

INSPECTION REPORT

WILLESBOROUGH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Ashford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118371

Acting headteacher: Mrs E Pettersen

Reporting inspector: Mr D Manuel
21090

Dates of inspection: 17th – 21st September 2001

Inspection number: 196548

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Bartlett
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

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21090	Mr D Manuel	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Modern foreign languages	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19650	Ms S Thomas	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?
20926	Mr G Bate	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
16038	Mrs J Bavin	Team inspector	Art History Physical disability	
20654	Mr P Knight	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Religious education	
20832	Mr M Galowalia	Team inspector	English as an additional language Design and technology Geography	
1696	Mr R Sharman	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Willesborough Junior School is situated in Ashford in Kent. The school serves the surrounding community but also many pupils come from outside the area through parental choice. The school is larger than average size with 620 boys and girls on roll, aged from seven to eleven. The school has a designated unit of six available places for pupils with physical disabilities; three of these are taken up. There are 187 pupils on the register for special educational needs (30 per cent, above average). The number of these pupils has risen by 23 per cent since the previous inspection. Fifty pupils are at Stages 3 to 5, mostly with moderate learning difficulties. Twenty pupils have a statement of special educational need. Sixty-eight pupils (11 per cent, below average) are eligible for free school meals. There are 14 pupils (2.2 per cent) from minority ethnic groups and they all speak English as an additional language. Four of these are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The school is committed to do its best for all pupils. The socio-economic circumstances are at an average level. Attainment on entry is wide ranging but at expected levels. The school recently gained the 'Quality Mark' status for its systems and provision. The headteacher left at the end of the summer term and the current deputy is the acting headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Willesborough is an effective school which has maintained satisfactory standards in the core subjects over the past four years, despite the rise in the number of pupils with special educational needs. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are valued and does so successfully. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Good systems for management, curriculum development and monitoring are in place but at present there is inconsistent implementation of these to impact fully on pupils' achievement in order to raise standards in literacy and numeracy of pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching is good and teachers have worked together well to provide a well-balanced curriculum. The leadership and management of the school, provided by the new acting headteacher, senior staff and governors are good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history, music and religious education.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The school provides a broad range of good curriculum opportunities including good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The leadership and management of the school, provided by the new acting headteacher, senior staff and governors are good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and respect for others are good and illustrate the high priority the school places on doing its best for all pupils.
- The school has very good links with parents, whose own views of the school are very good.

What could be improved

- There is insufficient involvement of pupils in setting new targets for learning so that they know exactly what they have to do to improve, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- There is a need for teachers' marking to be more closely linked to target setting for pupils.
- The school does not make sufficient use of the special needs co-ordinator and the individual education plans to raise standards of the above average proportion of lower attaining pupils.

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 previously inspected in March 1997. Since then the school has made satisfactory improvement. The two key issues from 1997 required improvements to be made in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology. In ICT there has been very good improvement due to the good use of national funding. The subject co-ordinators have led very effective staff development in the subject. This includes the provision of two new computer rooms and training support for staff. As a result, all teachers have greater confidence and expertise, pupils achieve well and standards have risen to above expected levels. In design and technology, improved provision has resulted in better achievement by pupils and standards have risen from below expected levels to reach expected levels. In addition to these issues, other weaknesses have been successfully improved. The English scheme of work has been improved, the school development plan outlines clear priorities for improvement, accommodation for the personal care of the disabled pupils has been improved and previous omissions in the school prospectus and governors' annual report have been rectified. The school has developed good systems and structures to support the strong team commitment to improve. The capacity for further improvement is good.

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	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	C	C	C	
science	B	D	C	D	

Children enter the school in Year 3 with a wide range of attainment and levels which are broadly expected for this age. In the national tests in 2000, for eleven-year-olds in Year 6, results matched the national average in English, mathematics and science. Over the past four years, improvement in the school's results has been similar to the national trend. In comparison to similar schools, results in English and mathematics were average and in science were below average. The standards being achieved by pupils have led the school to set realistic but challenging targets for national tests. Unconfirmed results for 2001 show similar standards. Targets for the year 2001 were not fully met in science, due to significant absence during parts of the week of tests.

During the inspection, standards of work seen indicate that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science with attainment at expected levels. In other subjects of the curriculum, all pupils maintain at least satisfactory, and often good, levels of achievement. Standards are above expected levels in art and design, geography, history, ICT, music and religious education. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection except in ICT where achievement is much improved. In physical education and design and technology, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are at expected levels. The school has identified the need to raise standards of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They listen to their teachers, concentrate and show sustained interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in classrooms and at break-times is good. Pupils move round the school in an orderly manner.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and often very good. There are good opportunities to develop personal responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory and has an adverse effect on the pupils' learning. Authorised absence is higher than the national average, due to family holidays being taken in term-time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.

In lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The characteristics of the good and better teaching include detailed planning in year groups to ensure consistent coverage in all subjects. In lessons, teachers question and prompt pupils skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways for all pupils to understand. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good. Teachers plan a good range of activities and provide good opportunities in subjects other than English, to develop pupils' literacy skills, particularly speaking and listening skills. Numeracy is strongly promoted and the development of quick mental calculation is a feature of all mathematics lessons. All pupils are fully integrated into the activities and are supported well in their involvement in asking and answering questions.

The good levels of pupils' learning illustrate the high priority the school places on doing its best for all pupils. Pupils' learning is positively influenced by the intellectual and physical effort that they put into the tasks that are provided for them. Learning is also helped significantly by teachers' good understanding of how skills in one subject can be consolidated by experiences in another subject. The ICT skills learnt by all pupils are used successfully as an extension of their learning in most subjects but particularly in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and art. The school has identified the need to improve pupils' learning by improved use of the day-to-day assessment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad range of worthwhile curriculum opportunities, which meets the needs of all its pupils. Every effort is made by the school to ensure that the curriculum is relevant.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for these pupils is satisfactory. The school makes appropriate plans for them to be included in all activities.
Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language	The provision for these pupils is good. The school is sensitive to their needs and they are well supported. As a result, they make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for all elements of pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has a positive ethos that values each pupil and enhances their self-esteem.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a supportive, caring environment in which pupils learn and develop. Parents have confidence in the school's ability to care for their children.

