

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FOULDS SCHOOL**

Barnet

LEA area: London Borough of Barnet

Unique reference number: 101279

Headteacher: Ms S Jayasuriya

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner  
23160

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> October-1<sup>st</sup> November 2001

Inspection number: 196091

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Byng Road Barnet Hertfordshire
Postcode:	EN5 4NR
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Foulds School
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Murison
Date of previous inspection:	30 <sup>th</sup> June 1997

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23160	Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	English, art	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9542	Brian Jones	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15917	Bob Cross	Team inspector	Geography, history, physical education, English as an additional language.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30695	Geraldine Dinan	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, information and communication technology, the Foundation Stage curriculum.	
14596	Tony Fiddian-Green	Team inspector	Mathematics, music, religious education, equal opportunities, special educational needs.	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Foulds School educates boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 years. There are 314 pupils on roll, of whom 23 attend part-time in the Reception classes. Another 22 children attend full-time in these classes. The school is larger than the average for primary schools, but its roll is lower than at the time of the previous inspection. There are similar numbers of boys and girls. The school admits 45 pupils in each year group and it has a waiting list for most classes. There are 68 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is broadly the national average. Six pupils have statements of special educational need, which is above average. The range of needs includes pupils with autism, speech and communication problems and specific learning difficulties. Approximately five per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is broadly average. Six per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is above average but only three are at an early stage of learning English. Approximately two per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. Pupils enter the school at above average levels of attainment. In the past two years the school has experienced a very high turnover of teachers. Ten teachers left and 15 were appointed during this time. The turnover of pupils is similar to that seen in most schools.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Standards are above average in Year 6 and pupils achieve well at Key Stage 2. However, although standards are average in Year 2, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The quality of teaching is good, despite the high turnover of teachers, although stronger at Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides sound value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve well at Key Stage 2 and reach high standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2.
- The good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes their very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development.
- The school provides very good levels of care for pupils and has very good procedures for promoting their personal development.
- The school makes effective use of the resources that are allocated to it to support pupils' learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards pupils attain in writing throughout the school, and in reading, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1.
- Curricular provision and standards in music and religious education throughout the school, and in geography and history at Key Stage 1, where statutory requirements are not met.
- The delegation of management responsibilities and the role of co-ordinators and governors in monitoring curricular provision.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June/July 1997 and, since then, it has made a satisfactory improvement. High standards have been maintained in the national tests for 11 year olds, but there has been a fall in standards in the tests for seven year olds. The quality of teaching is now better than it was four years ago, but constant changes of staff over the past two years have adversely affected the pace of improvement in some aspects of the curriculum and the management of the school. Curricular planning has improved to meet the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching have improved. However, the monitoring of curricular provision remains unsatisfactory. The school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	C	A	C	well above A average above B average C below average D well below E average
mathematics	A	C	A	A	
science	A	A	A	A	

The school's results have exceeded the national average in English and mathematics over five years, except in 2000, when fewer pupils reached the higher levels of attainment. In English, pupils achieve much better in reading than in writing. The school achieved its targets for the percentage of pupils expected to reach Level 4 and above in the tests in English and mathematics, and the proportion of pupils who achieved Level 5 was well above average. The school has set suitably challenging targets for the 2002 tests. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. They are average in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. In music and religious education, standards are below average because insufficient time is given to these subjects to enable teachers to cover the curriculum in enough depth.

The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are average in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education. They are below average in geography, history, music and religious education because insufficient time is allocated to teaching these subjects and they are not covered in sufficient depth. Most children in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach the levels expected of them by the end of the Reception year, but there is no provision for more able pupils to reach higher standards. Pupils do not make enough progress in Year 1 in order to reach their potential in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good

progress overall. Overall, pupils achieve well, but at Key Stage 1 achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils do not reach high enough standards given their above average attainment when they enter the school.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show high levels of interest and involvement in their work and apply themselves very well in lessons. These very positive attitudes support their learning very well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous to visitors and show respect for the school environment. This helps to create a very positive climate for learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils and staff get on very well together and this means that lessons are productive and enjoyable. Pupils show very good initiative and responsibility. They make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school and its links with the wider community.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Literacy skills are not taught well enough through other subjects. A very strong feature of the teaching throughout the school is the teachers' management of pupils in lessons, which ensures that pupils concentrate well and apply themselves to their work. A weakness at Key Stage 1 is that teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are not high enough. Throughout the school, there are inconsistencies in the way teachers mark pupils' work. Some give helpful comments that show pupils how to improve, whilst others just use ticks. The school meets pupils' needs well at Key Stage 2. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the needs of more able pupils are not adequately met. At Key Stage 1, pupils do not acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a sufficiently rapid pace.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements in music and religious education throughout the school, or in geography and history at Key Stage 1. This is because insufficient time is given to these

	<p>subjects. There are no arrangements for more able children to progress beyond the Foundation Stage curriculum before they enter Year 1, which slows down their progress. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and has very constructive relationships with other schools, playgroups and colleges. A good range of extracurricular activities, visits and visitors enhances pupils' learning.</p>
<p>Provision for pupils with special educational needs</p>	<p>Satisfactory. Pupils are supported well in mathematics and English, although not always in other subjects. The needs of pupils who have statements of special educational need are met well, and annual reviews provide a good picture of how they are progressing and a good focus for further improvement.</p>

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Most of these pupils speak English fluently and are able to take a full part in the life of the school without any additional support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Good provision for spiritual development is made in assemblies and through aspects of the curriculum. Very good provision for moral and social development is based on a clear code of conduct, mutual respect and opportunities for pupils to contribute to the life of the school community. Good provision for pupils' cultural development includes opportunities for them to participate in the performing arts and learn about the art, music and literature of different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There are very good levels of care and very good support for pupils' personal development. The procedures for tracking pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 but good at Key Stage 2. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress but assessment information is not used well enough to guide curricular planning in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and in some subjects.

The school's links with parents are satisfactory and it provides them with good quality information about what their children are learning and how they are progressing. Nevertheless, a significant minority of parents feels that the school does not work well in partnership with them.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear direction for the work and development of the school and receives good support from the two acting deputy headteachers. They have managed the recent very high turnover of staff well and have been successful in creating a strong team spirit and commitment to improving standards. The delegation of management responsibilities is unsatisfactory as some teachers have too many to fulfil their role effectively. Co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring curricular provision and the standards achieved by the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. Although governors have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, they are not meeting their statutory responsibilities to ensure that the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education are fully implemented.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are rigorous and have led to significant improvements. Detailed monitoring of test results has led to the implementation of an action plan for improving standards in writing throughout the school, which has been identified as the school's main priority. Although the school recognises the need to raise standards at Key Stage 1 and improve the transition arrangements at the end of the Foundation Stage, there is no action plan to address these issues.

The strategic use of resources	Good. There are close links between the budget and the priorities identified in the school's operational plan. Resources are used well to support pupils' learning. For example, expenditure on information and communication technology has equipped the school well to implement all aspects of the National Curriculum and ensure that pupils have well planned, regular access to computers. As a result, standards have risen. There is efficient and effective financial control and administration. The headteacher and governors make sound efforts to ensure that they get satisfactory value for money.
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The school is well staffed and it has a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. The accommodation is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, library provision is inadequate.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The range of extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework their children receive.</li> <li>• The way the school keeps them informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The way the school works in partnership with them.</li> </ul>

The findings of the inspection agree with the positive views of parents. They also show that the school provides adequate amounts of homework for pupils but this is not always consistent between classes. The school provides parents with good information about their children's progress in annual reports, but the 'boomerang' contact books are used more effectively in some classes than others. There are clearly some shortcomings in the school's partnership with parents because such a significant minority are dissatisfied with this aspect of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to exceed the standards found in most schools in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development by the end of the Reception year. In creative development, which is a relatively weaker area of learning, they are on course to reach standards that are similar to those found in most schools. This is similar to the judgement made by the previous inspection, except in creative development. Attainment on entry to the school is above average. As a result of good teaching and the successful implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum, children are making good progress in their first term in school. However, there is no provision in the curriculum for more able children to progress into the early stages of the National Curriculum later in the year. Consequently, in some aspects of English and mathematics, the more able children are not provided with work that is hard enough for them to reach their full potential, which slows down the progress that they make when they move into Year 1. Overall, achievement is satisfactory.

2. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2001, standards in reading and writing were broadly at the level of the national average. They were above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were below average in reading, well below average in writing and average in mathematics. The assessments made by teachers in science were well above average. The trend in standards in the national tests since 1997 has been variable, but shows an overall decline in both reading and mathematics. Standards in writing have remained much the same. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.

3. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are average in reading and writing, mathematics, including numeracy, and science. Standards in mathematics differ from the results of the national tests in 2000 because, at this stage in the year, few pupils are achieving above average standards. In information and communication technology, art, design and technology and physical education, standards are average. However, standards in religious education, geography, history and music are below average, because the time allocated to those subjects in the curriculum is insufficient to cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection, standards in reading and writing have fallen, while those in mathematics and science are similar. Standards are lower in geography, history, music and religious education. Standards in Year 2 are not high enough, given pupils' above average attainment on entry to the school, and their achievement is unsatisfactory. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the transition from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1 is not planned sufficiently well to allow more able pupils to progress at a suitably fast pace. Secondly, the school has recently had considerable staffing problems at Key Stage 1, which has hindered pupils' progress. As a result of these factors, pupils do not make enough progress between the Reception year and the end of Year 1. This means that they have to make up considerable ground in Year 2 before taking the national tests. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels is lower than it should be.

4. In the national tests for 11 year olds in 2001, the pupils' results were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. In English, pupils did significantly better in reading than in writing. In reading, 90 per cent reached Level 4 and 60 per cent reached Level 5, while in writing, only 62 per cent reached Level 4 and five per cent achieved Level 5. The school has identified as its main priority the need to raise standards in writing throughout the school and is already implementing a well thought out action plan to address this issue. The trend in standards in the national tests for 11 year olds is broadly the same as the national trend. Although standards in English and mathematics dipped significantly in 2000, they have risen again to their previously high levels. In all three subjects, the percentage of pupils who reach Level 5 is much higher than that seen in most schools. One pupil achieved Level 6 in mathematics, which is very high attainment. This shows that the school provides suitably demanding work for the most able pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was a key issue. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls. The school met its targets for the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in 2001 and has set suitably challenging targets for 2002.

5. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics, including numeracy, science and information and communication technology. Standards in literacy are average, because pupils' writing skills are less well developed than their reading skills. Standards are average in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. In music and religious education, standards are below those expected of 11 year olds, largely because insufficient time is given to teaching those subjects in order to cover the curriculum fully. There is also a lack of expertise among teachers in music. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection, standards are similar in most subjects, but lower in music and religious education. Standards are slightly lower than the previous year's national test results because some pupils, who are receiving additional help to reach Level 4, are not yet doing so. Overall, pupils' achievement is good at Key Stage 2 because they receive sufficiently demanding work to enable them to reach the standards of which they are capable. They have made good progress since they were in Year 2.

6. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those in Key Stage 2 make good progress towards their own targets, whilst progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Pupils receive good levels of support from teachers and assistants in English and mathematics although not always in other subjects. In these subjects, work is carefully planned to meet their needs and the targets that are set for them in their individual education plans are clear and specific. Pupils are included in all aspects of the curriculum and are enabled to participate fully in all lessons.

7. Pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress throughout the school in their ability to speak and understand English. However, most of these pupils are bi-lingual, speak English fluently and, therefore, their progress overall is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2 as it is for other pupils. The few pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English receive support from a specialist teaching assistant and are well-known to the teachers and to other teaching assistants. These pupils receive support not only in literacy and numeracy but also, for example, in art where they are encouraged to talk and to share their ideas.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. The previous inspection reported strengths in attitudes, behaviour and relationships. The school has further developed these strengths. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. They respond positively in the many lessons where teaching is good. Their interest falls in a few less stimulating lessons, but even then it remains good. Their attitudes were good or better in more than four out of every five lessons seen. Pupils listen carefully and stay alert. They are eager to answer and ask questions. Older pupils support the wide range of extracurricular activities in sport and the arts very well. They take interest in the local community and participate in events with enthusiasm.

9. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at leisure times. Ninety-six per cent of parents who completed the inspection questionnaire agreed that behaviour is good. Pupils are courteous to visitors. They respect the school environment and there is very little litter. There were no instances of disruptive behaviour during the inspection. In the past year, the school excluded three pupils, each for a single day. All three successfully modified their behaviour when they came back to school. Bullying happens very rarely. Older pupils who look after younger pupils in the playground say they have seen no examples of bullying. There is no evidence of sexism, racism or any other form of oppressive behaviour. Pupils from different ethnic groups get on well together. Boys, girls and pupils from widely different backgrounds are good companions at work and at play.

10. Relationships are very good. In lessons, pupils work together very well in pairs, groups and as a whole class. Older pupils take delight in helping the younger pupils in the canteen. They carry trays to the table and help to cut up food for any child who is not yet confident. The school has designated one part of the playground specifically for pupils of different ages to play together. This is popular with all the year groups. There is a strong caring ethos. Years 3 and 4 saw the play *Dreaming of Home*, about a refugee child, and this strengthened their understanding of the lives of the world's other children. They are considerate in helping children with disabilities, enabling them to play a full part in the life of the school. Pupils relate very well to teachers and other adults at school.

11. Pupils show very good initiative and responsibility. The school has improved their opportunities since the previous inspection. Two years ago, it established the school council where pupils are able to express their ideas and opinions, and have a say in different aspects of school life. Every class, from Reception in its second term to Year 5/6, elects two members. Pupils talk to their classmates and put forward ideas to improve the school. They created the Foulds slogan to make it easier for people to remember the school's code of conduct. They suggested the 'fun zone' in the playground, and the play equipment to go in it. They presented their ideas to the governing body, and made a successful case for spending money to set it up. Other pupils took part in a traffic survey of the congested roads around the school. Their evidence helped bring the speed limit down to 20 mph. Pupils show individual initiative. At present, two groups independently produce a magazine in school. Two pupils created a website for the Year of Languages. They won top prize in a national competition, and £1500 for the school. Pupils' commitment drives them to high standards in sports and the arts. A pupil regularly appeared in *Les Misérables* in the West End. The school won the Barnet middle school athletics competition. The orchestra and choir achieve high performing standards at musical events.

12. Children in the Reception class quickly settle into school routines and soon develop positive attitudes towards school. They behave well and develop constructive relationships with each other and with adults.

13. Pupils with special educational needs also have positive attitudes towards school and work well with other pupils and with adults. Pupils with English as an additional

language enjoy their work and co-operate well with their peers and with adults. They take a full part in all the activities offered by the school. Respect and value for cultural differences is very evident throughout the school.

14. Attendance is satisfactory. The rate of 94.4 per cent in 2000/01 is the same as the most recent national average and the rate at the previous inspection. Pupils' punctuality has improved since the previous report. Class teachers take the morning registers at or before 9.00 am. Very few pupils miss the start of registration, and lessons begin promptly.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

15. The quality of teaching and learning is good, although there is a degree of variation between different parts of the school, in that it is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2, and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. When compared to the findings of the previous inspection, this judgement represents a considerable improvement. In that inspection, 17 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory, whereas there was no unsatisfactory teaching in this inspection. In the last inspection, 40 per cent of the teaching was good at Key Stage 2. In this inspection, 75 per cent was at least good, and 31 per cent was very good. In this inspection, 68 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. The quality of teaching and learning was very good in 13 of these, good in 32 and satisfactory in 23. The needs of more able pupils are met well at Key Stage 2, but not well enough in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

16. The strongest feature of the teaching throughout the school is the teachers' very good management of the pupils and the effective relationships that they develop. This helps to create a positive atmosphere in which pupils are motivated to learn. Despite the recent high turnover of teachers and the fact that four of the class teachers are temporary, there is a very good team spirit within the school. Teachers work together well in teams to plan work across the year groups in order to ensure consistency and progression in learning. Strong features of the pupils' learning throughout the school are the interest they show in their work, the way they concentrate on tasks and their independence. This is particularly good at Key Stage 2 and is one of the principal reasons why pupils progress well. A relative weakness is the quality of teachers' marking, which is inconsistent. Some is helpful and constructive and shows pupils clearly how to improve their work. In some classes, marking is cursory, consisting simply of ticks, or gives undue praise for work that is average.

17. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good. During the inspection, 12 lessons were observed. One of these was very good and 11 were good. Teachers provide very good role models for the children and in return are treated with courtesy and respect. Teachers provide frequent opportunities to develop the children's independent learning, as well as appropriate group and class activities. They provide many opportunities to develop children's basic skills through practical experiences. They introduce suitable vocabulary during learning activities, which build effectively on children's previous understanding. Teachers and assistants make good use of a wide range of resources to support learning, which are well matched to the needs of young children. Lessons are well planned and tasks set are appropriate to the recommendations of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Although the quality of teaching in the lessons seen was consistently good and shows that the Foundation Stage curriculum is being implemented well, the absence of clear links into the Key Stage 1 curriculum limits the achievement of more able pupils.

18. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This was also the finding of the previous inspection, although at that time, there was a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. In this inspection, 20 lessons were observed, of which 14 were satisfactory, five were good and one was very good. This shows that standards of teaching have improved, despite the considerable staffing difficulties. At this key stage, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art, design and technology and physical education. In geography, history, music and religious education, the quality of teaching in the lessons seen was at least satisfactory. However, as these subjects are not given enough time for teachers to cover curricular requirements in sufficient depth, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. At Key Stage 1, teachers work well together as a team, which is particularly helpful for new and temporary members of staff. They are working hard to overcome the barriers to learning that have resulted from the high staff turnover since the last inspection. However, teachers' expectations are not high enough, especially for more able pupils, who do not always reach the standards of which they are capable. For example, in English, the development of pupils' writing skills, including imaginative and factual writing and handwriting, is not sufficiently rigorous or demanding. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length, either in English lessons or in other subjects. Another reason why the quality of teaching and learning is no better than satisfactory at Key Stage 1 is that the procedures for tracking pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. As a result, teachers do not have enough information about pupils' levels of attainment to ensure that they can plan suitably challenging work.

19. A Year 2 literacy lesson illustrated the satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the general features of teaching at this key stage. A good feature of the teaching was the effective links that were made between reading and writing. The teacher made good use of a large non-fiction text to show pupils how lists of ingredients and instructions for making a recipe are written. This helped pupils to understand the key features of writing instructions in the correct sequence. The teacher then modelled the writing process well, and involved pupils appropriately in spelling words. The pace of the lesson, which was good during the whole class session, slowed down, as pupils then spent time making sandwiches before writing instructions to tell others how to do it. Another feature that limited the effectiveness of the teaching was that all pupils were given a prepared worksheet on which to write their instructions. Whilst this provided a useful framework for less able pupils, it restricted the achievement of more able pupils. Overall, there was not enough time for pupils to achieve good standards in the writing task. There is good provision for pupils to read together and extract information from texts in Year 2. Well chosen texts provide good levels of challenge for pupils of all abilities.

20. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good and enables pupils to make good progress. During this inspection, 36 lessons were seen, of which nine were satisfactory, 16 were good and 11 were very good. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education. It is satisfactory in geography, history, art and design and technology. In religious education and music, although the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in the lessons seen during the inspection, these subjects are not given enough time to cover curricular requirements in sufficient depth. Consequently, teaching and learning in religious education and music are unsatisfactory overall. At this key stage, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of most subjects and plan work effectively to meet the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment. There is a shortage of expertise in music. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and lessons have good pace and challenge. This ensures that pupils apply considerable effort to their work and use

their time productively. Teachers' clear explanations and their skilful questioning help pupils to have a good understanding of what they have learned.

21. A literacy lesson in Year 5/6 illustrated the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy at Key Stage 2 and the good features of the teaching. The initial activity was effective in consolidating pupils' understanding of the story of Macbeth and pupils' previous work on direct and reported speech. The teacher made good links between reading and writing as he involved pupils in suggesting how the story might continue. There was a good emphasis on using adverbs to make the narrative more interesting, and the teacher modelled the writing process well, and showed pupils how to organise and present their ideas. He also demonstrated how to draft and redraft a piece of writing by improving on his original ideas. This helped pupils to understand how characters are portrayed through the dialogue and action in a story. The teacher's very good rapport with the pupils and his encouraging manner motivated them to work hard and produce good work. A strong feature of the lesson was that pupils were given a substantial amount of time to develop their writing at length.

22. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils who have special educational needs is generally good, and results in these pupils making good progress in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1, in the same way as their peers. Teachers plan effectively, and support assistants are aware of the contents of the lesson beforehand. They are able in this way to focus their help where it is most needed. In most literacy and numeracy lessons, teaching assistants provide good support both in whole class sessions and in the later group work. They observe how pupils get on in their work, and make notes to share afterwards so that help can be better focused. Teachers are well aware of pupils' special educational needs and move round helping where necessary.

23. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with English as an additional language is good. In an observation in a Key Stage 1 class, a pupil with English as an additional language coped well with the number work going on. He found the teacher's questions difficult to follow but watched the other pupils and was, for example, able to count number sequences with the rest of the class and to provide the answer to a question before the other pupils on his table. Teachers provide good models of spoken and written English and develop the pupils' listening skills well.

#### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

24. The school's 1997 inspection judged curricular provision to be "broad and balanced" and said that it "meets the statutory demands of the National Curriculum and the draft local syllabus for religious education". This is no longer the case. Requirements are not met in religious education and music throughout the school, or in history and geography at Key Stage 1. This is essentially because the school does not give the teaching of these subjects sufficient time to allow the requirements to be covered in enough depth. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered to the pupils at both key stages are, therefore, unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 1, this situation is compounded as the amount of time spent on activities which are not statutory is significantly higher than in most other schools. These activities include structured play and free choice of activities.

25. The school's 1997 report described the structure of the curriculum as "good". This is still the case. The school has a two-year cycle of suitable topics, which ensures that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat the same work. This cycle is supported by appropriate schemes of work in all subjects although, in some instances, for example, art,

planning does not ensure that skills are, in practice, developed progressively. Additionally, teachers now plan together much more effectively than they did in 1997.

26. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy appropriately, though it has not been effective in raising standards at Key Stage 1. Until recently, one aspect of the strategy, guided writing, was not being taught effectively. This was highlighted as a key issue for the school to address in its action plan for writing for the current year. Evidence shows that this aspect is now being taught well. Additionally, at Key Stage 2, teachers have allocated additional time for writing extended texts and this is having a good impact on standards. This is not the case at Key Stage 1 where pupils still have too few opportunities to develop writing skills. There is also insufficient planning for the development of literacy skills through other subjects.

27. Overall, the school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well although it is more effective at Key Stage 2 than it is at Key Stage 1. Teachers follow the format of the strategy well and plan their lessons carefully. Work is provided which meets the needs of pupils in the two age groups which are often present in classes and which also meets the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment. Teaching methods enable good quality learning to occur and provide opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge. Setting by attainment is a key feature which enables above average pupils to make good, and sometimes very good, progress particularly in Year 6. Key Stage 1 is less effective in this respect because setting was interrupted in this key stage at the end of last term due to staff changes.

28. Extracurricular provision was regarded as a strength of the school at the time of its last inspection. Extracurricular provision remains good. For example, provision includes football (including competitive fixtures), netball, rugby and dance activities, an orchestra and a choir. In addition, curricular provision is broadened by visits, which include the Golden Hinde and a residential trip. A broad range of visitors such as theatre companies and a group of African drummers, also enhance the curriculum.

29. Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Although teachers have implemented the Foundation Stage curriculum well and demonstrate good practice in early years education, the school has not taken into account sufficiently the needs of more able pupils who achieve the Early Learning Goals well before the end of the year. There is no arrangement for pupils to progress into the early stages of the National Curriculum when they are ready and the school has identified the need to determine a policy governing this transition.

30. Curricular provision for pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory. The arrangements to support them, particularly in mathematics and English, are good. Sometimes there is no support in other subjects, particularly in the afternoons. The pattern of withdrawing pupils from lessons is changing and their attendance in English and mathematics lessons is now assured. Individual education plans are in place and teachers refer to these when planning. The targets on these plans focus largely on literacy and numeracy, although there are some that help with organisational difficulties. In general, the targets are clear and achievable. The needs of those pupils who have statements of special educational need are met well, and annual reviews provide a good picture of how the pupils are progressing, together with a good focus for further improvement.

31. Curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Most of these pupils speak English fluently and are able to take a full part in the life of the school without any additional support. The small number at an early stage of learning to speak

English are suitably assisted by teachers, support staff and their peers as well as receiving some additional specialist support. This enables them to make good progress in learning to speak English.

32. Although the school does not have a written policy for equality of opportunity, there are good informal arrangements for ensuring that pupils of different gender, background and ethnic groups have equal access to all that the school has to offer. The new co-ordinator for special educational needs is moving towards more in class support for pupils and less withdrawal to ensure that their access to all aspects of the curriculum is not compromised. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to make progress in religious education and music throughout the school because of lack of curriculum time. Although the school identifies pupils who are gifted or talented in different areas of the curriculum, there are no formal procedures for this or guidelines to explain what provision will be made.

33. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education. Assemblies have a strong focus on particular themes. Recent examples are safety and 'have pride in yourself'. In science lessons, pupils learn about healthy lifestyles, a balanced diet and drugs awareness. The school offers simple and straightforward sex education for the older juniors. It invites parents to see the video material used in the discussions. All junior classes study citizenship. Pupils seeking election to the school council make a speech to their class. Pupils work on road safety with the local authority and two pupils represent the school as road safety officers.

34. Pupils make very good use of the community in their learning. They learn from historical sites such as Mountfitchet Castle. They visit museums and Barnet library. The local Member of Parliament arranged for a pupil to have tea at Number 10 Downing Street. Top-class players from Saracens rugby club show pupils how to play tag rugby. A school team appeared at the professional stadium in Watford last Easter Sunday. The rugby players take time to hear pupils read. Pupils also give help to the community. For example, they worked with the arts development officer at Barnet Hospital. They came up with ideas on how to decorate the X-ray department so that children would not be worried when they go into it.

35. The school has a very good partnership with other educational institutions. Children in a playgroup use the school's small hall each morning. They share facilities with the children in the Reception class. The playgroup and the school watched a professional performance of *Hansel and Gretel* in the school hall. In total, Foulds School takes children from some 13 playgroups and nurseries. It maintains links with the main feeder playgroups. The school works closely with the different secondary schools to which pupils transfer. Year 7 teachers from these schools spend a day at Foulds each summer. They meet pupils who will be going to their school and obtain information from the Year 6 teachers. The school has well-established contact with colleges. Students from two universities and the Institute of Education train at the school. Two have recently joined the staff.

36. The good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development represents an overall improvement since the previous inspection. The school has maintained its strength in social development.

37. Spiritual development is good. The school has links with local churches. In assembly on All Saints Day, pupils were able to answer the minister's questions about saints. They gained the fascinating information that anyone can become a saint. Arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements. Pupils experience

spirituality across a range of subjects and events. The whole school went to the Millennium Dome last year. They loved the high wire acrobatics and dancing. Pupils gasped with delight when pupils they first saw the new play equipment in the 'fun zone'. A moment of astonishment came last summer when the leavers presented their own end of year concert. The younger pupils realised what a high standard these pupils had reached and how they had matured.

38. The school bases its very good promotion of moral development on its behaviour policy. This works on the principle of assertive discipline, with clear unambiguous rules. Pupils win praise and rewards when they keep to these rules. The school consistently applies a system of sanctions if a pupil breaks the rules. Classes add their own ideas. For example, comments on a display board ranged from the headteacher's congratulations on 100 per cent punctuality to a note saying 'Seven smiley faces in a day!'

39. The very good encouragement of pupils' social development shows in the high quality of relationships all the way through the school. Reception children take part in paired reading with pupils from Years 5 and 6. These pupils take it in turns to look after the young children in the canteen and the playgrounds. The school has designated part of the playground for pupils of different ages to play together. The school council helps to extend social awareness. So does the 'listening ear' system, whereby older pupils listen one to one with any younger pupil who has a concern. Year 6 pupils value their residential visit in the spring term as a way to develop their social skills and maturity. Pupils are aware of other people less fortunate than themselves. They take pleasure in distributing gifts to senior citizens after harvest festival. Each year, they support a wide variety of collections for charity.

40. The school provides well for pupils' cultural development. Its strengths in music and drama help pupils become aware of different types of music. The school has dance and drama clubs. It benefits from its long association with the Foulds Theatre Company, formed by past and present parents. The school works hard to extend pupils' familiarity with the many different cultures in Barnet. This term, pupils enjoyed an African drumming workshop, and were excited by the idea of working together. Curricular provision includes a focus on black history, art from different cultures, such as aboriginal art, and Indian dancers. The school has improved its range of multicultural activities since the previous inspection and it plans to extend them further.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. The school cares for its pupils very well. It has maintained the secure and stimulating environment noted in the previous report. It closely follows the procedures in its very good health and safety policy and has already attended to most items noted in the recent local authority audit. It plans to rectify the remainder very shortly. The caretaker joined the school recently. He has wide experience of good practice in other schools. He uses his considerable skills in building techniques to correct minor defects. He and his team of cleaners maintain a high standard of cleanliness. However, many windows give cause for concern. Frames are in poor condition, and putty has worn away. The windows do not provide effective insulation in winter and will not open in summer. Child protection procedures are fully in place. The headteacher is the designated teacher. She keeps all staff aware of the requirements. The school has a separate medical room, with a bed. A caring welfare assistant maintains accident record sheets and notifies parents of head bumps and incidents needing their attention.

42. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development, and the educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are sound. They are strongest on the personal side, where the school provides wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and mature. The school monitors pupils' personal development well. It is a family school. Even the newly arrived teachers get to know their pupils quickly. Class teachers keep a written assessment of pupils' personal development in their academic records. They include a review of the child's development in the annual reports in the middle of the school year.

43. The school gives good personal support. The school has four houses so that house captains gain experience of leadership and house members are keen to win house points for good work and good behaviour. Within the school's very good policy for behaviour and discipline, it resolves instances of bullying and oppressive behaviour very effectively. It has recently added another dimension. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have trained as 'Listening Ears'. This system extends their sense of responsibility and maturity. It also means that any pupil who may have a problem can be sure they can find someone who will listen to their concerns.

44. The school has good procedures to encourage and monitor attendance. Class teachers monitor any absence or lateness. The school makes every effort to discourage parents from taking holidays in term time. The secretary follows up if parents do not supply the reason for absence. As a result, unauthorised absences have gone down in the past year. Punctuality was a concern in the previous report. The school now issues a certificate to classes achieving 100 per cent punctuality. Pupils are now aware of the need to arrive in good time, and punctuality has improved.

45. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers and support assistants know their pupils well and individuals are helped with any particular needs. All pupils with special educational needs have good opportunities to take part in school activities. There are good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs, and individual plans provide reviews at least twice each year and often more frequently. Records are maintained well, and the school makes very good use of outside agencies to provide assessments and tests where necessary, such as medical reports.

46. Most pupils with English as an additional language are confident and secure and well-motivated. Relationships within the school are very good and there is a strong and effective commitment to the inclusion of all pupils. The pupils' stages of fluency are carefully tracked and assessed so that their progress is monitored and promoted successfully.

47. The school's last inspection reported that "arrangements for monitoring progress in the subjects of the National Curriculum by collecting and assessing samples of work are good". This remains the case as the school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Pupils' progress in all subjects is systematically assessed and recorded. This information is used as the basis for writing reports to parents about the progress of their children in the spring term. These reports include targets for improvement which are shared with pupils and parents and which are discussed with parents at a consultation evening in the summer term. In addition, teachers also set their classes targets – mainly in literacy and numeracy – for improvement. There are good assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage, but the information gained is not used well enough to track children's progress or to provide suitably challenging work for the more able later in the year.

48. A range of assessment data is carefully analysed to set National Curriculum levels which individual pupils are expected to achieve and to establish how many pupils in Year 6 are on course to reach Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in the national tests and assessments. The analysis of data is also used to identify and address specific areas, within these subjects and science, which the pupils need to address in order to improve. The progress that pupils make towards these targets is carefully monitored in order to make sure that they achieve them and to assess how much pupils have improved. This is an improvement on the findings of the school's 1997 inspection which found that, assessment information was "not used systematically to monitor the progress of individual pupils over time or to give an indication of whether the school adds value". The effective analysis of assessment information and its use is much better established at Key Stage 2 where they work well, than at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 1, the process of analysing data to set targets for achievement in the end of key stage tests is much weaker. As a result, there is not the same degree of success in predicting performance successfully or in assessing accurately what National Curriculum levels pupils have already reached at this key stage.

49. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, the use of assessment information to plan the pupils' work is variable. Teachers often make and record accurate assessments of the pupils' attainment and, usually, provide appropriate work for those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. However, in some subjects, for example, geography and history, assessment information is not used effectively to provide work which challenges and extends pupils of above average attainment. Too often, these pupils are given work which consists of completing simple worksheets or drawing pictures.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

50. Parents' views of the school show that a significant minority have concerns about several aspects of its provision. Most questions in the pre-inspection questionnaire received a favourable response and there were many favourable comments at the parents' meeting. However, the questionnaires show higher than usual levels of disagreement. For example, 31 per cent of parents who completed the questionnaire do not agree that the school works closely with them. Parents express concern about the high turnover of teaching staff, and mixed ages in the Year 3/4 and 5/6 classes. The inspection's judgement is that the staff turnover is due to factors beyond the school's control, such as career progression or maternity leave. The school, with 45 pupils in a year group, has no alternative to mixing ages. However, parents feel that the school has not explained fully how the system works. The school acknowledges the need to improve relationships with the minority of disaffected parents.

51. Links with parents are satisfactory. There are good features. The school aims to be an open school. Class teachers meet parents formally once a term. They are available for informal meetings after school most days. Parents can see the headteacher and other members of the management team by appointment. The school invites parents to class assemblies, Christmas and summer music and drama presentations, and workshops to see their children's work. The parents' association holds two major fairs each year, social events and children's discos.

52. The school provides good information for parents. It sends newsletters once a week. At the start of each term, class teachers send an account of what their class will be learning. The well-presented prospectus and the governors' Annual Report meet statutory requirements. The school is aware that the prospectus needs some additional detail and has undertaken to include this in future. As 36 per cent of parents did not agree the school

gives them good information about pupils' progress, inspectors examined the annual reports carefully. Their finding is that the reports inform parents well. They show clearly what pupils know and can do in English, mathematics and science. They also describe learning in the other subjects. They include specific targets. Unusually, they also report on pupils' personal development.

53. Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning. At least 40 parents come into school each week. They hear children read and help especially in the younger classes. One parent comes in five days a week. The school makes good use of the very wide range of parental skills and experience. Parents help with artwork, crafts and cooking. Scientists, writers and artists provide specialist support and inspiration for the older classes. A parent who is a choreographer coaches the dance club. Parents accompany pupils on local studies. The school has recently improved its homework policy. Teachers set homework regularly, but this is not consistent across all the classes. Similarly, the 'boomerang books', which provide communication between school and parents, work better in some classes than others. At present, 23 per cent of parents do not agree their children get the right amount of homework but 69 per cent agree. The inspection finds that there is scope for improvement, but pupils are already doing significant amounts of home reading and homework.

54. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about what the school is offering for their children. They are invited to reviews and their views are sought and recorded. There are opportunities for parents to consult with the co-ordinator at parents' evenings, and some have taken up this offer.

55. Links with parents of pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory. However, information is not often translated into languages other than English and this restricts both the contribution that parents of these pupils can make to their children's learning and their involvement in the school.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

56. The school's leadership and management are satisfactory. No clear judgement on leadership was made by the previous inspection, but the day-to-day management of the school was described as good. The headteacher, who was appointed in November 1998, provides clear direction for the work and development of the school and receives good support from the two senior teachers who are acting as deputy headteachers. The school has appointed a new deputy headteacher for January 2002. The headteacher and senior staff have managed the recent very high turnover of staff well and have been successful in creating a strong team spirit and commitment to improving standards. New staff, although temporary, have worked hard to implement the school's aims and values and to liaise closely with colleagues in year group teams.

