioning drew out children's ideas about the senses of smell, touch, sight and taste, teaching them about different flavours and textures. They concentrated well and good learning resulted. Conversely, this questioning did not ascertain whether all children in the group knew the names of the fruits that they observed, so individuals' requirements were not consistently met.
88. Information and communication technology was seen in use in all classes. Children are developing skills in using a mouse particularly well. In the Nursery, for example, good support helped children to make a lot of progress in "clicking" accurately on an area of the screen. Children's use of programs that required "clicking" and "dragging" were seen in the Reception classes, demonstrating good learning of these basic skills.
89. During the inspection, teaching of this aspect was satisfactory in the Nursery and good in Reception classes. Generally, resources are used well, so children gain in understanding of the world and how things work. Expectations of what children can achieve are higher in the Reception classes than in the Nursery, which accounts for a higher rate of progress in this age group. A weakness in assessment and planning is that the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals are not sufficiently used to determine each child's progress and what they should do next.

Physical development

90. Resources to develop children's running, climbing, balancing and similar skills are unsatisfactory. The Reception classes have no outside area that includes climbing-frames and apparatus with safer surfacing. Regular sessions are timetabled for these activities in one of the school's halls, but access is restricted and the equipment is not designed to meet the specific needs of this age group. Although the Nursery has its own secure space, the quality of climbing apparatus is poor. It is low, as the surface of the playground is unsafe for anything higher, which restricts opportunities for climbing. Teaching of this area of learning is hampered by these deficiencies and in turn restricts children's development of basic skills. As a result, attainment is below what is described in the Early Learning Goals.
91. In the Nursery, children were observed using wheeled and pedalled toys, which offered them good opportunities to exercise and develop their awareness of others' needs, steering in and out of spaces and avoiding collisions. However, it was unclear how these activities were planned and recorded to match the stepping-stones and ensure progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
92. Two lessons that involved Reception classes were observed in the hall. Teaching was satisfactory in one and unsatisfactory in the other. In the unsatisfactory teaching, children became over-excited and, as a result, responded poorly to the tasks that were demanded of them, which adversely affected the development of their skills. This feature was not apparent in the satisfactory teaching. However, what was taught contained little adaptation to the needs of different individuals in the class. All of them were expected to perform the same tasks, with little

reference to their previous learning, which slowed the progress of those children who found the tasks difficult. Conversely, the pace of this lesson was good and children enjoyed the activities. They tried hard to succeed and many did, so weaknesses in the rate of learning were generally outweighed by strengths.

93. In both Nursery and Reception classes, children use a range of small tools, crayons, pencils, malleable materials and other resources that help them to develop control over hand and finger movements. Creative activities are planned that require children to look and observe carefully and to co-ordinate their movements to reproduce what they see. Teaching of these types of physical development is satisfactory.

Creative development

94. In creative development, by the time they enter Year 1, most children reach what is expected in the Early Learning Goals. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, teaching is satisfactory. It is sometimes good in Reception classes, and planning ensures a range of opportunities to paint, draw and explore texture and shape. Children also have opportunities for three-dimensional art, using, for example, malleable materials, recycled materials and card. They use these materials well to create pictures of their own. In a good lesson, children used different coloured papers to create a collage that represented different fruits. They chose colours sensibly to represent their ideas.
95. In the Nursery, a similar range of materials is available and children develop their skills satisfactorily. Opportunities are provided for children to clap and count rhythms and to sing simple rhyming songs. In the Reception classes, several number songs were used well, showing that children can keep together confidently and hold a simple tune.

ENGLISH

96. Standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 6 are below the level expected nationally. In reading and writing the performance of Year 2 pupils is well below national expectations. In the national tests, in 2001, standards for pupils at the age of eleven, were well below the national average but below when compared with similar schools. Pupils by the age of seven were very much below national expectations in reading and writing. The results are below national averages because of features already mentioned in the report, including a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, high mobility of pupils and high teacher turnover. The attainment of pupils is improving and last year the school achieved its target of 65 per cent of pupils reaching the expected Level 4. An even higher target has been set for 2002. The trend since 1997 indicates an overall improvement in standards by the ages of seven and eleven, although there are significant variations in results year by year. Improvements are due to the quality of the teaching achieved through excellent support for new teachers and to the extra support targeted to pupils who are close to the national expectations in Years 5 and 6. The achievement made by pupils is good.
97. Improvement since the last inspect has been good. The school has changed significantly since the last inspection and many improvements have been made in the last two years. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully and this, combined with good support given to teachers, has contributed to the improving standards. Teaching of reading and writing is consistent across all age groups and pupils now build upon skills they have learnt. The teaching of phonics has enable pupils to develop their reading effectively. Grammar and punctuation are now part of the literacy scheme and so are taught within a context. The quality and quantity of book resources have improved to support teaching and learning. Pupils are now assessed regularly and the information gained is well used to raise the expectations for teachers and their pupils. Pupils make good progress in lessons, although the changes are, as yet, too recent to have had a significant impact on the achievements of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6.
98. A priority of the school is to raise standards in English. This has resulted in concentration of English in the literacy hour, together with other timetabled lessons for speaking and listening, extended writing, handwriting and reading. In consequence, English accounts for over 30 per

cent of the timetable. While this is appropriate, given the learning needs of the pupils, it has resulted in English not being delivered through other subjects such as history and religious education. An improvement in overall curriculum planning, which highlights the strategies for teaching English as an additional language, and using English skills to enhance other areas of the curriculum would improve the breadth and quality of the overall curriculum and extend the use of English more effectively. Although there has been an improvement in the use of computers to help pupils with spelling and grammar, and some aspects of word processing, pupils still have too few opportunities to draft and edit their work directly on to the computer.