The school continues to have a good partnership with parents. Parents' involvement with the work of the school is good. The school benefits from parent volunteers who assist with trips and help in class. Parents contribute positively to their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school, provided by the acting headteacher, senior staff and governors are good. The new senior management team works well together.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective and has a good understanding of its strategic role. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities and help to foster good links in the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and governors have developed well-structured and systematic procedures that effectively support the school's self-evaluation and the setting of relevant educational priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used effectively to support all areas of the curriculum. They are used very well in ICT. There is a need to make better use of resources to raise standards of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

Teaching and support staff are deployed effectively to promote pupils' learning except that the co-ordinator for special educational needs teaches in only limited group sessions. The school has recognised this inefficient use of resources and changes are to be made. The number of resources and their quality are good. The school successfully applies the principles of best value for money. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services and resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • The teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard and give of their best. • Children make good progress in school. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of a more interesting range of outdoor activities. • Parents would like to be kept better informed about how their children are getting on. • The need for children to get the right amount of work to do at home. • Closer links with parents.

The inspection team agrees with all the aspects which parents identified as strengths of the school. Of the areas identified for improvement by a small number of parents, the team considers the overall provision of extra-curricular activities is better than normally seen in this type of school. However, some parents are not clear about which activities are available for the different year groups. The school has responded to parents' requests for better information about the availability of activities, children's progress and closer links. Arrangements have been made for parents to have discussions with the teachers of English and mathematics sets as well as class teachers. The amount of homework is judged to be appropriate for this age group.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school in Year 3 with a wide range of attainment and levels which are broadly expected for this age. In the national tests in 2000, for eleven-year-olds in Year 6, results matched the national average in English, mathematics and science. Improvement in the school's results over the past four years has been similar to the national trend. When compared to similar schools, results in English and mathematics were average and in science were below average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the tests was above the national average in English and mathematics but below average in science. Unconfirmed test results for 2001 show that standards in English and mathematics have been maintained but science results were adversely affected by absences during the week of tests.
2. These formal tests indicate the satisfactory progress that is achieved by pupils in the core subjects during their time at the school. Each year group has a much higher number of pupils than normally seen in a school of this type and there are significant variations between year groups. The number of pupils with special educational needs has risen by 23 per cent since the previous inspection. The school has maintained the percentage of higher attaining pupils in national tests but slightly fewer pupils attain the average level. This picture is confirmed by the work seen during the inspection. As well as judging the work observed in lessons, inspectors scrutinised the work that pupils had completed at the end of Year 6 last term and made judgements about how this work compares to average levels nationally.
3. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science with attainment similar to the national average. Standards have been maintained in mathematics since the previous inspection but have fallen in English and science, having been judged above expected levels at that time. There is a need to involve pupils more closely in the setting of individual targets for learning so that they know exactly what to do to improve. This is particularly true for the 30 per cent of pupils with lower levels of attainment. Despite this high proportion, teachers work hard to provide suitable opportunities to improve all pupils' achievement, whatever their background and prior attainment. The good level of the teachers' questioning skills ensures that achievement in speaking and listening is good. These good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Most pupils express their ideas clearly, having listened very closely to the questions and guidance. Pupils' mathematical skills are suitably extended when working in other subjects. For example, pupils use graphs in geography, design patterns based on mathematical shapes in art and consolidate their understanding of angles as they develop sequences based on turns in gymnastics. Achievement in problem solving is less extended.
4. In science, one of the strengths is in investigative work. Pupils in all year groups are confident when carrying out investigations and fair testing. In other subjects of the curriculum, all pupils maintain at least satisfactory, and often good, levels of achievement. Standards are above expected levels in art and design, geography, history, ICT, music and religious education. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection except in ICT where achievement is good and very much improved. Standards in ICT have risen significantly since the opening of the

new computer rooms. Teachers' confidence has improved and as a result, pupils are highly motivated to extend their skills and understanding. In physical education and design and technology, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are at average levels. This indicates that standards have been maintained in physical education but have improved in design and technology, when previously they were judged to be below average.

5. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make satisfactory progress in relation to set targets. A small proportion attain average levels in literacy and numeracy but most attain levels which are below average. Learning support assistants help these pupils in their group activities and help them retain their focus during whole-class sessions. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards achieving the targets set in their individual education plans. In the latest audit of pupils on the special needs register it was noted that most pupils had made satisfactory progress. A small percentage had made good progress and had been removed from the register altogether. The needs of the small proportion of minority ethnic pupils are met effectively and they achieve well. Higher attaining pupils are challenged successfully by the extra demands placed on them and the higher expectations that teachers have of them. As a result they achieve higher than average levels.
6. The standards being achieved by pupils have led the school to set realistic but challenging targets for national tests. Annual targets are set by the senior management team and the governing body, who anticipate the percentages of pupils who are expected to reach average and above average levels by the end of both key stages. Targets for science this year were not fully met due to absences during the week of tests. The school has also identified the need to raise the standards of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They listen to their teachers, concentrate and show interest in their work. In all ICT lessons pupils showed high levels of concentration and enjoyment. Year 6 pupils worked well in pairs in ICT to produce well-planned and colourful presentations. Year 4 pupils worked well in drama groups to produce some imaginative ideas for their playlet. Most pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. A very small number of pupils are less positive in their attitudes to their work. This adversely affects their progress. Pupils with special educational needs work well within the class and group structure and are keen to make progress. Pupils with physical disabilities are naturally integrated into class activities and are sensitively helped by other pupils who display good attitudes towards them.
8. The behaviour of pupils is good. Eighty-eight per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire feel that behaviour is good. Pupils move round the school in an orderly manner. In assembly for the whole school, pupils quietly gather in the hall. They are aware of the space restrictions and respect the routines which have been established to enable the large numbers to meet together. The majority of pupils behave well in class. However, in a very small number of classes there are some incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour but teachers manage these occasions effectively. In the playground pupils play purposefully. No incidents of bullying or racist behaviour were seen during the inspection. There were two short-term exclusions in the past year.

9. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are valued. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and often very good. Parents feel all pupils are included in school life and the contribution each makes is respected by others. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to develop personal responsibility. Pupils appreciate the 'playground buddies' system. Pupils in wheelchairs are supported at lunchtimes and break-times by other pupils who do so very willingly. The school council is an opportunity for all pupils to make a contribution to school life. Ninety-four per cent of parents who completed the questionnaire feel the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible.
10. Ninety-four per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire say their children like school. Most pupils say they enjoy coming to school. However, attendance is unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence is low but authorised absence is higher than the national average. This is due to family holidays being taken in term-time which has an adverse effect on their learning. In some classes a number of pupils were not present for the start of the term and although term has only just begun, a significant number of children are already scheduled for holiday absences later this term.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The overall quality of teaching is good. In the 91 lessons observed, three per cent of teaching was excellent, 11 per cent very good, 44 per cent good, 32 per cent satisfactory and the remaining one per cent unsatisfactory. Good standards in teaching have been maintained since the previous inspection.
12. The characteristics of the good and better teaching include detailed planning in year groups to ensure consistent coverage within the full range of subjects. The relationships between teachers and pupils in the classroom are good and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work. Teachers question and prompt pupils skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways to ensure that all pupils understand. Thus lower attaining pupils gain confidence from being able to contribute successfully while average and higher attaining pupils are challenged to think hard and explain their reasoning. This was demonstrated well in a Year 6 mathematics lesson when pupils using computers explained their methods for identifying number patterns on spreadsheets. Resources are used effectively to aid pupils' learning. In most lessons, there is a brisk pace and, particularly in the setting arrangements for English and mathematics, different tasks are planned for the range of pupils' needs and abilities. Most pupils respond well to the intellectual demands made of them and their learning is effectively promoted.
13. Teachers' good subject knowledge is used well in the planning of lessons. Different teachers within each year group take responsibility for planning work in particular subjects, according to their individual strengths. Individual lesson plans provide clear objectives for the specific learning to be achieved by pupils in each lesson. In most lessons, teachers discuss these learning intentions with pupils and constantly remind pupils of them as the lesson progresses. These good systems and structures are effective in the medium-term planning. However, there is insufficient involvement of pupils in setting targets for improvement and the use of day-to-day assessment to ensure that pupils understand exactly what they have to do to improve. Teachers' marking needs to be more closely linked to the specific learning targets so that pupils know how to improve.

14. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy successfully by providing a good range of activities that are matched well to groups of pupils with different needs. Teachers provide good opportunities in subjects other than English to develop pupils' reading and writing skills and particularly speaking and listening skills. These opportunities are particularly evident in ICT, drama and history. Sessions known as circle time, when pupils hold discussions about issues that relate particularly to their personal development, are successfully used by teachers as further opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Number work is strongly promoted and the development of quick and accurate mental calculation is a feature of all mathematics lessons. Good links are also made with most other subjects when pupils are involved in calculating, measuring and using shapes as in science, geography, art and physical education. The school has identified the need to make better use of day-to-day assessment in an attempt to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. Teaching is good in art, music, history, ICT and religious education and accounts for the above average standards attained in the subjects.
15. Teachers make good use of classroom support assistants to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils. Support staff are briefed thoroughly and, where they have a specific responsibility for helping an individual pupil, the quality of their guidance is good. All pupils are fully integrated into the activities and supported well in their involvement in asking and answering questions. A well qualified technician provides good support for learning in the computer rooms.
16. Pupils' learning is positively influenced by the intellectual and physical effort that they put into the tasks that are provided for them. Pupils' work output and the pace at which they work are good. Pupils' learning is also helped significantly by teachers' good understanding of how skills in one subject can be consolidated by experiences in another subject. The ICT skills learnt by all pupils are used successfully as an extension of their learning in most subjects but particularly in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and art. This leads to a range of good quality presentations using text and graphics. Learning in literacy and numeracy is extended when pupils are provided with suitable opportunities in other subjects such as geography, history and design and technology. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and in pairs, sharing ideas, which they do well.
17. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The teachers know the pupils well and the learning support assistants give good support. In one mathematics lesson observed, the support assistant showed good judgement to diffuse a confrontation when a potentially disruptive pupil threatened the good working relationship of the group. The relationship between teachers and support staff is good. Planning is thorough and assessment procedures comprehensive. The quality of learning depends upon the clarity of the targets in the pupils' individual education plans. Where the targets are clearly written and the objectives clear, the learning is good. More emphasis is needed on clarity and focus in the wording of these targets. The management and organisation of support is under review under the new leadership and there are plans to deploy staff more efficiently, resulting in smaller groups and more focused teaching.
18. The school has a small proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Teachers make good provision for the subject, including support from the local authority's language support service. The provision is well targeted, especially at

the pupils who are at earlier stages of language acquisition and enables them to make good progress in their learning.

19. Teachers have a good awareness of the social, behavioural and emotional needs that some pupils have and manage them well. The use of homework is satisfactory. All pupils have regular practice at the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and this successfully consolidates their learning in lessons.