57. The improvement in the overall effectiveness of the school has been affected by the high turnover of staff. Overall, the school has made a satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in 1997. High standards have been maintained in the Key Stage 2 national tests, although standards at Key Stage 1 have fallen. The quality of teaching is now much better than it was four years ago, when there was a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. However, it has taken some time to eradicate the unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 1, where changes of staff are still occurring, part way through the term in some instances. Although the school has successfully raised the standards achieved by more able pupils at Key Stage 2, they are still not high enough at Key Stage 1. A revised curriculum map takes good account of the needs of pupils in different year groups in the same class. However, the high staff turnover has limited the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators in monitoring the implementation of the curriculum in some subjects. This has resulted in insufficient time being allocated to the teaching of certain subjects.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve because of the shared commitment amongst staff to raise standards and seek ways to improve their practice.

58. Management responsibilities for subjects are delegated to all permanent teachers, including some part-time teachers. Many of these have been re-organised recently as a result of staff changes. The present delegation of responsibilities is unsatisfactory. For example, one of the acting deputy headteachers has responsibility for co-ordinating the Foundation Stage curriculum, Key Stage 1 and English. The other has assumed temporary responsibility for assessment, in addition to mathematics and Key Stage 2, pending the arrival of a new deputy. Both are also full-time class teachers. The teachers' effectiveness in any of these areas is inevitably limited because of the demands on their time. Another part-time teacher is temporarily managing two subjects because no-one else is able to do so. Most co-ordinators have not become fully effective in checking the quality of teaching and learning or monitoring curricular provision and the standards achieved by the pupils.

59. The special educational needs co-ordinator is new in post this term, but has made a good start in directing the provision for special educational needs. She has already introduced several initiatives, such as the 'Listening Ear' scheme, and has made herself available for parents' consultations, should they wish to meet with her to discuss their children's progress. Plans for development include more support in lessons for pupils. Records are good and all relevant material is filed well, so that it can be retrieved easily.

60. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has good levels of knowledge and has worked hard to ensure that the recently introduced national requirements for the Foundation Stage have been successfully incorporated into teachers' planning. A weakness, and one which the school has recognised, is the lack of suitable arrangements for children to move into the early stages of the National Curriculum when they are ready. This is particularly important for those more able children who exceed the Early Learning Goals while still in Reception and need to start Key Stage 1 work in order to progress at an appropriate rate according to their capabilities.

61. The management of English as an additional language is satisfactory. The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator has responsibility for this work but has not had time to make a significant impact on it. However, she has an understanding of this provision because of her work in other schools. A teaching assistant is currently undergoing specialist training to help improve further the quality of teaching and learning for these pupils. The school has some useful resources, for example, bi-lingual dictionaries, but it lacks sufficient materials in the mother tongues of pupils with English as an additional language.

62. The governors have also experienced significant turnover recently and several are new to the role. They work closely with the headteacher and organise their activities appropriately through committees. Governors are kept well informed through detailed reports from the headteacher at their regular meetings, and have a sound awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their monitoring of the school's provision is not sufficiently rigorous and they are not fulfilling their statutory responsibilities to ensure that the curriculum fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Governors hold the school to account for the standards it achieves, for example by analysing the school's performance in national tests and asking for reasons to explain why standards have fallen. Although governors help to shape the direction of the school by discussing priorities for the school's operational plan, and checking on how these are progressing throughout the year, their strategic role in planning the long-term improvement of the school is less well developed. This has already been recognised and the headteacher has organised suitable training to improve this aspect of the governors' role.

63. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching is rigorous and has led to significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, especially at Key Stage 2. The appraisal of teachers contributes soundly to this process, although it is sometimes interrupted when teachers leave and are replaced. There is good support for staff who are new to the school, including those who are newly qualified, and the year group team leaders provide effective guidance and induction into the way the school operates. There is also detailed monitoring of the standards achieved by the pupils. This has led, for example, to the implementation of an action plan for improving standards in writing throughout the school, which has been identified as the school's main priority. The headteacher and key stage co-ordinator have also highlighted the need to raise standards at Key Stage 1 and improve the transition arrangements for the end of the Foundation Stage. However, there is no action plan to address these issues, which is a matter of some urgency for the school to address.

64. The school makes good use of its resources to support pupils' learning. Spending decisions are linked closely to the priorities identified in the school's operational plan. For example, there has recently been significant outlay on books and other resources to support teaching and learning in the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson. These are used well. Similarly, targeted expenditure on information and communication technology has equipped the school well to implement all aspects of the National Curriculum and ensure that pupils have well planned, regular access to computers. As a result, standards have risen to above average at Key Stage 2. There is efficient and effective financial control and administration. The headteacher and governors are well informed and the administrative officer ensures that finances are kept in good order. They have managed the school's resources well and this has enabled them to undertake a long-term programme of improvements to the buildings, but also have suitable contingency plans in hand to cope with any further staffing difficulties that may arise. The headteacher and governors are concerned to ensure that they get good value for money when they obtain different quotations for goods and services. After consulting the pupils about their views of the playground facilities, governors allocated money to improving these facilities, which has resulted in enhancing the quality of pupils' play. However, governors have not challenged the use of curriculum time, for example, at Key Stage 1, where a significant proportion of lesson time is used for play activities whilst several National Curriculum subjects are not given enough time for pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

65. The match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum is good. There has been a high turnover of staff since the last inspection, but teachers and assistants work well together to form a functional team. Support assistants are generally good and contribute well to the quality of teaching and learning of those pupils who have special educational needs. There are sufficient teachers, and they have a wide range of experience, from those who are relatively new to those who have many years' experience. Teachers who are from overseas and are new to the school are receiving good levels of support. There are co-ordinators for all subjects except music, and this post is being advertised. Staff have sufficient opportunities for their own development, and attend courses relevant to their teaching. However, several teachers, having received training, have then moved from the school. In general, the standard of staffing has been maintained since the last report, in spite of the high turnover.

66. The school's accommodation is generally satisfactory, although there are some areas for concern. Library provision for infants and juniors is unsatisfactory. The infant library is used as a corridor and is too small to be used for anything other than very small groups of children. The junior library is to be found in the computer room. Both libraries do not allow pupils space or opportunity to read, or research as a class, and there are not enough books. Because of these inadequacies, pupils are not being taught library skills

sufficiently well. Teachers make good efforts to brighten up an unpromising set of buildings with their displays, both in rooms and in corridors. The school has some specialist rooms, such as one each for music, pottery and clay work, and special educational needs. However, in spite of a good standard of cleaning throughout the school, some of these rooms are cluttered and uninviting. For example, the room used for instrumental lessons and choir, has furniture and equipment stored in it and is in need of refurbishment. There is a medical room where pupils can lie down if they are not feeling well. Outside there are separate playgrounds for Foundation Stage children, infants and juniors. These are marked with games for use in playtimes. The school pays for the use of a local field, but it is often waterlogged during the winter and cannot be used.

67. Resources are generally good and help to promote good learning. They are kept in two large areas with plenty of space, and they include a variety of materials for teachers' research into topics. Some resources, such as a collection of pictures for use in art, are brand new and have not been used because teachers are not aware of what is available. The computer room has 15 computers and this provides a good facility to enable pupils to develop skills in information and communication technology. The school has purchased some good resources to help make playtimes more enjoyable for the pupils. For instance, pupils were seen playing with a giant draughts set, as well as bicycles and small games equipment.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

68. In order to continue to improve the quality of education provided by the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

### **1. Raise the standards of the pupils' work in writing\* throughout the school and in reading, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 by:**

- ensuring that the pupils develop their writing skills more fully in all subjects of the curriculum;
- improving the pupils' ability to draft and redraft their work in order to make it better;
- developing good standards of handwriting and presentation;
- being certain that the pupils' work is marked in ways which help them to improve;
- checking that sufficient time is devoted to extending pupils' competence and skills in written work;
- improving the links between the Foundation Stage curriculum and the National Curriculum to ensure a smooth transition;
- raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in Year 1;
- improving the use of assessment information to track pupils' progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2;

(Paragraphs 1-4, 16-19, 26, 29, 48, 60, 63, 70, 80, 83, 85-90, 92, 94, 96, 100, 102, 105, 122, 127)

### **2. Improve curricular provision and raise standards in religious education and music throughout the school and geography and history at Key Stage 1 by:**

- ensuring that enough time is given to these subjects so that National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are fully implemented;

(Paragraphs 3, 5, 20, 24, 32, 49, 64, 119, 124, 125, 127, 136, 137, 139, 140, 148-151, 153)

### **3. Improve the role of subject co-ordinators and governors in monitoring curricular provision and the standards achieved by the pupils.**

(Paragraphs 57, 58, 62, 92, 112, 123, 129, 141, 153)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

1. Seeking ways to improve the school's partnership with those parents who feel dissatisfied with this aspect of its provision.

(Paragraphs 50-55)

2. Improving library provision and opportunities for pupils to develop research skills.

(Paragraphs 66, 84, 93)

3. Formalising the arrangements for the identification of gifted and talented pupils and the provision that is made for them.

(Paragraph 32)

\*denotes issues already identified in the school development plan

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	32	23	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	47	34	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	303
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	68
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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)**

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year		2001	22	23	45
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	19	20	
	Girls	20	23	23	
	Total	38	42	43	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (89)	93 (93)	96 (87)	
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20	
	Girls	21	23	23	
	Total	40	43	43	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (89)	96 (87)	96 (100)	
	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)**

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year		2001	22	19	41
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	21	
	Girls	15	13	17	
	Total	32	32	38	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (82)	80 (69)	95 (93)	
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	20	
	Girls	16	17	17	
	Total	35	36	37	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (80)	90 (78)	90 (82)	
	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	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	5
Indian	8
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	258
Any other minority ethnic group	40

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	176

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	698903
Total expenditure	703030
Expenditure per pupil	2239
Balance brought forward from previous year	47963

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Balance carried forward to next year	43836
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	15

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	314
Number of questionnaires returned	108

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	45	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	27	51	13	5	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	58	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	18	51	18	5	8
The teaching is good.	19	60	14	5	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	39	31	5	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	41	10	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	46	13	3	3
The school works closely with parents.	18	48	26	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	32	50	8	4	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	58	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	55	10	3	2

### Other issues raised by parents

Seven parents wrote to the registered inspector to express concern about the way classes are organised at Key Stage 2. A number of parents at the pre-inspection meeting echoed their concerns. The inspection's findings are that the school is managing its mixed age classes well and that the revised curriculum plan takes good account of the needs of pupils of different ages in the same class. The present system is not having an adverse effect on

the standards achieved by the pupils. However, it is clear from parents' responses that the school has not fully explained how its arrangements work in practice.