99. Standards of pupils' speaking and listening are satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills from Year 1, through the questioning by teachers. However the quality of the provision for drama is limited and greater opportunities for role-play and small group work would enhance the learning of the pupils. In Year 1, pupils are encouraged to describe the features of characters in a story. They do this initially by matching with the descriptions made by the teacher; they then, independently, describe physical features and then, with teachers prompting, begin to describe qualities of the characters. In Year 2, pupils are expected to voice words that contain similar letter sounds so that these become more familiar. They are assisted in extending their vocabulary by considering the spiritual aspects of the reading text shared by the class. Pupils in Year 3 are encouraged to sound words with silent letters, so that they become more familiar with their use, while in Year 4 they are encouraged to read poems out loud and to substitute alternative words to keep the rhymes. Some Year 5 pupils are hesitant speakers but listen intently. Overall, teacher makes good use of questioning to explore features of the shared text, and again this is supported through grammar work. However, significant numbers of pupils are passive listeners and do not respond orally.
100. The standard of pupils' writing is below expectations by the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, standard is well below expectations. Handwriting is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Most pupils can write in a joined and legible style by Year 4. Spelling is below expectations, but many of the words spelt incorrectly are those to be expected of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. In Year 1, pupils form their letters, with help, satisfactorily. They write simple words accurately. Higher-attaining pupils write simple sentences using capital letters and full stops. In Year 2, pupils write short poems, with guidance, but extended writing shows insufficient understanding of sentence structure and spelling. Higher-attaining pupils have greater confidence in sentence structure and their presentation is clear. Spelling has weaknesses amongst pupils who are learning English as a second language. In Year 3, pupils write simple sentences and begin to write short narratives, concentrating on the beginning and the end of the work. They begin to write poems based on their experiences. Pupils in Year 3, are more confident in English than many older pupils in Years 4 to 6. This is an indication that changes made in the school recently are having an impact. In Year 5, pupils write with a weak sentence structure with the incorrect spelling of simple everyday words. Descriptive writing lacks sufficient vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 are not secure about the use of speech marks and the use of paragraphs. Lower-attaining pupils do not join their letters, spell inconsistently, and their writing often lacks sense. The higher-attaining pupils make good use of grammar and punctuation, such as speech marks, and the semi-colon. They write stories in genre - horror stories - which are beginning to show pace and characterisation.
101. The standard of reading is below expectations by Year 6 and well below the level expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils are hesitant readers, although they are familiar with common words and begin to build new words phonetically. Mistakes are usually made with word endings. Higher-attaining pupils read with expression. They are fluent with simple texts and tackle unfamiliar words with confidence. They begin to describe characters in a story and predict possible actions. By Year 6, pupils build words phonetically and read with some expression. Their choice of text is below the level that would be expected for the age group. Higher-attaining pupils read confidently and self-correct; words are read for meaning and they understand the main point of a story. They are beginning to express a preference for particular authors. Pupils use a dictionary with confidence from Year 3, and most are aware of the use of an index and table of contents to locate information. Their skills of research are limited. The library resources, which are insufficient, do not help this. Most pupils do not use the public library.

102. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. It is good across all years of the school. With most teachers new to the school in the past two years, and with many from overseas the successful teaching has been achieved because of the excellent provisions for monitoring and supporting these teachers. In some lessons the teaching was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and this helps the pupils to gain confidence. Good classroom management ensures that lessons are calm and productive and a good variety of activities help the pupils to maintain their interest in their learning. Lessons are well planned, using the three-part guidance of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers generally have high expectations of all pupils and this is reflected in the good quality of marking and pupils' work, which is consistent across the school. Pupils have targets to meet, which helps them to focus on what they need to achieve. Assessment procedures are used to raise expectations but there is too little information about pupils in the short term to inform day-to-day planning. Targets are too long-term, and pupils need to understand more clearly how they can improve their work. Considering that most pupils are learning English as an additional language, the strategies for assisting such pupils could be better used by all teachers, especially to address those pupils who are fluent in basic English but need to develop a richness in their language.
103. The management of English is very good. Assessments are made regularly and these are used to increase the expectations of teachers and pupils. The support for teachers, many of whom are from overseas, in teaching the National Literacy Strategy is excellent. The overall resourcing of English is good, but the library provision is unsatisfactory. Project loans are available from the local public library, but the lack of an adequate school library limits the ability of pupils to exercise their research skills and to have a place to reflect quietly upon their learning. The use of ICT to enhance the subject is underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICS

104. Since the time of the previous inspection, attainment in mathematics has remained below the national average for pupils at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. However, the results of the national tests of 2001 show a dramatic improvement for pupils in Year 2 and a steady rise in attainment for pupils in Year 6. These results, seen in the context of a school where the number of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language is well above the national average, indicate sustained improvement over the past two years. The broad trend for pupils in both groups is now upward. The inspection findings confirm that significant gains have been made in the past year. The environment in which mathematics is now taught is conducive to further improvement. New teachers are deployed at maximum strength across the curriculum and are given high quality induction on their arrival and strong support thereafter.
105. In the national tests of 2001, all but six pupils in Year 2 attained the national standard of Level 2, and a good proportion of pupils, although below the national average, attained the higher Level 3. Overall, the results were marginally below the national average, but significantly better than the previous year. Notably, the results are above the average of similar schools.
106. The inspection found that pupils in Year 2, based upon lesson observations, looking at previous work and conversations with pupils, are maintaining recent improvements. Their attainment is now in line with national expectations. Pupils are achieving well and making good progress in all aspects of the mathematics curriculum, which is broad and ambitiously taught. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the class teacher and by the learning support assistant, although the type of support provided is not always carefully defined in the lesson plan. A small group of pupils, withdrawn from class, makes very good progress in acquiring the basic skills of numeracy. This group includes pupils with EAL, who receive excellent support. In the classroom, the needs of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as additional language are not always met. The school is aware of this difficulty and is developing strategies to address it.
107. Attainment of pupils in Year 6 has steadily improved over the past two years. In the national tests of 2001, over two-thirds of the pupils attained the national standard of Level 4, which is close to the national average. One-fifth of the pupils attained the higher Level 5, compared with

25 per cent nationally. Overall, the results are marginally below the national average but substantially better than the previous year. The results are better than the average for similar schools, which indicates that the improvement observed in earlier years has been maintained. A critical factor in raising standards is the recent improvement in the attendance rate across the school and stability in staffing.

108. The inspection found that pupils in Year 6 are continuing to make significant gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics, but found also, considerable gaps in pupils' ability to use their numeracy skills to investigate and solve problems. Recent improvements are due to the improved quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Overall, pupils are achieving satisfactorily and making sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those with EAL make satisfactory progress, although their improvement targets needs to be carefully defined and shared between the class teacher and the support staff. Overall, attainment is marginally below the national average but rising steadily. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are grouped on the basis of prior attainment and this allows pupils to work and progress at the optimum rate. Extra classes are provided for small groups of pupils where individual support is given. This has a significant effect on attainment and enhances pupils' self-esteem and confidence that, in turn, increases knowledge and understanding.
109. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in counting, ordering, adding and subtracting numbers. Pupils confirm their knowledge of number in board games, where the competitive element sharpens progress. Many pupils know the number bonds for 2, 5 and 10, and apply what they know, for example, to telling the time and working out the change from 50 pence and one pound. Pupils also recognise and name a wide range of flat and solid shapes and count corners, edges and sides accurately. They know how to estimate simple lengths and compare them with actual measurement in centimetres. Pupils learn how to collect information and, for example, they draw simple bar charts to illustrate the favourite crisp flavours of the class. Pupils in Year 2 make very good progress in learning about symmetry, using mirrors to confirm their observations. This is evidence that an ambitious teaching programme stimulates interest and improves learning.
110. The rate of progress slows down a little in Years 3 to 6, when pupils encounter the more demanding aspects of mathematics. Pupils progress well in gaining further understanding of number, but need more practice in applying their knowledge to problem-solving and investigative work. The harder aspects of mathematics, such as coordinate geometry and probability, for example, are not given enough coverage, and opportunities to apply number skills to more challenging tasks are lost. Pupils understand patterns in number and can usually find the next term in a number sequence. They find it more difficult to describe the sequence because they lack fluency in mathematical vocabulary. Teachers uniformly address this problem by the clear display of related vocabulary that they expect pupils to use. Pupils know about equivalent fractions and work easily with halves and quarters, but they find thirds and fifths harder to manipulate. Pupils correctly name the types of angle. One enterprising Year 5 group investigated the angle sum of a quadrilateral, while another measured angles correct to the nearest degree. This is further evidence that teachers are beginning to challenge their pupils more. Pupils in Year 6 know how to read information, such as bus timetables and television schedules, although the use of the 24-hour clock needs more practice. Pupils know how to illustrate information on bar charts, straight-line graphs and pie charts. One group illustrates the rainfall of three cities by using a three-dimensional bar chart on the computer. Pupils work well in all activities but are often let down by insecure knowledge of basic arithmetic. Teachers work hard to address this deficiency by brisk, mental and oral sessions at the beginning of each lesson.
111. The quality of teaching across the school is good. It is never less than satisfactory. Of all the lessons seen, over three-quarters were good or better, one fifth were very good and one lesson was excellent. In this lesson, planning was of a very high quality and all the necessary resources were immediately available. The lesson moved at a swift pace. High quality questioning was used to confirm learning. Good emphasis was placed on the related vocabulary and pupils were expected to use it. The pupils remained on task throughout the lesson and enjoyed the work. They were eager to learn. The quality of planning, strongly dependent upon the National Numeracy Strategy, is good in all lessons although there is a need to set out in precise detail

what support is to be given to pupils of different abilities including those with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English. Teachers share lesson objectives with the class, so that pupils know what is expected of them. Questioning is used well and sometimes results in pupils making exciting discoveries, for example, the pattern in a set of numbers. Occasionally, the introduction is too long and pupils become restless, particularly when they sit on the carpet for long periods. The presentation of work, particularly for older pupils, needs greater care, which in turn will promote greater understanding and better preparation for written tests. Classes are firmly but sympathetically managed and relationships are very good. This provides a safe and secure environment in which pupils learn and progress. This is a marked improvement upon previous years.