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

20. Since the previous inspection, the school has extended and improved the curriculum particularly by developing the provision for ICT. It provides well for the appropriate statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school provides a broad range of worthwhile curriculum opportunities. Every effort is made by the school to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, for example by building on the pupils' previous experiences and making good use of learning resources within the local community and beyond. Suitable policies are in place for all subjects and for sex education and personal relationships. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and the higher attaining pupils are met well, in the latter case by the setting arrangements in literacy and numeracy.
21. The school places great importance on the development of literacy and numeracy. There is a good balance of time for all other subjects and for the recently introduced programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school approaches the teaching arrangements, such as setting, and of additional subjects, such as French and PSHE, in a very systematic manner. It ensures that the impact on the subjects and of pupils' learning is monitored and evaluated. This is carried out by year teams, with the assistance of the curriculum co-ordinators and with the findings evaluated by senior management. Recent evaluation has identified the need to review the setting arrangements to support the lower attaining pupils more effectively.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, except that the current practice is for the individual education plans to be held centrally by one teacher in each age group. This is a weakness as these plans are not readily available for immediate reference by all teachers to enable them to monitor pupils' learning more closely. This practice is to be reviewed. The co-ordinator, teachers and learning support assistants are responsible for writing the individual education plans. They work well together. There is some inconsistency in the way the targets are written. The main weakness is they are too general and lack clarity. The school makes appropriate plans for these pupils to be included in all activities. When they are withdrawn for specific teaching, opportunities are provided for them to catch up with what they have missed.
23. The school identifies the talented and gifted pupils through the tracking and monitoring procedures. An appropriate draft policy to provide challenging activities for these pupils is to be presented to the governing body in the near future. The school has forged links with a 'beacon school', one of outstanding quality, to provide suitable competition for these pupils and for them to be involved in challenging activities. The co-ordinator is to join a working party with staff from similar schools to promote good practice.

24. Every effort is made by the school to enliven and enrich all aspects of the curriculum. Authors are invited in to talk about their writing. Dressing-up days are planned to support historical understanding and interest. For example, the provision of a Year 6 Victorian week as well as the Viking and Tudor days in Year 5 and Aztec and Greek days in other years. Visits are made to Hever Castle and to museums. Local people, such as a dental hygienist and fireman, introduce the pupils to the world of work, and interest in the performing arts is stimulated by visits to London theatres and from theatrical groups. Pupils speak enthusiastically of these experiences, which are obviously of considerable benefit to the breadth of the curriculum. The pupils' interests in, and understanding of, their local community are well supported by visits from local clergy, hospice workers and from members of the local ethnic minorities. The school also contributes successfully to the community by singing for the elderly, collecting for charities and by raising awareness of their local and world environment through the wildlife garden and the collection of paper in each classroom for recycling. All these activities have a very beneficial impact on pupils' learning, as do the annual residential experiences for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.
25. The curriculum is open to constant review and improvement. For example, the teacher taking the lead in planning a subject for a particular year, will trial the lesson first. Any modifications necessary will be evaluated in the weekly team meetings. Regular evaluations are also made of the setting arrangements and booster and springboard classes, in order to ensure that the curriculum is meeting the needs of all pupils. This also helps to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. However, in some of the literacy and numeracy lower sets the numbers of pupils with special educational needs is high in relation to the support available. The school is also sensitive to the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and they are well supported.
26. The programme for personal and social education, introduced a year ago, is enhancing the school's curriculum. Pupils receive age-appropriate sex and drugs education, for example within the context of 'things that can help or harm my body'. The PSHE programme is linked to circle time sessions and is beginning to develop the pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem.
27. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, some at lunchtime and others after school. The activities are wide-ranging and include wildlife, drama, art, poetry, science, ICT and Bible clubs; also musical groups for choir, guitar and a school band. Sports activities include athletics, rugby, netball and football. The school takes part in a number of matches and tournaments with considerable success. Homework clubs are also available for pupils. All of these experiences are extending the learning for pupils and adding quality to the curriculum. There are satisfactory links with partner institutions, for example, the curriculum co-ordinator regularly visits the main contributory infant school and all eight secondary schools to which pupils may go.
28. The school abides by its motto:- *'Together Everyone Achieves More'* and in doing so makes good provision for all elements of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This maintains the good standards of provision seen in the previous inspection. The school has a positive ethos that values each pupil and enhances their self-esteem. Provision for spiritual development is good and supported well by regular assemblies, which enable all pupils to reflect thoughtfully on a range of values and themes. Achievement assemblies are particularly effective in promoting a good awareness of the special talents and efforts of pupils. Teachers use several subjects, including science and history, to provide good opportunities for pupils to appreciate

the natural world and so contribute to pupils' spiritual development. When studying the rainforests, they not only consider the impact of people on the environment in a geographical way, but also in a spiritual, moral, social and cultural context.

29. The school successfully helps pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. They do this in their daily routines by involving pupils in establishing class rules. However, the school also raises wider moral issues in many subjects. For example, in English lessons older pupils read and discuss a biography of Nelson Mandela together. Both geography and history lessons frequently raise moral issues, such as those surrounding poverty or pollution. The school makes good provision for personal and social education and is currently developing this programme further. Sessions observed during the inspection were taught well.
30. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities. The school council is composed of elected pupil representatives, and the election process introduces the meaning of citizenship. Pupils value this council which has successfully brought about improvements to their facilities at lunchtimes. There are also opportunities for pupils to be elected as 'playground buddies' for others who may feel in need of support at lunchtime. Parents appreciate the way in which the school lives its motto on a day-to-day basis by including all pupils in all activities. House captains are elected and help to co-ordinate and organise fundraising activities for charities. Recent activities include the school's involvement in the 'Shoebox Appeal' for 'Children in Distress'.
31. The very good art curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development and awareness. This subject is planned to ensure that all pupils experience making artefacts or use materials associated with other cultures, such as making Aztec masks or shields and working with Indian and African textiles. Music also makes a positive contribution to this element of pupils' development. For example, pupils discuss the origins of Sergei Prokofiev, as well as working with African rhythm. Various visitors, such as authors, actors and friends of the school who provide insights into diverse cultures, add further richness to the school curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school provides a supportive, caring environment in which all pupils learn and develop whatever their background and needs. Staff know the pupils well. Parents have confidence in the school's ability to care for their children. PSHE lessons provide good support and guidance in an objective manner.
33. Monitoring of attendance is satisfactory. In view of the number of absences last year, the school has already informed parents that no absence will be authorised for Year 6 pupils in the week of the national tests. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are effective and are good for the majority of pupils. They are implemented unobtrusively for managing the unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority, most of whom have special needs relating to emotional and behavioural difficulties. Classroom and playground rules are discussed and agreed with pupils and are on display. Most pupils appreciate the house-point system and are delighted when teachers award these.
34. Support for pupils with special educational needs complies with the current Code of Practice. The co-ordinator is beginning training for the new Code of Practice which comes into force in 2002. The school receives all the appropriate help from the support services and additional medical help where necessary. The co-ordinator arranges all the reviews and these are well supported by the different agencies.