## **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**

69. The school makes satisfactory provision for children in the Foundation Stage, as at the time of the last inspection. Significant changes in national requirements for the curriculum for this stage of schooling have been implemented effectively by the teachers. Children are admitted to the two parallel Reception classes in the term in which they become five years old. Initially, they attend for half-day sessions for a few weeks, before becoming full time, to allow for a period of settling in. They are taught within a welcoming, supportive environment, where they feel safe and secure. Most of the children have attended some form of pre-school establishment, before starting in the Reception classes. Tests administered soon after children start school show that their attainment on entry is above average.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all areas of development. Teachers in the Reception classes plan carefully and prepare lessons well. A strong feature of their good provision is the effective organisation and thoughtful management of the whole learning environment, which is a major influence on the children's good development. They match activities well to the needs of lower and average attainers, but pay insufficient attention to the needs of more capable children on completion of the Early Learning Goals. This is because there is no provision for more able children to progress into the early stages of the National Curriculum when they are ready for more demanding work. Consequently, by the end of the Reception year, although children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals, which is sound achievement, the transition into Year 1 tends to slow down pupils' progress. The school has identified this an issue to be addressed because of its impact on standards at Key Stage 1.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

71. The quality of teaching and learning is good and enables children to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. At the start of each day, teachers make a point of engaging every child in conversation during the registration period, which helps them all to feel included and valued as individuals. Children's behaviour is good in and around the school. They co-operate well in play and work activities, listen carefully to teachers and each other and respect each other's ideas. They quickly develop a good understanding of classroom procedures and most respond well to them. When given the opportunity to choose activities for themselves, they do so sensibly and sustain good levels of concentration for their age. Opportunities for learning through stories and role-play help to develop empathy and understanding of how others experience the world. When a group of children enacted the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, even the youngest adopted a good range of dramatic and expressive voices with which to portray their characters. They discussed how frightened Goldilocks might have felt, developing vocabulary as well as social and emotional understanding. During circle time, children take part in structured discussions on many topics, including religious education. All children attend well to their personal hygiene and most are able to undress and dress themselves, before and after movement lessons. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted well in other areas of learning. A strength of the teaching is the warm, caring relationships that adults develop with the children, which helps them to respond well to others.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

72. The quality of teaching and learning is good in this area and children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year, which is above average. Most children make good progress, including those who have been identified

early with special educational needs. Those few children who speak English as an additional language do so fluently and do not need extra support in class. However, more able children do not progress at a sufficiently fast pace to enable them to reach the levels of which they are capable by the end of the year. Teachers have introduced enlarged text reading books and posters, which they share with children, in preparation for the literacy hour in Key Stage 1. Younger children recognise initial letters and know their names and sounds. They are beginning to form clear letter shapes and writing patterns. They enjoy games where they take the initial letter of each other's names and then say the names of three fruits, toys or foods beginning with the same letter. More able and older children, write their own name, can string letters together to write words and know that text and pictures carry meaning. All children enjoy looking at and handling books, which they readily share with adults. Some can read simple stories with understanding and expression. Teachers ensure that frequently used words are prominently displayed to support children's writing. Children are provided with good role-play areas, such as the Three Bears' House and the puppet theatre. These are very well used, often with an adult involved, to extend the children's vocabulary. The classroom assistants make a very positive contribution to children's development, for example, they take small groups to develop listening skills, using a tape recorder, and share enlarged texts of the story as they listen, stopping the tape at intervals to teach and discuss specific points.

### **Mathematical development**

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Teachers help children to develop mathematical understanding well, by providing a structured programme of practical experiences, which enable them to make good progress. The youngest count to five and back, most can count to ten and back to 0 and approximately one third exceed this already. They love to sing counting songs such as *Ten little, nine little, eight little, teddy bears...* Children know the names of the days of the week and remember the correct sequence by singing a song designed to teach this. They recognise and describe the attributes of many simple two and three-dimensional shapes. Many children work by keeping two or three different concepts in mind at the same time. For example, when seated in a circle, they took turns to choose three identical shapes, colours and types of toys such as bears and rabbits. They applauded each other and counted the toys out loud together to join in the fun. Adults provide good support by playing board games and specially designed resources, which enable children to practise matching, sorting, counting, addition and subtraction in a practical way. They experience working with materials such as clay, playdough, sand and water, by rolling out and cutting shapes and by filling and emptying differently sized containers.

74. Teachers provide many opportunities to extend the children's understanding of basic skills, through practical experiences. They introduce mathematical vocabulary during learning activities, which build upon the children's previous understanding well. Resources to support teaching and learning are plentiful, well matched to young children's development and of good quality. Lessons are well planned and the tasks set are appropriate to the recommendations of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

75. The good teaching promotes good learning and children are on course to exceed the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teachers used food and its preparation well as a method of extending children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, in small groups, they made porridge after listening to the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. Teachers gave children the opportunity to discuss table manners, they showed respect for each other's ideas and were polite and amicable. Children described how dried oats felt to touch and developed good levels of sensory

vocabulary. They used magnifying lenses to observe grains and learned that each flake was pressed from a separate seed. They knew that seeds grow into plants so that more oats can grow. Each child took turns to measure, add and stir the ingredients and learned that they are called solids and liquids. They noticed changes, which occur when heat is applied to the mixture. Teachers were mindful of safety issues. Children knew they must take care when handling utensils and only work with an adult when cooking or heating food in the oven. They learned to use specific language for mathematics by matching the larger portion to Daddy Bear and so on. Other groups of children worked with a classroom assistant, to scoop out a giant pumpkin when making a candle lantern for Halloween. Some children, with little pre school experience of practical activities, recoiled from getting hands into wet pulp.

76. Children use computers for brief spells, throughout the day, working independently or in pairs. They co-operate well and develop accuracy and proficiency when controlling the mouse. In whole class lessons, using the computer suite, children make very good progress because they behave well, share computers sensibly and listen carefully to clear, simplified instructions from their teachers. They concentrate well and some become engrossed. They become excited when making changes to the screen, dressing characters in appropriate clothing and footwear from the selection in the visual display. Children learn about the differences and similarities of beliefs which people hold. They know about the celebration of feasts and festivals and the significance of candles to Jewish people at Hannukah, the star of Bethlehem at Christmas time to Christians and the symbol of light in the Hindu religion. In this way, they develop specific vocabulary and build upon their good levels of spoken English. The teaching and learning of operational computer skills are good and teachers provide a good range of other practical resources for children to handle and play with. They provide a good range of books, tools and materials, to help children effectively in this area of the curriculum.

### **Physical development**

77. The good quality of teaching helps children to make good progress in this area of learning. They are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Children's physical development is good overall and particularly good in indoor physical education lessons. There is a good range of outdoor play equipment for children to climb and balance on, as well as large wheeled toys, such as a tractor, buggies and bicycles. Pupils dress appropriately for indoor lessons. They enter the hall quietly and sensibly find their own space. Teachers assess children's previous learning by getting them to recall achievements from the last lesson and set clear ground rules for safety before beginning activities. Children move carefully, sometimes at speed, in the hall, being mindful of their own and each other's safety. They respond well to commands and directions, often moving in time to the beat of a drum or other musical instrument. They interpret a range of musical sounds, such as staccato, by making stomping, jerking movements. All children enjoy movement lessons. They sustain long periods of concentration and this helps them to make good progress. Younger children overcome timidity and gain confidence because of the well structured, step by step activities provided. Boys and girls make equally good contributions to lessons.

78. Teachers plan well for physical development. In class, they develop good levels of dexterity and control through the use of a good range of mark-making tools for drawing, painting and writing. Children develop satisfactory cutting and joining skills, which teachers make a point of developing early because of the lack of experience with tools that many children show on entry to school. Children enjoy using a good range of large, outdoor construction kits and blocks, as well as the scaled down versions used in class, for developing manual dexterity. Most are able to dress themselves, and only a few need help with shirt buttons.

## **Creative development**

79. For a significant number of children, this is the weakest area of capability on entry to the Reception class. Teachers work hard to ensure that children receive extra help in this respect and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals. Teachers build confidence through closely supervised teaching of small groups, to develop practical skills such as cutting with scissors, tearing, gluing, threading beads and tying laces and threads. Children learn to mix and apply paint, join materials for collage work and draw using pastels, pencils and pens. They enjoy a good range of activities, enabling them to explore materials and marks creatively and imaginatively. They model with malleable materials such as clay and play dough and develop their understanding of texture and three-dimensional work. Children enjoy making and listening to music. After listening to a tape of the 'Goldilocks Rap', they learned the song, adding actions, clapping and changing their voices to represent each of the Three Bears. They reproduce quite complex clapping patterns, on first hearing. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to engage in imaginative play, as when they participated in acting out the story of *Goldilocks and The Three Bears*. They use stories and rhymes well to advance this aspect of the children's development.

## **ENGLISH**

80. Standards in English are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. This represents a decline in standards in Year 2 since the last inspection and similar standards in Year 6. The reason for average standards in Year 2 is that too few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment, especially in writing. Standards in writing have been identified as the school's main priority for development at both key stages, as they are lower than those in reading. This is reflected in the pupils' performance in national tests, where very few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment in writing. The school has set challenging targets for Year 6 pupils to achieve in 2002, but no targets have been set for pupils in Year 2. The achievement of pupils at Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory given their above average attainment on entry to the school. Pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2 is good, as they make up considerable ground from the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets that are set in their individual education plans, because they are given work that meets their needs and are well supported by teachers and assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language, many of whom are bilingual, progress at the same rate as other pupils in the class.

81. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2, pupils speak clearly and confidently in class discussions. They organise what they say and include relevant details. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils used correct scientific vocabulary and answered articulately when the teacher probed their understanding of light and dark. Pupils join in discussions as members of a group and take turns in speaking. They ask questions to clarify their understanding and listen attentively to the reply. When listening to the teacher during the introduction to lessons, pupils sustain concentration well and follow instructions appropriately.

82. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to be good listeners. They identify the main points of a discussion and are able to recall and recount the important features of a talk or reading. Pupils respond appropriately to what others have to say and ask relevant questions to further their own understanding. For example, in a Year 5/6 information and communication technology lesson, pupils asked questions about the technicalities of using sensing devices to measure changes in environmental conditions, which increased their understanding of the process. Pupils speak with confidence in a range of contexts and use

a wide variety of appropriate vocabulary to communicate meaning. They speak audibly and clearly, and make effective contributions to class and group discussions.

83. Standards in reading are average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. This is because at Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels of attainment is similar to that found in most schools, whilst at Key Stage 2 it is much higher. Pupils clearly enjoy books and this has a positive influence on their learning. At all ages, they enjoy reading the shared text in the literacy hour and most do so with expression and understanding. At Key Stage 1, pupils read texts accurately and use a number of different strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. More able pupils read confidently and with good expression, and use their knowledge of sequence and story language when they are retelling stories they have read.

84. Pupils' enthusiasm for reading develops well throughout Key Stage 2. In Year 6 they read with fluency and accuracy and become increasingly competent in inferring and deducing information from a text. Pupils scan texts well to find information, as when they searched for examples of direct and reported speech in a Year 5/6 lesson. They identify how an author represents and portrays characters through dialogue and action and consider the effects of language. Pupils summarise events and discuss character in some detail, and are able to predict possible outcomes and suggest alternatives. As the school does not have sufficient library resources, the development of pupils' research and referencing skills is limited.

85. Standards in writing are average at both key stages. Few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment. Pupils in Year 2 have a growing awareness of how to structure a story, although their books show that they have had few opportunities to develop this aspect of writing. They understand the conventions of writing lists and sequencing instructions, as when they made sandwiches and wrote instructions to explain to others how to carry out the same sequence of operations. There is little evidence that pupils plan and review their writing or discuss the quality of what they have written. Pupils use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly and more able pupils are beginning to use commas when writing lists of words within a sentence. Pupils spell common words correctly and are beginning to attempt more complex words. Handwriting is inconsistent in size and shape and often untidy. Very few pupils attempt to write in a joined style.

86. In Year 6, pupils write in an appropriate range of forms, including newspaper reports, stories, descriptions and information pamphlets. The best writing shows a lively and interesting style, with imaginative use of vocabulary and precision in selecting words to achieve a planned effect. For example, pupils use persuasive language effectively when writing leaflets to extol the best qualities of their school. Most pupils organise their writing in a logical sequence to tell a story or recount events, and generally show a sound understanding of grammatical conventions. There has been a noticeable improvement in the standard of pupils' writing as the term has progressed. This is because teachers have begun to implement the action plan and place suitable emphasis on teaching and modelling the writing process. Pupils were seen to be developing their ideas in detail and producing extended pieces of text as they wrote their own ending to the story of 'Kensuke's Kingdom', using language imaginatively and writing with fluency and confidence. The analysis of pupils' work, in particular, showed a lack of emphasis on pupils planning, drafting, editing and refining their work. Handwriting varies considerably in quality, but much is untidy and ill-formed. There is insufficient emphasis on standards of presentation.

87. Throughout the school, standards in literacy are average, but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop literacy skills across the curriculum. Teachers do not plan adequately in subjects like history, geography and religious education to extend pupils' experience in writing and often lessons do not present sufficient challenge, especially for more able pupils.

88. The quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. All teachers have supportive and encouraging relationships with their pupils that create a positive climate for learning and enable pupils to enjoy their work. They manage pupils very well and ensure that all concentrate on their tasks and put a great deal of effort into their work. At both key stages, there is not enough emphasis on teaching pupils to develop a fluent, joined style of writing and to present their work neatly. There are also inconsistencies between teachers in the way they mark pupils' work. Some write helpful comments that show pupils clearly how to improve their work, whilst others just tick work or give too much praise for work that has obvious shortcomings. A good feature of the teaching is the setting of individual targets that focus on identified weaknesses in each pupil's work. These are used well to help pupils progress, and teachers often draw pupils' attention to them.