112. Mathematics is very well organised and led. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of what is required for standards to improve and the ability to communicate this to her colleagues. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is rigorous and has led to the sharing of good practice and, consequently, to improved standards. Resources are good and are well used, although computers are not used enough to enhance learning and promote understanding. Teachers work hard to provide a stimulating environment. The quality of the displays in the classrooms and around the school is good. A wealth of statistical data about pupil performance is available and is well used to plan pupils' work, leading to improved continuity in learning. The environment in which mathematics is taught is very positive. The teachers work well together and are mutually supportive. They share a renewed commitment to improvement and, jointly, they have the capacity to succeed in their task.

SCIENCE

113. By the age of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment is below national expectations. These findings reflect the 2001 National Curriculum test results. Below average standards are partly because of the school's appropriate concentration on numeracy and literacy. Three additional factors slowing progress in developing standards are the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, a similarly high proportion of pupils for whom English is a second language, and the high degree of pupil mobility. However, improvements are needed in teaching. Pupils' performance has continued to improve over the past two years, after a considerable decline, to being well below average. It has been restored to the standards achieved at the last inspection. Moreover, standards are in line with those for schools with a similar intake.
114. By the age of seven, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are below national expectations. Many accurately name the major parts of a bird's body, and those of simple plants, and know their basic needs. Pupils compare different creatures but many are unclear about how animals live in different habitats. Although pupils name a variety of materials confidently many cannot explain what happens to chocolate when it cools down after being melted or to rubber bands when they are released after stretching. Most know what makes an electric circuit work, but few understand switches. Pupils' skills in experimenting and writing reports are underdeveloped.
115. By the age of eleven, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are still below average. They know more about the parts of plants, but most do not fully understand their functions. This also applies to food chains, adaptation, and the beneficial role of some micro-organisms. Pupils' knowledge about human development, including puberty, and the effects of alcohol, smoking and drugs is not secure. Their knowledge of materials and their properties is better. Pupils' explain the processes of sieving, filtering and dissolving, and how evaporation and condensation apply to the water cycle. The more able explain conductivity. Pupils' learning is again underdeveloped in the area of physical processes. They explain the apparent movement of the sun and its effect on shadow lengths. They identify forces acting on a boat, and when friction is occurring. However, they have little knowledge of the planetary motions linked to a day, month or year, and cannot explain how to change the pitch on musical instruments. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that they have not been taught all aspects of the National Curriculum in science. Consequently, the majority of pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6 do not have the breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of pupils for their age. Many experience difficulties in investigating and presenting their findings in drawing, charts and writing.

116. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory, with some good and unsatisfactory teaching. However, teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' earlier work reveal that, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory because not all aspects are fully covered. This limits the progress pupils make. In the best practice, organisation of classes is good so that pupils learn by working in groups with similar needs. Classroom assistants generally provide strong additional support, although there are some inconsistencies. This was helpful, for example, where some pupils found it hard to make switches and needed to discuss their purpose. Teachers always ensure that the necessary resources are to hand. In one lesson, to determine the reasons for variations in the size of craters on the moon, pupils settled down quickly and enthusiastically to their experiments because everything was ready for them. Most teachers provide a clear introduction and carefully revise previous learning. They have a good rapport with pupils and support well where necessary. Where teaching is most effective, teachers ensure that all pupils are included in question and answer sessions, and plan so that the level of work matches their abilities. However, teachers' plans are frequently inadequate to include all pupils' needs. This often results in many pupils concentrating less on science and more on filling worksheets. Moreover, classroom assistants have to spend more time in supporting pupils so that they complete their work, and less on teaching them what would help them learn. Teachers' expectations of pupils' thinking, writing and independence are often low. Consequently, they do not learn the skills of structured investigation so that they can use them for their own purposes. Moreover, they make little use of computers. In marking pupils' work, teachers' expectations of accuracy, presentation and correction are variable.
117. The school is being successful in gradually raising standards through its overall commitment to improving the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator recognises the need for more systematic checking of teaching and learning, greater use of assessment information and ICT to enhance learning. Resources are good and provide a sound basis for scientific investigation on which appropriately the school places a high priority. The school has the capacity to continue the improvements it has already made.

ART AND DESIGN

118. Standards in art and design are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Despite numerous staff changes, below average attendance and a high percentage of pupils entering and leaving the school during term-time, standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
119. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good understanding of the use of texture, tone and shape. In the infants pupils' understanding of colour is enhanced by the use of red and yellow tissue paper to make the display of the sun related to the story of '*The Very Hungry Caterpillar*'. In the juniors, pupils use line and shading while drawing the three-dimensional shape of a globe for the school logo, while designing footwear and completing observational drawings of a fruit bowl. In Year 4 they enjoy evaluating photographs by applying their knowledge and understanding of lighting, reflection and angles. Pupils in Year 5 skilfully design and make a tapestry based on the story of '*Jason and the Argonauts*'. They choose appropriate textiles, like calico and hessian, to depict various scenes from the story.
120. Throughout the school, art and design is used well to enhance learning in all areas of the curriculum. For example, a visit to the theatre to see the pantomime '*Aladdin*' is used effectively as stimulus for whole-school display of drawings of the characters and artefacts in the story. In mathematics, religious education and history, pupils take great pride in illustrating their written responses. For example, in Years 3 to 6, pupils use curved lines to make different types of Greek borders.
121. Although lessons were observed only in the juniors, the scrutiny of work and displays around the school show that, overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers create opportunities for pupils to explore a range of starting points for practical work. For example, the inspiration to make sculptures in Year 3 came from scanning the Internet. Similarly, Year 4 pupils created a storyboard showing various scenes in the park with their peers before using a digital camera to take photographs, which are then analysed to learn about angles, lighting and reflection. Good classroom organisation enables pupils both to work well on their own and