Reviews take place termly and pupils receive new updated targets or are removed from the register, whichever is appropriate. Parents are always invited to the reviews and play an important part. Pupils are also invited to give their views and often sign their individual education plan. They work alongside their peer group wherever possible in non-core subjects and are included appropriately in all activities. This enables them to develop independence and sound relationships.

35. The child protection policy complies with local authority guidelines. Staff are aware of the procedures and have undertaken appropriate training. Health and safety measures are good. Staff pay proper attention to safety in lessons. Governors are conscientious in their duty to ensure the safety and security of the premises.
36. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement are good. The systems in place to gauge pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are very good and have been recognised by the Basic Skills Agency which has awarded the school its Quality Mark. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The regular assessments made by teachers enable them to identify pupils who either need more challenge in their work, or have not yet reached the required standard. However, these are not yet rigorous enough to be fully effective. Teachers make good use of this information to plan their work and this is reflected in the quality of teaching across the school. The systems for assessment in the other subjects taught are not as well developed. This has been recognised in the school improvement plan and a good start has been made in music and ICT, building on the success in English, mathematics and science. In art, a useful start has been made in drawing up a portfolio of pupils' work to enable teachers to assess how well they are doing. The school ensures assessment of minority ethnic pupils' language development and learning and maintains good records of pupils' attainment and progress.
37. Results of the national tests and tests set by the school are analysed very effectively to measure the school's performance. Care is taken to examine how all groups of pupils are getting on, for example boys and girls, pupils who speak English as an additional language, pupils 'looked after' and those with special educational or behavioural needs. The information is used to carefully identify those areas of the curriculum where improvement is needed, for example in algebra and solving real life problems in mathematics.
38. Good use is made of the results of these tests to identify pupils who will need extra support in Year 5 with mathematics, and those in Year 6 who, with an extra boost, could reach the nationally expected level in English and mathematics. The school identified this need a year ago and began booster classes to raise the number of pupils reaching the expected levels. There is still a need to focus on raising the standards of this relatively high proportion of pupils by using the resources available to them more efficiently, such as smaller groups and closer monitoring of improvements.
39. Targets are set for pupils to reach at the end of each year in English and mathematics and these are helpfully shared with parents. The potential afforded by these targets for raising pupils' attainment is not fully realised, as individual pupils are not sufficiently involved with the target setting process. Consequently, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is satisfactory overall, despite the predominantly good teaching. A recent start has been made in English. For example, pupils' work is marked regularly and praise and encouragement are given, but little written comment is provided to let pupils know how well they are doing in achieving the targets they

have been set, or how they could improve their work targets. The need to share targets more with pupils has been identified by the acting headteacher in a recent rigorous review of the effectiveness of the assessment systems.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school continues to have a good partnership with parents. Eighty-two per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire feel that the school works closely with them. Ninety-one per cent feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems. Parents' involvement with the work of the school is good. Almost all parents have signed the home/school agreement. Earlier this year, a number of parents formed working parties to create the school's environmental garden. The school benefits from parent volunteers who assist with trips and help in class. The parents and friends of Willesborough raise money for the school and organise social events. Parents contribute positively to their children's learning. Those with children having special educational needs attend their child's reviews if possible. The homework diary is a useful means of communication between home and school.
41. The quality of information the school provides to parents is satisfactory. At the beginning of the autumn term parents receive details of the curriculum their child will be studying. The school discussed the PSHE syllabus with parents before it was introduced to the children. The questionnaire shows that 84 per cent of parents feel they are kept well informed about their child's progress. However, some were dissatisfied that they were unable to see their child's English and mathematics teacher on parents' evenings if they were not in the same set as their class teacher. The school has responded positively to this. In the coming year, the format for parents' evenings will be changed to enable parents to meet the teachers they wish to see. The annual governors' report to parents and the school prospectus now contain the required information. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there were omissions. The quality of pupils' annual reports is satisfactory overall. Particular targets are set for English and mathematics but could be improved with references to how other aspects of learning might be improved.
42. Parents appreciate the information they receive from the newsletters. The school's relationships with parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language are good as a result of the school's own efforts, which are efficiently complimented by the language support service.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership and management of the school provided by the new acting headteacher, senior staff and governors are good. The acting headteacher has only been in post this term but, building on her good involvement in the previous management team, is already providing good leadership and a clear educational direction for the work of the school. Very good monitoring procedures of teaching and learning have enabled her, subject co-ordinators and the previous headteacher to share the best practice to the benefit of all. The new senior management team is committed to the continuous improvement of the school. Monitoring is closely linked with the school's own appraisal procedures, which meet statutory requirements for performance management. Staff have considerable individual strengths in subject knowledge and these are successfully shared in planning and whole-school development, as in improvements in ICT.