89. At Key Stage 1, teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve are not high enough, especially in writing. This was evident in the work completed by pupils in both Years 1 and 2 during the previous year. This showed that there was a good emphasis on teaching pupils sounds and simple spelling patterns, but insufficient development of the skills required to write increasingly lengthy pieces of text. Pupils do not make enough progress in Year 1, given their above average attainment on entry to the school. This means that they have too much ground to make up in Year 2, which is why the results of national tests are not as high as they should be. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils write in large unlined books. This does not help them to develop awareness of letter size and their handwriting is often uneven, poorly formed and untidy. The teaching of handwriting is not sufficiently structured to help pupils become neat and fluent writers. Teachers do not take advantage of opportunities in other subjects to develop pupils' literacy skills. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils made sandwiches so that they could write instructions afterwards, which resulted in a rather rushed attempt at writing. Yet there are few examples of pupils developing writing skills in design and technology, history or religious education lessons, for example.

90. At Key Stage 2, teachers have high expectations of pupils and set challenging targets for them to achieve. Four of the six teachers are new to the school. They have been supported well by team leaders and year group colleagues and are providing pupils with suitably demanding work and also implementing the key points in the school's action plan for developing writing. In two of the lessons seen, there was good modelling of the writing process, which helped pupils to improve the style and content of their own writing. However, analysis of pupils' books shows that, earlier in the term, there were inconsistencies in the way teachers were implementing the National Literacy Strategy and the quality of teaching and learning varied considerably from class to class. This was not evident during the inspection and suggests that the good support given to new teachers has had a positive effect. Teachers do not stress sufficiently the importance of carefully formed handwriting and neat presentation, which often detracts from the quality of pupils' finished work.

91. Strengths of the teaching throughout the school were illustrated well in a Year 3/4 lesson where pupils were learned about the function of adverbs and the features of play scripts. The initial activity reinforced pupils' understanding of nouns and verbs and led them well into learning how adverbs are used to "add to the verb". The teacher's clear explanations and use of pictures to stimulate pupils' ideas prompted them to suggest a good variety of adverbs such as "speedily" and "noisily". The teacher made good use of a large poster to demonstrate the key features of a play script, such as stage directions. Her skilful questioning helped pupils to draw inferences from the text, which she used well to lead pupils into planning and writing the next two scenes. The teacher made effective links between the work on adverbs and the writing task, and also involved pupils in reading the text. Her very good rapport with the pupils and encouraging manner helped to create a

positive atmosphere in which pupils were eager to participate and responded well to the task.

92. The curriculum in English is planned effectively to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. The co-ordinator is very experienced and has a realistic view of the issues facing the subject. However, she has too many other responsibilities to be fully effective in the role. There has been extensive monitoring of the quality of teaching in English and detailed analysis of the pupils' results in national and internal tests, which have led to the current focus on improving writing. This is already having a positive impact, though it is more noticeable at Key Stage 2. However, there is still insufficient development of literacy skills in other subjects. Assessment and record keeping procedures are good, but the information gained from them is not used effectively at Key Stage 1 to track pupils' progress from the Reception year to Year 2. Similarly the assessments that are made soon after the children start school are not used to predict future attainment levels or set targets for individual pupils and year groups to achieve. Some teachers are over generous in their assessments of pupils' levels of attainment, especially at Key Stage 1. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning in English. For example, some pupils have written stories to be published on a website. Resources in English are satisfactory, overall.

93. The school is well equipped for the literacy hour and pupils benefit from a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts for structured reading sessions. However, classroom libraries are less well resourced and many books are worn. The location of the small selection of books in the infant and junior libraries is unsatisfactory. One is in a corridor and the other in the computer suite, neither of which provides a suitable environment for pupils to browse or develop library skills. The subject is enhanced by a variety of well planned events. Visiting theatre groups widen pupils' experience of the performing arts and the recent visit by an author of children's books inspired pupils to write stories for a website. The school has its own theatre company, in which pupils, teachers and parents take part to put on productions. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards in numeracy and all other areas of mathematics. This finding is similar to that of the previous report, but the standards are lower than they were in the national tests for 2001, where standards were above the national average. The difference in the findings of this report and the results of the tests is mostly explained by the staff changes that have affected pupils' attainment, especially in Year 2. Last year, they were able to have two days each week with grouping arrangements, which enabled teachers to focus specifically on extending and challenging the more able pupils as well as meeting the needs of less able and average attaining pupils. These grouping arrangements have had to be suspended until the next term. At present, there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils across the range of activities in mathematics. Overall, the achievement of pupils at Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory because their attainment on entry to the school is above average. Pupils do not make enough progress in Year 1 to enable them to achieve the standards they are capable of in Year 2.

95. Standards are above average in Year 6, with a significant number of pupils reaching a standard that is well above average. This finding broadly matches the results of the 2001 national curriculum tests, although those results show that standards were well above average overall. It is also similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is good at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2.

96. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and this reflects the findings of the last inspection. There are, however, some shortcomings, mainly due to the lack of challenge for more able pupils across the range of mathematical topics. Teachers' planning includes some extension work but does not provide enough that is pitched at a consistently high level for those capable of achieving it. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and all lessons begin with a suitable warm up of mental mathematics followed by the main activity, which leads smoothly into group activities. When pupils are engaged in these, they concentrate and work well. They successfully add and subtract in mental mathematics sessions. Year 2 pupils were seen working on problems requiring knowledge of odd and even numbers, but the work was not challenging for the more able group until the very end of the lesson. In Year 1, pupils count forwards and backwards in ones or tens and the teachers have good strategies for challenging pupils of differing ages and levels of attainment in classes containing both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Pupils use standard units when measuring the length of everyday objects such as pencils and scissors. Year 2 pupils know shapes such as pentagons and hexagons, and sort objects, using diagrams to record their findings. However, they have had little opportunity to use charts and simple graphs. Some pupils are able to work out strategies for helping their calculations such as rounding numbers up to make the sum easier. However, some pupils have not grasped the idea of using such strategies until an adult helps them. Teachers ensure that pupils are attentive and they try to involve as many as possible when the class is working as a whole.

97. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is good, and pupils generally make good progress for their ages and abilities. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when progress was satisfactory. All classes in this key stage have good relationships with their teachers and this creates a productive working environment. Pupils are very well behaved, and they concentrate and work hard. There is a good level of challenge across the range of attainment and pupils use a variety of strategies for mental calculations. For example, they were seen partitioning numbers, borrowing and paying back, adding and subtracting. These sessions are usually taken at a brisk pace, which sets up the challenge for later work. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5/6 were engaged in work on quadrilaterals and plotting co-ordinates. Teachers had planned for all levels of attainment and all were challenged to extend their knowledge and understanding of co-ordinates and translating movements round the four quadrants. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of regular shapes and their properties, and give definitions of a parallelogram, a rhombus and a trapezium. Year 3/4 classes were working with two and three times tables, number squares and sequences. In some cases, attainment in these classes is above average. Pupils in Year 6 multiply decimals, work out ratios and percentages and apply these to practical problems. For example when working with ratios, they applied their work to the making of mortar, working out the proportions of sand and cement required. Good teaching leads to high levels of interest and a willingness to work that enables good progress to be made.

98. Teachers at both key stages are confident with the National Numeracy Strategy, and they apply it effectively. In general, the management of classes is very good, and, in Key Stage 2, all work is planned that matches pupils' abilities. Pupils are encouraged to explain and show their mathematical reasoning and working out, and most are keen to answer the mental mathematics questions. All teachers in both key stages take care to explain what the pupils are going to learn, both in the mental mathematics starter and in the main activities. In this way, pupils understand what is expected of them. Good questioning in a Year 5/6 class enabled pupils to crystallise in their minds the properties of the four-sided figures they were defining. In most classes, across both key stages, teachers move round the groups helping pupils to do their written work, as in a Year 3/4 class where the teacher focused on those who have special educational needs and those who find working

in the English language more difficult. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are encouraged to use whiteboards to answer mental mathematics questions and there is an element of contest and excitement about this part of the lesson.

99. Across the curriculum, mathematical skills are used to some extent in other subjects such as in music, where pupils count, and in science where they measure. Some use of computers is to be found in pupils' work, but in the lessons observed during the inspection, computers were not used. Homework is used satisfactorily to reinforce what pupils have learned in lessons.

100. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and analyses the results of tests. The use of this analysis is improving, and areas for development are identified to some extent so that more work can be done. This is especially so at Key Stage 2. At the time of the previous inspection, there was insufficient monitoring of teaching, but this has improved. The assessment of pupils' work refers directly to the levels of the National Curriculum that they have reached, but teachers' marking includes little advice about how the work could be improved. Resources are good and are organised so that all classes are able to have access to them when they are required. The school adds to the National Numeracy Strategy by using material gathered from a variety of commercially produced books, and this contributes well to the depth of the curriculum. Teachers have all received training in numeracy, and there is good support for those new to the school.

## **SCIENCE**

101. The findings of the inspection are that standards for pupils in Year 6 exceed the national average. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Over recent years, standards have been rising. In the national tests in 2001, almost all of the pupils gained the expected levels for their age, with almost two thirds of them gaining the higher Level 5. These improvements have been brought about due to the school's effective drive to raise standards, by concentrating on the investigative and practical approaches in Key Stage 2. This ensures that pupils become proficient in scientific methods and processes and are not just knowledgeable about it. All pupils make good progress in the subject and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the practical investigations and achieve good levels of reporting in their work-books. This is because of the emphasis that teachers place on clear visual recording methods using illustration, diagram and annotation, which supports pupils' written work. In lessons, boys and girls made equally good contributions to class discussions and there was no discernible difference in rates of progress.

102. The findings of the inspection show that the standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the last report. The assessments made by teachers in 2000 and 2001 show that they were well above average by the end of Key Stage 1. This was because a very high proportion of pupils achieved Level 3. There is no evidence to show that this is likely to be case for pupils in the present Year 2 and indicates that some assessments may be over generous. Achievement is satisfactory at Key Stage 1.

103. The strengths of the pupils' achievements include their understanding of materials and their properties. For example, pupils in Year 6 make careful observations when adding a range of dry substances to water, in order to learn about solubility. In the lesson observed, pupils were careful to measure exact amounts, showing a good knowledge of fair testing principles, when making comparisons between baking powder, cornflour, salt and plaster of Paris. They knew that some of the changes can be reversed and that some are irreversible and could say why. Pupils offered sensible predictions, based on experience. For example, they knew that some particles do not easily dissolve and may need to be accelerated by stirring. All pupils were keen to begin practical investigations. More able pupils reflected on effective procedures, conferred amongst themselves, and quickly drew up helpful tables on which to record and compare investigations, before

commencing work. A few lower achievers took more time to complete tables, however, with support, they made good progress. Higher achievers are not always sufficiently challenged.

104. Information and communication technology is used well to link learning in science and design and technology. Using a simple layout of a modern home, pupils were able to simulate the operation of chosen devices, using a control module to switch on items such as a table lamp, a television set or a cooker.

105. Pupils in Year 2 know that light comes from different sources, that the sun is a star and that darkness is the result of no light source. When discussing everyday electrical devices, a few pupils confuse battery and mains as the source of power. Taking this as an opportunity to stress safety precautions, the teacher gave warnings and advice about the correct uses of power points and household gadgets. The teacher explained by means of pictures and offered a variety of hand-held electrical devices to investigate, such as a mobile phone, a games machine and a torch. Some pupils initially thought that the information card was the power source for the phone and were surprised to find that it is the battery that supplies the charge. Teachers introduce famous scientists through stories. For example, in one lesson, the teacher used Thomas Edison and his many inventions, such as the light bulb, to capture pupils' imagination. Pupils expressed amazement at the wide variety of his interests and were impressed by his curiosity when still a child which led eventually to his inventions. This helped to develop their own spiritual, moral, cultural and social awareness. The weaknesses in some pupils' learning stem from their inability to offer their own ideas of "What might happen if....?" This is due to some over-directed teaching, which does not always allow for pupils' own investigations and time to reflect on possible outcomes. This is the case when pupils copy a prepared text or use inappropriate printed worksheets.

106. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good at Key Stage 2, and shows improvement since the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, it remains sound and has been maintained since the last inspection. An improvement, which is particularly evident at Key Stage 2, is the way teachers are taking a more investigative approach in which pupils are actively involved in experimental work. This approach motivates pupils and results in more personal learning experiences for pupils at all levels of attainment. Pupils' work is assessed on completion of each topic and the information is beginning to be used to plan further developments in their learning. However, the analysis of assessment information is not rigorous enough to ensure that appropriately demanding work is given to more able pupils. There is a variation across the school in the way teachers mark pupils' work. Sometimes, just a tick or one word is offered, rather than a comment to help pupils to improve. Pupils develop appropriate scientific vocabulary and are encouraged to express themselves clearly, using good levels of spoken English in class discussions.

107. The subject co-ordinator has very good levels of specialist knowledge and expertise and has taken the subject forward since the last inspection. The improvement in standards has been partly due to the adaptation of a recently adopted national scheme, which supports teachers' planning, especially those new to the school, by providing clear objectives and progression in pupils' learning. Much work has been undertaken by the co-ordinator to ensure that pupils in mixed year classes receive an appropriate curriculum for their age. Monitoring of pupils' work across year groups, to ensure parity of experience, is in the early stages of development. Teachers have not had the benefit of any recent in-service training, because of other priorities. The subject is well resourced.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108. Standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6, as at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. They use a range of materials, tools and techniques when creating art work. They mix paint

successfully to create different shades and tones and draw from memory, observation and imagination. A relative weakness is the evaluation and development of their own work.

109. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages. The effectiveness of the teaching is limited by the way that the curriculum is planned, as there is no whole school overview to ensure progression in the teaching of skills, or the knowledge and understanding of different artists' work. Although teachers in each team plan together to ensure consistency for pupils in the same year groups, there is no certainty that the planned work will build systematically on previous learning. A good feature of the teaching is the way teachers link art and design with the pupils' work in other subjects. For example, pupils in a Year 3/4 class produced some good work when they observed and sketched animal bones, linked to their work in science.

110. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 1, pupils experimented with paper, using different techniques to create particular effects. They explored ways of tearing, scrunching, twisting and pleating paper after watching the teacher's careful demonstrations and explanations. Although the lesson helped to extend the pupils' knowledge of materials and how to use them, they had no opportunity to evaluate or develop their own ideas as they were shown a finished product, which they then had to recreate. Too much direction by the teacher limited their creativity and imagination.

111. As they move into Key Stage 2, pupils refine their skills appropriately. In Year 3/4, pupils mix watercolour paints effectively to create designs in shades of autumn and use their drawing skills well to produce self-portraits. Pupils in Year 5/6 experiment with more demanding techniques, such as drawing to scale and creating perspective in their views of landscapes. Their work shows depth and distance effectively. In a good lesson in a Year 5/6 class, which linked well with pupils' work in history, there was good teaching of sketching techniques. Pupils refined their skills well as they drew people from different angles, using light pencil strokes and looking frequently at the subject in order to reproduce the correct proportions.

112. A part-time teacher is overseeing the subject until a permanent co-ordinator is appointed. There has been little development in the subject since the previous inspection. The school has adopted the scheme of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but this has not been modified sufficiently to ensure progression in the teaching of skills and knowledge from year to year. A two-year cycle of work does, however, ensure that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat the same units of the scheme. The school has a good range of resources to support learning, including a variety of examples of artists' work, although teachers are not all aware of what is available or where it is kept. The co-ordinator is currently organising these resources more efficiently and is making sure that teachers are made aware of them. There was no evidence of the use of information and communication technology in the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

113. From lessons seen, pupils' work in displays and teachers' planning, the inspection findings are that standards at both key stages are similar to those found in most schools of this type and have been maintained since the last inspection. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory at both key stages, including those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

114. In Year 2, pupils have experienced a variety of appropriate materials to support their designing and making activities. Pupils learn to manipulate simple tools, such as scissors, staplers and rulers, correctly and safely. They use a satisfactory range of joining techniques, such as masking tape, adhesives and paper clips, to construct models and products. Pupils in Year 2 enjoyed making their artwork 'come to life' by devising slider mechanisms, which simulate the movement of vehicles and animals across their paintings.

Pupils learn to use a good working vocabulary of technical terms when discussing and evaluating their own work and that of other designers and makers.

115. In Year 6, pupils have extended their practical skills and explored more rigorous materials, effectively linking work done in science with constructional, designing and making skills. After a class visit to Mountfitchet Castle, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made realistic models of early settlers' houses, using clay, card, straw, dried leaves and timber. From these models, they were able to make comparisons between their own lives and those of the early settlers in 1100, as part of a history topic on 'Barnet then and now'.

116. The quality of teaching varies across the school but is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Teachers rely heavily on a recently adopted national scheme of work, which has helped to raise awareness and develop confidence in teaching the subject. There has been no recent in-service training for teachers, in order to update their own practical expertise in teaching the skills required, which makes it difficult for newly appointed teachers to become familiar with current practice. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own models and products, both during the making process and at the end of topics. They give good oral feedback in lessons. The use of food as a material is handled well by teachers and opportunities are found to link wider world issues with pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding, such as the origins of some foods and their religious significance in feasts and festivals. A group of pupils, who experience specific difficulties in learning, enjoyed making bread as part of a programme designed to enrich their personal and social development. They learned new vocabulary, such as the difference between 'knead' and 'need'. Classroom assistants make a very positive contribution, especially in practical activity sessions. They are well briefed and appropriately deployed with small groups of pupils. This was evident in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils carefully made pop-up puppets, using card, fabrics, threads and wooden rods, as part of a larger puppet theatre project. They were well motivated and derived much pleasure and pride from the activity and resulting products.

117. Leadership in the subject has recently changed. The present co-ordinator is overseeing the subject temporarily and has done a good job implementing the scheme of work and organising resources. There are no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and there is a good range of resources to support learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

118. No teaching of geography was observed during this inspection as the school teaches history and geography alternately in half term blocks throughout the school year. Judgements are, therefore, based on the analysis of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning and records.

119. The evidence indicates that, in Year 2, standards and achievement are below average. This is largely because the school allocates less time to teaching the subject at Key Stage 1 than most schools do. The time allocated is insufficient to cover the subject adequately. As a result, the requirements of the National Curriculum are not met at this key stage and the pupils do not know as much about the subject as they do in those schools where requirements are met. This, and a different quality of teaching, are why standards at Key Stage 1 are not as high as they were at the time of the school's last inspection. The analysis of work shows that only a limited amount of work was produced by the pupils during the half term in which this subject was taught. This work was of a below average standard. The school's planning shows that the topic covered in Year 2 was the seasons, but pupils' books contained only three pieces of work on this topic. The work essentially consisted of drawing or colouring a picture about aspects of autumn, varied amounts of writing about it and completing a word search to identify words relating to the weather. Pupils have not been taught this topic in sufficient depth and do not know enough about

the seasons. Conversations with pupils confirmed this fact. The teachers' expectations of the standards that pupils should achieve, the amount of work that they should produce and the quality of the presentation of their work are not high enough. The quality of teaching and learning at this key stage are, therefore, unsatisfactory.

120. The evidence indicates that pupils reach average standards in Year 6 and that their achievement is satisfactory. The analysis of work showed that pupils in Years 5 and 6 had used appropriate research skills, including evidence gained from the use of information and communication technology, to answer questions about the growth and decline of the London docklands. They had also suitably identified some of the major features of London generally and had placed significant features of its development in chronological order. In Years 3 and 4, the analysis of work showed that the pupils have developed sound map work skills. Conversations with pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed that they have an adequate understanding of the geography of rivers, and a clear concept of the need to protect the environment. Their knowledge of the geography of a less developed area of the world and their involvement in fieldwork are relative weaknesses. The indications are, therefore, that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The judgements of standards and teaching are similar to those made by the school's last inspection.

121. The evidence indicates that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their peers throughout the school. It also indicates that pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds have full access to the provision made by the school in geography. No differences in the achievement of boys and girls were observed.

122. At both key stages, literacy skills are not used well enough to allow the pupils to extend them or to explain and communicate their geographical knowledge fully. This point was, essentially, made by the school's last report which mentioned an over reliance on worksheets that lacked challenge and it is recognised by the subject's co-ordinator. That inspection also found that more able pupils were insufficiently challenged and this is still the case. In addition, the findings of this inspection indicate that, throughout the school, marking does not sufficiently help the pupils to improve.

123. Improvement in geography since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because of the decline in standards at Key Stage 1. The co-ordinator has only held the post since the start of the present term and is still developing the role. He is enthusiastic and has already agreed targets for the development of the subject with the headteacher. These include the management of resources and modifying the scheme of work (which is also on the school development plan. There are, however, no plans for systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. Resources for the subject are adequate although there are, for example, too few maps of the docklands area. Information and communication technology is used appropriately in the subject. Procedures for assessment in the subject are good but assessment information is not always used well enough to plan work which challenges and extends all pupils. The subject makes an unsatisfactory contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development mainly because of weaknesses at Key Stage 1.

## **HISTORY**

124. Standards in history are below average in Year 2. This represents a decline in standards since the school's last OFSTED inspection when they were found to be "at least satisfactory". The one history lesson observed, the analysis of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers and the school's planning and records show that the pupils' historical knowledge and skills are very limited. This is essentially because the school does not allocate sufficient time to the teaching of history at Key Stage 1 and, as result, the requirements of the National Curriculum are not met at this key stage. The pupils do not, therefore, have as great an understanding of history as they do in those schools where

requirements are met and their achievement is unsatisfactory. In addition, the teachers do not make sufficient demands of the pupils in terms of the standards they should reach and the amount and quality of the work they should produce. This means that the effect of the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. These factors explain why standards at Key Stage 1 are not as high as they were at the time of the school's last inspection. The pupils have, for example, an awareness of aspects of the life and work of Florence Nightingale and of some of the differences between the past and the present such as methods of providing light in homes. However, their skills of enquiry, their knowledge of chronology, their understanding of the interpretation of history and their abilities to organise and communicate their historical understanding are all under developed.

125. The one history lesson seen at Key Stage 1 illustrated the importance of giving the subject sufficient time. This lesson was originally planned to introduce the topic of Guy Fawkes but, in current world circumstances, this was considered to be inappropriate and more time was, therefore, given to work about Florence Nightingale. This enabled the teacher to develop the pupils' understanding of this topic in more depth than would otherwise have been possible and, as a result, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in this lesson. In addition, pupils with special educational needs were given good support in undertaking work that was carefully matched to their needs and they made good progress.

126. In Year 6, pupils reach average standards and their achievement, including that by pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. The pupils' understanding of the interpretation of history is above average. Standards reflect the fact that the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory although some very good teaching was also observed. The pupils have a sound understanding of the periods, for example, the Ancient Egyptians and the Tudors, that they have been taught about. They can explain the difference between primary and secondary historical sources and have a secure grasp of the vocabulary of chronology, but are less clear about placing historical events in their correct time period. In a very good lesson in Year 5/6, the teacher's confident and knowledgeable approach motivated the pupils. There was a good discussion of artefacts related to Britain since 1948 that the pupils had brought in and a 'fashion parade' of the period by pupils who had provided their own costumes. The pupils made good gains in their knowledge of this period and in their understanding of historical evidence.

127. The school's last inspection report commented that opportunities for the more able pupils to extend their skills were 'constrained'. This is still the case. Undemanding worksheets are still used too frequently and, even in the very good lesson about Britain since 1948, the task for all pupils was merely to draw one of the fashion models. This means, of course, that the pupils do not apply and develop their literacy skills enough in this subject. In addition, the marking of pupils' work does not help them to improve sufficiently as it is largely ticks with some praise. Limited use of information and communication technology in history was seen during the inspection. The application of numeracy skills was limited to basic timelines.