collaboratively with their peers, ensuring that all pupils obtain the experience of designing, making and evaluating their work. Although pupils with special needs are withdrawn from some art lessons, teachers have high expectations of all pupils and make learning exciting for all.

122. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has been in post for one term and in this short time a policy and guidelines for display have been drafted and close links developed with other co-ordinators to develop the subject across the curriculum. Moreover, her secure knowledge has ensured that breadth and balance is achieved in the coverage of art and design in Years 3 to 6. However, the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment is underdeveloped. The co-ordinator is aware of these areas of development and has identified these priorities for action. The use of accommodation is satisfactory, with new sinks in some classrooms ensuring efficient use of time in using water, for example, when painting. Resources are adequate, well used and easily accessible.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Three lessons in Year 4 were observed and it is therefore not possible to make a secure judgement on teaching and learning in the infants. However, pupils' work was examined, and discussions were held with pupils from Year 6. Conclusions reached are on the basis of this work, discussion with the co-ordinator and talking to pupils. Standards are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven. This maintains the standards seen at the last inspection.
124. Pupils in Year 2, make well-decorated glove puppets using a variety of methods to join materials. They plan their designs carefully before carrying out their work. However, they rarely use measurement in their designs. Pupils in Year 6 make attractive slippers, using suitable materials, and decorate them. They, too, have developed the processes of designing and making with more detailed drawings and specifications. They improve their work by discussing their qualities.
125. Teaching is satisfactory in the juniors. In Year 5, for example, pupils have planned and made working musical instruments. The lessons observed in Year 4 were good or very good. These involved pupils in making good links with science by using their knowledge of circuits to design and make a torch. Resources were well prepared in order to include all pupils in these processes, and they were expected to contribute to discussions that evaluated the final products. Teachers do not make enough use of literacy, numeracy or computers to develop learning.
126. All other aspects of design and technology are making a satisfactory contribution to standards of attainment. The co-ordinator recognises the need to develop assessment and the use of ICT to enhance learning. Resources are adequate to enable the scheme of work to be implemented.

GEOGRAPHY

127. In the last inspection, standards were described as in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and 2. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement about standards the end of Year 6.
128. The judgement of the current inspection is that standards are below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. While teaching is satisfactory, the evidence from lesson observation and from the sampling of pupils' work is that there is insufficient coverage of the subject in both breadth and depth, and that the underdeveloped language-handling skills of pupils mean that they find it difficult to express many geographical concepts.
129. In the infants, some pupils show awareness of the seasons, and begin to understand how plans and maps work. Higher attainers in Year 2 confidently produce a competent account of the basic features of a walk in the neighbourhood of the school. Nevertheless, much is at a simplistic level, and many pupils asked, for example, to draw a plan of their classroom show

that they do not understand how objects relate to one another and arrange everything around the walls, leaving a space in the middle. A great deal of what is in their geography exercise books is identical and copied: there is little sign, for example, of enquiry about why a particular locality is as it is.

130. A similar situation exists in the juniors. A lot of work is also simply copied, and it is difficult to perceive how much pupils understand. There is some careful colouring and labelling of maps, and listing of important features, like rivers and cities. Famous attractions, languages and currencies are set out. Higher-attaining pupils in all year groups present their work more carefully, and they manage to collect more facts. In Year 5, in work on the local preparations for the arrival of the Euro-Tunnel, pupils were observed making predictions as to what might be some of its advantages and disadvantages. However, these were mostly obvious and limited, of the kind one might expect of pupils a year younger. Their skills of independent learning are limited, as was seen in their struggling to respond to a questionnaire based upon a Euro-Tunnel information leaflet. The problems of many in terms of language mean that most, even at this age, cannot explain what is meant by "route". In Year 6, no geography lessons were observed because of the school's policy of concentrating upon preparation for the statutory tests in English, mathematics and science. A small amount was seen on the European Union, but, again, there was a considerable amount of copied material. In terms of the depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding, attainment is below what is expected of pupils of this age.
131. Judging from the past written work seen, pupils have not been making satisfactory progress in geography for the reasons already given. However, in the lessons seen, their progress and the quality of their learning were always satisfactory and sometimes good or very good. This applies to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or EAL. As a result, it may be concluded that the overall picture is one of well-directed and continuous improvement.
132. Teaching is satisfactory in all classes. There are good relationships between pupils and teachers and between pupils, who collaborate well together. In lessons, teachers promote learning effectively. They prepare their resources carefully, and they present well-structured and interesting lessons. Their friendly and collaborative styles engage pupils' attention. Class control is good, largely because the lessons are so well-paced that pupils have neither the time nor the inclination to misbehave. In the work sample, however, marking was not good. It was often cursory, and remarks were not analytical or developmental. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development through its examination of our own and other societies and the reasons for their conditions, customs and cultures.
133. The management of geography is satisfactory, given that the co-ordinator has very recently accepted this responsibility. She is an experienced teacher with a clear vision of the development needs of this subject. A high priority will be to introduce formal and regular assessment procedures, which in their turn will need to be based upon a revised scheme of work, which connects the school's needs to the subject programme adapted from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority advice. There is also a need to incorporate applications of ICT. Resources are satisfactory in terms of maps and source-books, although a greater variety of globes is needed. As the emphasis on literacy and numeracy has an increasing impact upon standards and progress, the school now needs to direct more attention to the development of this area of the curriculum so that improvements already noticeable in some subjects may pervade all of what is taught and learnt.