44. The subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility very effectively and make significant contributions to good curriculum planning. The school is now well placed to build on the good systems and structures within the school, to extend the roles of the individual co-ordinators to take more personal responsibility for monitoring teaching, standards and pupils' achievement in their subjects, linked more closely to the target setting. The greater involvement of pupils in their target setting is an area for further development. The effectiveness of the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies is good and the very good improvements in ICT and its contributions to subjects across the curriculum have increased teachers' confidence and pupils' knowledge and understanding.
45. The governing body is effective and has a good understanding of its strategic role. The school improvement plan has an important strategic place in identifying a range of short- medium- and long-term priorities and targets very clearly. These priorities are reviewed rigorously by the governors on an annual basis. Individual governors attend a range of appropriate training courses and play a full and active part in the life of the school. The governing body has good strategies for evaluating the school's effectiveness, such as monitoring the school's National Curriculum test results and setting new targets. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities and help to foster good links in the community. The school's aims and values are very appropriate and well communicated to staff and parents, reflecting the strong team commitment among staff and governors. The school fosters good relationships and these are greatly valued by parents.
46. The school has a good number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and cover the full requirements of the National Curriculum. They have well-defined responsibilities and work very co-operatively as an effective team. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a good number of well trained and effective learning support assistants who make valuable contributions to the work of the school. A well qualified ICT technician and a librarian provide good support for teaching and learning. The efficient administrative staff, site manager and cleaners are valued team members and contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school. Induction procedures are thorough and new members of staff, including newly qualified teachers, feel well supported when they join the school, enabling them to settle quickly and successfully into their new roles.
47. The quality of the accommodation is good and effectively supports teaching and learning by providing all the facilities and teaching space necessary to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum effectively. There is a main hall where everyone can gather for whole-school assemblies. The newly created ICT rooms enable whole-class teaching of ICT skills to be undertaken in a stimulating learning environment. Most classrooms are spacious and enhanced by attractive and informative displays. Activity areas in each year group are used effectively for group learning but sometimes restrict year group assemblies and drama presentations. Playgrounds and playing fields give pupils plenty of space to enjoy playtimes and physical education activities. Ramps provide good wheelchair access into the building and throughout the building electronic pads enable a wheelchair user to open doors independently. Additionally, there is a new and well-equipped medical room. The accommodation is maintained and cleaned to a high standard and provides a stimulating learning environment for pupils.
48. The fiction and non-fiction libraries are well stocked and organised and used effectively by pupils. New computerised systems are in place and are used well to

gather information about the availability of book resources. The school successfully applied for grants to create an environmental garden. This is a very attractive area with different types of planting for various purposes such as a meadow and sensory garden. It is fully accessible for pupils in wheelchairs. There are sufficient classrooms for the delivery of the National Curriculum. There is very little storage space for large physical education equipment.

49. The quantity, quality and range of learning resources are good and effectively support all areas of the curriculum. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. Resources are readily accessible and used successfully throughout the school to enhance the quality of education provided. The new computer rooms are well equipped with a good number of computers enabling all pupils to work individually or in pairs to improve their skills. In addition the school has a good number of laptop computers which are available to all classes and used in connection with the 'Wavelan' signal system to enable them to be linked. These provide pupils with regular opportunities to reinforce their technological skills and as a result standards are rising. The school has identified a need to increase the number of artefacts and to improve its ICT software for history.
50. The overall efficiency of the school is good. The school has built successfully on the good standards of financial planning reported at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher and governors have developed well-structured and systematic procedures that effectively support the school's educational priorities. This is a process that involves all members of staff in an annual review of the work of the school in order to identify and agree future priorities. Efficient use has been made of national funding for ICT equipment and teachers' training. Good use is made of new technology in all aspects of school life to improve efficiency levels and to support the curriculum. The carry forward of funding is 15.5 per cent of the total income figure. Governors have planned for this over recent years to allow for a projected falling roll, a new playground area and other priorities. The acting headteacher also has plans to increase teaching support, particularly in English and mathematics sets. These are suitable priorities for improving efficiency.
51. The special needs co-ordinator is well qualified and an experienced teacher. She has a good impact on the systems used in the school, many of which she developed. The school has a generous number of teachers and support staff who are supporting special needs. During lunchtimes, one of the teachers employed for special needs works with a group of learning support assistants on key strategies, such as the teaching of reading. This has a good impact on teaching and team building. There is a governor responsible for special needs who works in the school as an assistant in the special unit. She is ideally placed to understand the workings of the department. The management of special educational needs is to be reviewed so that the resources allocated for these pupils are used more efficiently to support their learning.
52. The school successfully applies the principles of best value for money and is good at consulting and involving all those concerned in decision-making about spending. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services and resources in order to acquire cost effectiveness and as a result, money is spent carefully. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are good, enabling the headteacher and governors to closely monitor and evaluate spending decisions, such as the recent computer rooms, to raise standards of attainment. The most recent financial audit, last term, made a small number of recommendations and the school has responded appropriately to these. Teaching and support staff are deployed effectively to promote

pupils' learning and their improved expertise is used for the benefit of all. Standards are only average at the end of Year 6 and this concern has been identified by the acting headteacher and changes are to be made.

53. Taking into account the average levels of attainment on entry and when pupils leave the school, the satisfactory levels of improvement since the previous inspection, the good leadership and management, the satisfactory quality of education provided, the above average unit costs and the significant carry forward of funding, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. To improve the quality of education provided and to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and senior management team should build on the good systems and structures in place by:
- (1) increasing the involvement of pupils in setting targets for improvement so that they know exactly what they have to do to improve; (paragraphs 13, 39, 44, 65 & 75)
 - (2) ensuring that teachers' marking is more closely linked to target setting and indicates how pupils' work might be improved; (paragraphs 13, 39, 65, 68 & 75)
 - (3) making more efficient use of the special needs co-ordinator and other resources to provide more focused support in order to raise standards of the high proportion of lower attaining pupils; (paragraphs 17, 38 & 52)
 - (4) making pupils' individual education plans more readily available to help class teachers track the progress of these pupils more closely and so improve achievement. (paragraphs 17 & 22)

Other minor areas for improvement

- (a) complete appropriate assessment procedures for the non-core subjects, sharing the good practice already in place; (paragraphs 36, 90, 94, 118 & 122)
- (b) take the necessary steps to reduce the high levels of authorised absence. (paragraph 10)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURE

Unit for physically disabled

55. The school has six places designated for pupils with physical disabilities. At the time of the inspection there were three pupils attending the unit, one of whom is a wheelchair user. The accommodation for pupils with physical disabilities is very good. Ramps provide good wheelchair access into the building and throughout the building electronic pads enable a wheelchair user to open doors independently. Additionally, there is a new, spacious and well-equipped medical room.