128. Throughout the school, pupils with English as an additional language are mostly fluent in English and are able to make the same progress as other pupils in their classes. Those in the early stages of learning the language are well supported by teachers, support staff and their peers. They make good progress in extending their understanding of English and similar progress to their peers in their understanding of the subject. Pupils from minority ethnic groups take a full part in all aspects of the school's work in the subject. No differences in the achievement of boys and girls were observed during the inspection.

129. Standards in history have declined at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection and, therefore, its development since that time has been unsatisfactory. The subject's contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development is unsatisfactory because of

weaknesses at Key Stage 1. The recently appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has already agreed targets for the development of the subject which include revising the scheme of work and updating the school's policy for the subject. The targets do not include systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. As at the time of the school's last inspection, resources for the subject are very good and very well organised and historical visits, for example, to Mountfitchet Castle support teaching well. Assessment procedures in history are good but assessment information is not always used well enough to plan work which challenges and extends all pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. Standards are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection in Year 2 but shows an improvement in Year 6. Since the last inspection, national requirements have become more rigorous and the school has done well to keep abreast of developments.

131. In Year 2, pupils are able to enter their own text, change the font and shape and make grammatical or spelling corrections. They can save and retrieve their work without help. Pupils use computers to link ideas and techniques learned in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 use a graphics program to replicate 'pointilliste' techniques, which they know to have been developed by the French Impressionists, using tiny, controlled dots of paint on a canvas. Pupils share a computer in the suite amicably and effectively. This helps to strengthen aspects of their social and personal development.

132. The satisfactory start which pupils make in Key Stage 1 is effectively built upon at Key Stage 2 where pupils develop a wider and increasingly useful repertoire of personal communication skills. They also use computers well to find out new information for use in other curriculum areas. Pupils successfully mix text with graphics and they make good use of these skills when composing pages for newsletters and newspaper articles. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make data bases about the habits of British birds. Since the last inspection, pupils have had more opportunities to explore control technology and to use the Internet, subject to appropriate supervision, which has developed their research skills well.

133. Some more advanced work, is undertaken by higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 6 during their lunchtimes. They set up web pages for individual classes as part of the school's web site. Some of these pupils gained a national and regional award in a national competition for their multilingual web page. Pupils with special educational needs develop skills in other curriculum areas because of the good range of motivational software which supports their learning. They take pride in their finished work when it is printed out and this increases self-esteem. All pupils enjoy using computers and behave well in the computer suite.

134. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The school has benefited from in-service training but part of that expertise has been lost due to some teachers leaving. All teachers use word processing appropriately and proficiently to produce documentation such as lesson plans, notices and headings for displays. Because whole school planning is closely related to a national scheme of work, teachers have a continuity of approach, which helps pupils to make systematic progress. The teaching of focused practical work is well organised in the computer suite and ensures that all pupils benefit from the same direction and demonstration by the teachers. The use of computers in classrooms is much more varied, because some classes do not have their own machine. This restricts the necessary practice time which pupils need to develop skills and also for more spontaneous research work in the rest of the curriculum.

135. The subject co-ordinator has good levels of knowledge and practical capability and has been instrumental in recent initiatives for improvement. There is a shared commitment to raising standards for all pupils. The school has firm plans for additional computers. The

subject leader has been given no opportunity to monitor the curriculum. There is no technical support in school, so that much valuable time is taken up maintaining hardware and solving technical breakdowns. The range of software for pupils at both key stages is good. There is an appropriate balance of carefully selected, subject related programs for most areas of the curriculum and for all ability groups.

## **MUSIC**

136. During the inspection, it was possible to see only four music lessons, two in each key stage. Judgements are based upon these lessons, teachers' planning, scrutiny of the schemes of work, discussion with pupils in both key stages, and observations of extracurricular activities for the orchestra and choir. There is insufficient time for music lessons throughout the school. This affects standards, which are consequently below average in Years 2 and 6. The quality of teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall due to this constraint. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.

137. In the lessons seen at Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in one was below average, and in the other it was average. Where it fell below average, pupils had no notion of the names of most of the percussion instruments, and the only one that was named was a castanet, but the pupils confused this with maracas. Excitement was high, but there were not enough instruments for everyone to have their own, and then some did not have the opportunity to play anything due to time constraints. In the other Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils were beginning to compose their own music to interpret a story, which was read by one pupil in each small group. Owing to the short time available in each lesson, this was to be continued over two or three lessons.

138. In the Key Stage 2 lessons observed, attainment in one was well above average, whilst in the other it was below average. In the lesson where attainment was very good, the pupils were singing very well and using notation. They demonstrated understanding of some musical terms such as 'crescendo'. About half of the class are in either the choir or the orchestra and have learned much from those experiences. In the lesson where attainment was below average, singing was weak and pupils were unable to sing at the correct pitch, so most were off key. The quality of teaching in all these lessons was at least satisfactory except in the very successful Key Stage 2 lesson, where it was very good. Teachers are making efforts to enable pupils to learn and enjoy music. For example in the Key Stage 1 lesson where attainment was below average, the teacher tried hard to introduce an element of excitement. All the pupils had to sit with eyes closed while she placed instruments on their tables. They were delighted when they saw them, and were eager to use them, but time and lack of resources meant that some could not play at all.

139. In discussions with pupils, Key Stage 1 pupils said that they play instruments and have heard a story to which they added sounds. They could not recall any songs when prompted, and were not able to name instruments from those in a box to hand. Key Stage 2 pupils talked about choir and orchestra and recalled clapping and singing in Year 5/6 work. They know some names of percussion instruments, such as castanets, maracas and the rain stick. One recalled making sounds to go with weather details in Year 5, such as sun or lightning or rain.

140. The time allowed for music lessons in both key stages is half an hour each week per class, and this is insufficient to enable the planned curriculum to be taught, and to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Although the choir and orchestra make very good contributions towards the music in the school, involve relatively few pupils. Likewise, the individual instrumental tuition only involves a few pupils. These additional activities are very worthwhile, and enable more able pupils and those who are gifted or talented in the subject to excel.

141. Planning shows that the schemes of work are good, and that if sufficient time and expertise were available, they have the potential to fulfil requirements. There is no co-ordinator for music at present, although the school is currently advertising for one. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology in the subject. Most of the teachers are not music specialists, and although they are doing their best, when the lack of overall organisation and time are considered, the subject has lost considerable ground since the last inspection, when it was reported as being a good subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. Standards of attainment are average in Years 2 and 6. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and well at Key Stage 2. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's last inspection. No differences in attainment between boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds were observed.

143. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. No clear comparison with the findings of the school's previous inspection is possible as the judgement made then was not sufficiently precise. In a music and movement lesson in Year 1, the pupils responded suitably to the music. They kept in time and varied their speed appropriately as they simulated the movement of varied animals, for example, the tiger. The teacher made good use of different instruments to stimulate the pupils' imagination and to develop their movements and they showed great enthusiasm as they responded to the increasing pace of a drumbeat. However, the teacher did not always ensure that all of the pupils were listening to instructions or that the teaching assistant was always employed to the best advantage. In a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, the pupils showed average skills when transferring their weight when, for example, balancing, taking short steps or taking long steps on both the floor and on mats. Strengths of the teaching and learning in this lesson included the teacher's control of the pupils and their response, the quality of the teacher's explanations and the pupils' understanding and the support provided by the teaching assistant. However, putting out the mats was a slow process, which reduced the pace of the lesson and caused some pupils to become restless. At Key Stage 1, although there is some evaluation of the pupils' performance, it is largely directed by the teacher and the pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to develop their own skills in this area.

144. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good although it ranges from satisfactory to very good. No comparison with the findings of the school's previous inspection is possible. Although standards and achievement in Year 6 are average, in other years they are good. A good Year 3/4 lesson exemplified the quality of teaching and learning at this key stage. The lesson was well-planned and its purpose was communicated effectively to the pupils so that they knew exactly what to do. There was a good pace to the lesson and pupils showed good levels of imagination and skill in travelling when developing and linking sequences of movement. The pupils made good use of space and showed high levels of awareness of others. This was a particularly important contribution to their social development because it overcame the potential restriction imposed by the relatively limited space available in the hall. In Years 5/6, the pupils showed average levels of skill when passing and receiving a rugby ball. However, their abilities to organise themselves into teams and decide who takes what part in the team are below average.

145. Swimming was not taught during the inspection. However, discussion with teachers and analysis of the school's planning shows that the statutory requirement to teach this aspect of the subject at Key Stage 2 is fully met. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres safely and unaided by the time that they leave the school.

146. Throughout the school, most teachers readily identify what pupils need to do to improve their performance. However, this sometimes results in general comments to the class and is not followed up by specific help for the individual pupil whose need has been identified. This weakness was also identified by the school's last inspection.

147. Improvement in physical education since the school's 1997 inspection has been satisfactory as standards have been maintained and assessment procedures have been improved. However, the use of assessment information remains unsatisfactory. An able and experienced co-ordinator who has good ideas for the development of the subject has taken responsibility for it since September 2001. Plans for improvement include the evaluation of dance in Key Stage 1 and training in the use of large apparatus for all staff. The subject is amply resourced although some equipment is old. There is adequate hard surfaced area around the school and a nearby field is available for the pupils' use. A good range of extracurricular activities supports the teaching of the subject well.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

148. Attainment is below average in Year 2 and Year 6 because there is insufficient time to cover all the recommendations of the syllabus. Pupils receive half an hour each week and this does not enable either key stage to cover the planned topics in sufficient depth. Standards are lower than at the time of the previous inspection. The pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.

149. In discussions with Year 2 pupils, they were able to recall two stories from assemblies, but could remember nothing about religious education lessons, even when gently prompted. They were unable to talk about any story from any world religion. All of the Key Stage 1 lessons observed were about Bilal, the first muezzin in Islam. Teachers were skilful in rewording questions from a difficult story so that pupils grasped something of the underlying idea of suffering for a faith. Pupils did not have the opportunity to write a simple sentence or two of explanation. No past written work was offered for scrutiny at this key stage, and very little in Key Stage 2. In the Key Stage 2 lessons which were seen, pupils were given a set of photographs and were asked to write down possible thoughts going through the minds of the subjects. This produced above average work in being able to think through the possible problems that these people may have had. Racial and social problems were suggested and the whole idea of outcasts and misfits was developed well in discussion.

150. Scrutiny of the planned curriculum for Key Stage 1 reveals that several topics, taken from the locally agreed syllabus, require a recommended time of 12 hours over a term. The school gives about half that time to religious education and so it is impossible to complete the recommended course. The same problem occurs in Key Stage 2 where the two units planned for the autumn term have a recommended total of 30 hours to complete them, with less than eight hours given on the timetables. The quality of teaching and learning, whilst satisfactory in the Key Stage 1 lessons observed, and good in those seen at Key Stage 2, is, nevertheless, unsatisfactory overall because there is insufficient time for pupils to learn all that is planned. They make unsatisfactory progress as a result.

151. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 revealed that they remembered learning about Ganesha, the Hindu god, and some thought that they had heard stories about Moses in Year 3/4 lessons. A short discussion developed about the bulrushes story. They remembered that they had heard about Gandhi and Martin Luther King, but they thought that this was in a history week. The only biblical story anyone could remember was that about the cure of the blind man by Jesus. All the pupils said that they had made Advent calendars, Christmas cards and done some pottery work for Divali, but they had no notion of the idea of light underlying these festivals.

152. Assemblies provide some opportunities for stories, and younger pupils remembered about Chinese New Year, and the story of Zacchaeus from a local minister's assembly. Older pupils had heard the story of the Good Samaritan, again in the minister's assembly. During the inspection time a minister from a local church visited the school and talked about various saints on November 1<sup>st</sup>, All Saints day.

153. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus, but this is unsatisfactory because it is not modified for the very youngest pupils, and there is insufficient time to complete the topics. Assessment procedures in the subject are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post for three terms, and has good ideas for the future development of the subject and the use of resources. Due to timetabling, there is no opportunity for her to monitor lessons but she offers informal support for colleagues who may need help. In spite of its difficulties, religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In particular there are opportunities for quiet reflection, and the Year 5/6 lessons provided good opportunities for pupils' empathy with other people's sufferings. Resources are good and include a good range of artefacts from world religions and reference books for teachers' own planning.