HISTORY

134. The standards of attainment for pupils by the age of eleven and seven are well below those expected of pupils of a similar age. This is because the school, in its improvement plan, had prioritised raising standards in English and mathematics and insufficient time was allocated to the subject. It now has plans to improve the foundation subjects. Whilst pupils make good progress in individual lessons their progress over time is unsatisfactory.
135. The improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. A nationally available scheme of work underpins the teaching and a co-ordinator has been appointed. Some areas of improvement

from the last inspection remain.

136. In Year 1, pupils accurately identify some famous figures from the past, for example, Guy Fawkes, Helen Keller and Louis Braille. By Year 2, most identify with confidence some old buildings in the local area and compare changes in the area in roads and shops. In the juniors, younger pupils work well in groups to gather information from written and pictorial sources about Roman Britain. Pupils in Year 5 use a time-line, compare events in Benin with those at the time in England. Some recognise the importance to trade in the development of the Kingdom of Benin and many begin to understand how events and ideas from the past can be worked out from the evidence left behind. In Year 6, in their study of Ancient Greece, pupils compare the city-states of Athens and Sparta.
137. The quality of teaching and learning overall, is unsatisfactory. From the observation of the work of pupils, it is evident that teachers' planning is not sufficiently adapted for their needs. There is little difference in the expectations of work from pupils of different abilities nor at the different stages of learning English. Resources are not matched to the ability levels of the pupils. The key elements of chronology, evaluation of evidence and research are not consistently built upon and developed. Assessments are not used effectively to raise expectations of appropriate standards. There are insufficient resources to support the curriculum across the whole age range. Opportunities are missed for developing language - reading and writing - through the teaching of the subject. However, in the three lessons observed during the inspection in Year 4, teaching was good. Teachers made good use of questioning to enable the pupils to gain information from the sources of evidence available. The good relationships established by teachers mean that pupils are well-behaved and learn with confidence.
138. The subject is led satisfactorily. The co-ordinator is new to the post and as yet no provision has been made for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms, though the school has plans to rectify this. The use of ICT to support the subject is under-developed. Although there is an overall shortage of resources, especially artefacts, effective use is made of project loans from the local library. Some improvements have already had an impact, as in Year 4. Whilst improvements are included in the school development plan, including developing links with local museums, these have, as yet, not had an impact on standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

139. The previous inspection made no overall judgement about standards, owing to insufficient evidence. Currently, standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below expectations, although there are aspects of the subject in which some pupils are achieving above expectation. For example, work which pupils are carrying out in using the Internet to support their learning in other subjects of the curriculum is above national expectations. Overall, achievement is unsatisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6 for the majority of pupils. The work in ICT is underdeveloped and the pupils have too few opportunities to work with computers. This is partly because resources are lacking. At present, there is one, and in some cases two, personal computers in each classroom. This means that time is lost and the pace of learning slows while pupils wait for their turn. The school will find it hard to improve the level of attainment in this subject, until there is sufficient equipment for pupils to practise their skill more frequently and increase their knowledge of the capabilities of ICT. Also the school's recent focus on English and mathematics has resulted in insufficient time allocated to teaching all aspects of the subject. The high percentage of pupils both leaving and joining the school during the year, with the resulting lack of continuity in learning, has affected overall standards for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language.
140. By the age of seven, most pupils are becoming familiar with the keyboard. Many develop stronger manipulative skills and are becoming increasingly confident with aspects of ICT. They log on and off machines, skilfully use a mouse for pointing, selecting and moving items across the screen and are familiar with saving and printing work independently. With adult support they word process simple sentences about their science experiment, delete and insert letters, and use upper and lower case type, with accuracy. Pupils enjoy demonstrating their skills, and teachers make certain that pupils explain exactly what they are doing and why. For example, Year 2 pupils, in describing how they produced attractive shape pictures, used words like

'select' and 'icon' to outline clearly the process which enabled them to achieve the desired effects. However, many are not familiar with retrieving or storing work or using the computer to store or present data. They have little experience in directional control but have not had much opportunity to control devices for a specific purpose.