56. The school provides suitable support to enable pupils with physical disabilities to fully participate in lessons. They attend most lessons with their regular classes. Pupils and adults sensitively welcome their presence. Teachers and support assistants provide good teaching which takes good account of the immediate needs of these pupils. Either, relevant detailed discussion takes place to help understanding, or the helper records answers as dictated by the pupil. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistant quickly compile adequate care plans when a new pupil with physical needs arrives in the school. This provides helpful guidance for the supporting adult. The school has gained a very good reputation for the way it includes pupils with physical disabilities in all activities and the life of the school. Children from a nearby special school attend lessons one afternoon a week when being prepared for mainstream schooling.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	91
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	11	44	32	1	0	0
Percentage	3	12	49	35	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	620
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	20
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	187

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	36

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.0

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	87	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	60	64	72
	Girls	56	51	59
	Total	116	115	131
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (75)	74 (63)	84 (77)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	52	64	72
	Girls	55	55	60
	Total	107	119	132
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (71)	76 (80)	85 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	1
Indian	7
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	606
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	24.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.6
Average class size	31

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	338

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	1,168,636
Total expenditure	1,121,381
Expenditure per pupil	1,809
Balance brought forward from previous year	133,596

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	13.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	620
Number of questionnaires returned	172

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	44	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	58	3	4	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	58	15	1	0
The teaching is good.	45	48	6	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	49	13	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	38	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	34	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	33	49	16	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	43	44	7	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	60	5	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	42	23	7	6

The figures on each row may not add up to one hundred due to rounding up and down in each section.

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

ENGLISH

57. As a result of the effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the overall good quality of teaching, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The previous inspection judged that standards were above average but following that time, evidence shows that standards dropped to below average. Standards have improved over the past two years and are now average overall, although not yet high enough for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.
58. The quality of relationships within the school helps pupils to feel at ease with their peers. As a result, most pupils feel confident enough to express their ideas without fear of ridicule. This, coupled with the good level of the teachers' questioning skills, ensures that achievement in speaking and listening is good. The teachers give high priority to this aspect of the pupils' development and have maintained the good standards noted in the last report. The development of these skills is well planned by the teachers, for example in a Year 4 drama lesson, the pupils described what may be contained in a 'mysterious bag' carried by a stranger, and the likely characteristics of a rural inn. The pupils' ability to listen closely is shown in music lessons, where they respond well when asked to describe variations in how short pieces have been performed by other groups in the class. This they do well. Most pupils, in conversations with them about the books they are reading, express their ideas clearly, having listened very closely to the question. Many converse well. A high attaining Year 5 boy, in a conversation over reading, charmingly, humorously and eloquently explained that, 'I've tried to be a malingerer but have failed'.
59. It was noted in the previous report that, as a result of the monitoring of the curriculum, reading had been identified to be a priority area for development. The current school improvement plan maintains this thrust, for example by identifying the need to provide a greater range of texts for guided group readings, especially for weaker readers. This, coupled with the effective way in which most of the reading is taught, results in good achievement by the majority of pupils and above average standards. Most of the higher attaining pupils, at a level appropriate to their age, explain aspects of the plot, their favourite characters and an opinion of the books. This skill is well supported by the maintenance of their own reading record book, which gradually develops through the school into a summary of book reviews. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6, for example, when reading the biography of a children's author, show a well-developed ability to draw conclusions. They begin to select phrases from the text to support their views and opinions.
60. Pupils who attain average and above average reading standards read fluently, accurately and with effective intonation. This is as a result of teachers' recognition of the importance of this aspect of reading. They are not content with the pupils merely 'barking at print'. Teachers working with lower attaining pupils usually ensure that they provide a good model for reading, which greatly assists the pupils' progress. On a few occasions, however, pupils' achievement is hampered within these groups when the teachers appear unaware of the precise problems and needs of pupils with special educational needs in the group. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in language development as a result of targeted support.

61. Most pupils have well-developed strategies for reading unfamiliar words. These include using picture clues and sounding of words. Pupils throughout the school have a clear understanding of the differences between fiction and non-fiction. Higher attaining and average pupils are aware of the differences between the contents and index. The library is well stocked and run, and is a considerable asset to pupils' learning. There is currently the need to provide a broader range of books linked to the themes or topic being studied in the school. Many teachers have a systematic approach to encourage pupils to read a wide range of fictional work. They track the type of books read by the pupils, for example stories from annuals, play scripts, myths and legends etc.
62. Teachers' planning for English and literacy is very good. This helps the progressive development of writing skills and the functional aspects of writing such as punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting. The teachers have sensibly adapted the National Literacy Strategy, but with amendments made to meet the needs of the school. For example, by achieving a balance between text level and word level work over a course of a week rather than each day, and by adapting some sessions to extended writing. These strategies, have successfully addressed the weakness in the systematic progression of language noted in the previous report.
63. Scrutiny of previous work indicates that the pupils have a satisfactory appreciation of their need to write for a specific purpose. Groups of Year 6 pupils use computer programs well to write formal and correctly set out letters of complaint to a company about their broken washing machine. They also effectively use text and graphics programs to create anthologies of Macbeth, native American Indians and a fact file on Nelson Mandela. Writing skills are frequently used well in other subjects, such as geography, science and history. The writing shows an understanding of complex sentences, reported and direct speech and the use of comparatives and superlatives.
64. The high expectations that the teachers have for the use of language are reflected well in the descriptive writing of a Year 6 pupil. Following work on the use of a thesaurus, he wrote 'He suddenly became aware of a luscious, intoxicating aroma coming from the plant'. In another example, a Year 3 pupil used the alliterative phrase 'attacking alligators annoying ants'. There were a few examples of extended writing, giving pupils the opportunities to consider the use of short chapters and to develop a theme or longer story. However, higher attaining pupils do use their writing skills well in some extended work on Henry VIII in history. There is a growing awareness by most teachers of the importance of demonstrating good examples of work for their pupils as they strive to raise the overall standard of writing. Where teachers use this strategy, it has a positive impact on pupils' achievement, for example in a Year 5 lesson on instructional texts. Here the pupils were particularly well motivated as the model was written on the white board, with the assistance of the teacher, by a pupil who also followed the agreed instructions to make an actual sandwich. Consequently, learning was good and all pupils achieved well, particularly in their understanding of imperatives.
65. As most pupils show very positive attitudes and relationships are good, the teachers know the pupils well and assess progress successfully. Also, teachers' management skills are good, so little time is wasted with distractions from learning. These have a very positive effect upon pupils' learning. However, the overall quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and it does not have the impact it should on pupils' achievement. In the best examples, not only is it regular, but it sets targets for improvement and is not merely a tick, or an exhortation, or the important note of