141. By the age of eleven, many pupils use search engines confidently to find information on databases. They save, retrieve and print their work, using a range of programs, and extend their use of the correct subject-specific language. Many explain clearly how they used the Internet to find additional information for their history topic and the e-mail to correspond with their e-pals. Most are confident in collecting and displaying data and they explain with a good degree of clarity the processes they use. Although some Year 6 pupils use the basic editing functions of word processing skilfully and present work in a more attractive manner by changing the font size, style and colour, many are insecure about copying text and word processing. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to draft and edit work directly on to the computer and as a result, many have underdeveloped keyboard skills and are slow at typing in text. This limits their output in the allocated time. Pupils' previous work show that they have limited opportunities to use computers to support and enhance their learning in other subjects and this adversely affects their attainment and progress as they move through the school. Overall, by the end of Year 6, many pupils have had little experience of using computer equipment for controlling events, such as electric lights or motors, monitor temperature or simulations to help them investigate relationships. The range of understanding, skills and the level of confidence that the majority of pupils have is lower than expected for their age.
142. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop a range of knowledge and skills and to build upon the skills they bring from home; most computers were used only rarely during the inspection. As a consequence, learning is unsatisfactory and pupils do not acquire adequate ICT skills. Planning is limited. Although there are clear objectives for the teaching of specific skills there is no planning of opportunities when computers will be used to support learning in other subjects. Also, the needs of all pupils of different abilities are not clearly identified. Where ICT is taught, however, teaching is good. Most teachers are competent and knowledgeable about the basic skills of ICT. They demonstrate confidently the specific skills at the start of the week and provide sensitive support for pupils who work on these skills in pairs during the week. Although, teaching methods such as these provide opportunities for pupils to learn from each other, limited resources limits learning. This is because when skills are introduced, only two pupils at the time can use the classroom computers. As the result, pupils will demonstrate whether they have understood the lesson at various times in the week. Some teachers set work for pupils who have computers at home and this supplements their research and word processing work in school. In a good session in the juniors, the teacher's high expectations, secure subject knowledge and careful planning ensured that all pupils were introduced to the specific skills in groups. Even though there were only two computers available, most pupils were patient and attentive to the teacher's explanation. In this session, effective questioning by the teacher enabled pupils to show their knowledge and skills well. When pupils get a chance to work on computers, they show interest and application. For example, pupils in Year 6 take great pride in their ability to use search engines to find the correct answers to questions about the different backgrounds of people who live in Newham and to check the weather forecast for the week on the Internet. They work well in pairs, learning to co-operate and help each other to use the computer. Most handle equipment with care. On the whole, all pupils show remarkable patience in sharing resources and in taking turns on the computer but this undoubtedly slows the pace of learning and has a subsequent impact on achievement
143. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for two terms. She is knowledgeable, offers advice and support to colleagues in planning and teaching but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in order to share good practice and help teachers identify opportunities for the wider use of computers. There is a clear sense of direction for the development of the subject. The hardware the school has, although limited in the number of machines, is modern and functions well. Software is inadequate. For example, there are insufficient resources to support teaching of control so that pupils can sequence instructions; there are no simulations and adventure games, linked to subjects, to enable older pupils to undertake challenges within the 'modelling' strand, and no sensors to support science investigations on temperature change. Some classes have rotas to record pupils' experiences on the computer and to provide a check

of what has been done. However, teachers do not have a clear picture of what individual pupils know and can do, and do not, therefore, know the skills and understanding that the pupils need to develop next. Overall, assessment is currently unsatisfactory and rightly identified by the co-ordinator as an area for development.

MUSIC

144. In the last inspection, pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 was judged as satisfactory, as was teaching. In this inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about either of these features. However, the following observations may be made.
145. In lessons, pupils bring a strong sense of enthusiasm to their music. They follow their teachers' instructions carefully, and handle instruments respectfully. They play untuned instruments, following an improvised pattern, and, in Year 5, can follow very basic informal notation of rhythm. They understand the connections between music and mood, but in Year 4 they were seen having problems illustrating these connections pictorially. When asked to perform together, pupils collaborate well and try hard to contribute to the ensemble effect. Pupils were not observed singing during this inspection.
146. Pupils' positive attitudes to music are well exploited by teachers, who organise and pace their lessons well. Of the four lessons seen, one was unsatisfactory, and three were very good. As a result, within the limited context of their lessons, the quality of pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, is satisfactory. However, the amount of time allocated to music every week is below the recommended minimum. When the effect of this limitation is combined with the fact that pupils rarely have the traditional opportunities for singing (in assemblies, for example), the subject provision must be judged as insufficient. Teachers' subject knowledge is inconsistent, and needs to be more systematically supported by a user-friendly scheme of work, backed by appropriate recorded material. While the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' moral and social development through group and teamwork, and to their spiritual development through the consideration of the effect of music upon mood and spirit, there is insufficient time for appropriate attention to cultural and cross-cultural aspects.
147. The music co-ordinator is of very recent appointment, and has yet to make an impact upon development in the school. Nevertheless, she has made a good start by recruiting a school choir. The provision for instrumental tuition in percussion, clarinet and violin is taken up by a small number of pupils. The co-ordinator understands the priorities very well, and recognises the opportunities to enhance pupils' learning. The need to produce or acquire a new scheme of work has already been mentioned; the time allocation needs to be enhanced; formal assessment needs to be introduced, as well as ongoing informal assessment in which pupils share. Resources are satisfactory, particularly in untuned instruments, although a systematic audit of all items distributed around this large school has still to be conducted. Accommodation for music is unsatisfactory, because of the poor sound insulation of classrooms, which makes disturbance from one class to another inevitable.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment matches the national expectation. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of physical skills and achieve appropriately for their age. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 was described as unsatisfactory. Provision for swimming is made in Year 6, and although it was not possible to observe lessons during the inspection work, records indicate satisfactory levels of attainment and progress.
149. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, demonstrate their physical agility as they stretch and bend during the warm-up session. In Year 1, pupils use their bodies to make different shapes and move to music, simulating the movements of the three bears in the fairy tale. Pupils in Year 2 establish a routine of several related movements and practice and refine them to demonstrate to others.

Pupils work well together, safely in pairs or in groups and have a good understanding of space and how to use it.

150. Junior pupils concentrate on acquiring ball skills. Most pupils throw, pass and catch accurately. Hand to eye co-ordination is developing well. Pupils employ their skills in small team games of netball and basketball. Games play is vigorous but the rules of engagement are closely observed. In basketball, pupils learn the chest pass and make good progress during the lesson. Pupils also practice goalkeeping skills to good effect and move agilely to catch the low and high ball.
151. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has a number of good points. Pupils are carefully and safely managed. The balance between control and creativity effort is about right. Pupils feel confident enough to experiment and this enhances progress. Lessons are planned satisfactorily, although the assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent. Relationships are good. Teachers set a good example by joining in with the activity. This adds to the sense of enjoyment, ensuring that pupils think physical exercise is worthwhile. Pupils make intelligent comments about the changes to the body during exercise. In one lesson, pupils are encouraged to note the effect of exercise on their bodies and observe the increased heart rate and the perspiration on the brow. Teachers expect good standards of work and behaviour and are rarely disappointed. Appropriate use is made of the available equipment to stimulate and sustain interest in physical exercise.
152. The subject is managed satisfactorily and a new scheme of work is being put into effect, including assessment, which when in place will improve the rate of progress. At present, the school does not offer residential trips to pupils and this reduces the scope for outdoor and adventurous activities. The main playground is potentially hazardous for all kinds of games play as the surface is very uneven and in a poor state of repair. There are no pitch markings and this limits the pupils' experience and enjoyment of team games. Similar reference to the playground was made at the previous inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Standards of attainment remain below those expected by the local authority's Agreed Syllabus, which the school is required to follow. The school does not allow sufficient time for teaching the subject, and is not meeting the recommendations of the Agreed Syllabus. However, there are encouraging signs of improvement in pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject because of the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
154. Infant pupils know that Guru Nanak is a leader for Sikhs. They describe a leader as a special person who is kind, caring and one who looks after other people. They proudly talk about the ways in which they celebrate Eid and compare it with how Christians celebrate Christmas. Pupils listen to the story of the '*The Prodigal Son*' from the Bible and are learning about the differences between the emotion of happiness and jealousy. They learn to use words such as Torah and Bible in the right context when describing special books.
155. Pupils in Year 4 learn about the similarities and differences in the wedding ceremonies of Hindus and Christians and understand the meaning of vows and commitments. Year 5 pupils describe how Muslims believe that Muhammed is God's messenger and that this means they follow Muhammed's teachings. They learn about the modern ways of sending messages, for example, through electronic mail, and are filled with wonder and awe when they reflect on how God gives messages to humans when they are in difficulty. Pupils in Year 6 also use art to illustrate the symbols of various religions, for example, khanda for Sikhism and moon and star to depict Islam. They understand the role of angels in Islam and Christianity and talk about similarities between the stories of Muhammed and the Burning Bush. They use the appropriate vocabulary such as 'Moses', 'Allah' and 'Namaz', in their discussion on religion. However, as reported in the previous inspection, pupils do not get the opportunity to deepen their understanding of religious beliefs, as sufficient time is not spent on the subject.

156. Although some satisfactory and good features are common in the teaching and learning of religious education, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory because not all aspects of the syllabus are fully covered. Consequently, pupils make too little progress over time. Learning is also limited when pupils of different abilities are set the same task. However, during the inspection, satisfactory and good practice was observed. Bearing in mind that many of the teachers are overseas trained this shows a sense of commitment and a willingness to succeed. In some of the lessons, teachers use relevant visual materials and use stories as a vehicle to enable pupils to learn about Christianity and Sikhism. They use skilful questioning to check the pupils' understanding and enhance speaking and listening skills. A majority of pupils learn the meanings of topic-related words such as 'Guru'. However, planning does not identify the next steps in learning and insufficient stress is placed on recording, especially in Years 3 to 6, which would allow pupils to consolidate their thoughts and learning through applying literacy skills.
157. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, overall. They listen intently to stories and value the contributions of their peers, while they answer questions about Islam, Hinduism or Christianity. In some lessons, pupils' curiosity in the subject is aroused through the use of artefacts, such as the Qur'an, but, overall insufficient use is made of resources to stimulate religious dialogue.
158. Overall, the subject makes limited contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong by talking about the story of *'The Prodigal Son'* and understanding the importance of not being greedy. Junior pupils reflect on the story of the *'The Good Samaritan'* and understand the importance of doing good to others. Their social development is enhanced when they learn about other religions with respect. Religious education makes a limited contribution to extending the pupils' literacy skills. Although there are opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills, the pupils' written responses are of a low standard and often left unmarked.
159. The co-ordinator is new to the role and recognises the need to develop the subject by ordering resources and artefacts and making them easily accessible. His priorities include monitoring schemes of work used in all classes, introducing assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress and to guide planning across the school. He is keen to join the working party to revise the locally Agreed Syllabus and to update the policy in the light of the new developments.