praise. The half-termly assessments made by the teachers, of progress towards sets of clearly identified objectives, are an important step towards good progress and higher standards. The use of these assessments, as part of the work in the subsequent half-term, is also a significant initiative to support pupils' learning. However, individual pupils are unaware of these targets and have little self-knowledge of their learning. This lack of individual written targets against which pupils would measure their progress, hinders learning, especially of lower/middle attaining pupils. These pupils need to relate to identifiable and attainable targets. This is clearly an element for development.

66. Homework is used effectively by the teachers to develop and support pupils' learning and provide a basis for future work. Most pupils respond well to the set tasks, especially when they relate closely to the purpose of the work, for example some Year 6 work on diary writing.
67. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strategies for future developments in this subject. She is involved in the effective analysis of national tests and has, through effective monitoring, a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the learning and teaching. Resources for literacy have been bought wisely and relate closely to the needs of the subject.

MATHEMATICS

68. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and is reflected in the average standards attained by the eleven-year-olds. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress because the teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good overall. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress as they are well supported. The subject is very well managed and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved the consistency of the teaching. Pupils work hard in lessons and want to do their best. This is a credit to the teachers' determination to raise pupils' attainment. Although teachers set targets for pupils to reach, these are not shared enough with the pupils and so the good teaching is not as effective as it might be in raising their attainment.
69. Pupils are placed into class sets for mathematics lessons according to their levels of attainment. The higher attaining eleven-year-olds in the top set attain above average standards. They calculate accurately with whole numbers and decimals. Pupils quickly recall their times tables. They have a sound understanding of shape and accurately measure angles using a protractor. Pupils are not as successful in solving problems, especially in explaining the methods they have used and their reasoning. This is partially explained by the considerable use made by teachers of worksheets, which provide pupils with problems that are not always relevant to their interests and experiences. For example, when they were asked by their teachers to work with problems based on 'Harry Potter maths' involving the 'Weasley Wizard Wheezes', the quality of their work was of a high standard.
70. Most pupils in the second set and a majority in set three, attain average standards for eleven-year-olds. Again they are competent in calculating but are weaker in problem-solving. The lower attaining pupils in sets four and five, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress but are not as confident in recalling their tables or in calculating accurately. However, they are better at measuring and telling the time, with both analogue and digital clocks, as teachers have placed considerable emphasis on this. Too many pupils in set four do not reach the standards

expected of eleven-year-olds. Despite the extra teaching support provided in Year 5 for some of these pupils, and the extra boost some have in Year 6, there is a degree of underachievement. Often these pupils are not quick enough or sufficiently accurate in recalling number facts and multiplication tables.

71. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is never less than satisfactory, at times is very good and occasionally is excellent. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there were instances of unsatisfactory teaching. When the teaching is good or very good, pupils often make good progress in their learning as a result. In these lessons, the teaching is brisk, encouraging and challenging. 'Give me a hot tip for rounding up to a hundred' asked one teacher. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, where pupils were learning to solve problems involving money, not a second was wasted. At the end of the lesson the pupils were asked how they felt they had got on and to talk about what they had found difficult so that they could be helped to overcome their difficulties. The pupils responded well and their learning was good.
72. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject. Their planning is good and most eleven-year-olds have successfully built on their earlier work because the curriculum is well planned. Opportunities are taken to develop pupils' mathematical skills when working in other subjects. For example, pupils use graphs in geography; in art, patterns are often based on mathematical shapes; and in physical education pupils consolidate their understanding of angles as they develop sequences based on turns in gymnastics. This consolidates pupils' learning effectively. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has increased pupils' ability to calculate mentally. When pupils in Year 6 were asked where they saw their strengths in mathematics, a significant majority said that it was what they termed their 'mental agility'.
73. Questions are used effectively by teachers to consolidate what pupils have learnt, as well as probing to check their levels of understanding. Questions such as, 'How did you work that out?' together with 'How do you know?' and 'What have you noticed?' are used well. This happened in a very good lesson in Year 5 where pupils were learning to change improper fractions into mixed numbers. As a result of the good questioning, one pupil explained how she had tackled the questions. Other pupils found this useful and so the teacher named the strategy after the pupil for future use. Teachers take care to use the correct mathematical vocabulary and insist that pupils do the same. Teaching such as this encourages pupils, raises their self-esteem and improves their learning.
74. The previous inspection judged that ICT did not play a significant part in the teaching of mathematics. This has now improved considerably. The recent establishment of a second ICT room, together with the purchase of laptop computers, has considerably increased the use of ICT in lessons. Pupils regularly have their mathematics in the ICT rooms and have access to laptops in other lessons. This is already improving their use of ICT in the subject. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils used spreadsheets effectively to double large numbers and to investigate the patterns that this produced. In Year 4, pupils successfully used ICT to draw equilateral triangles and to explore the patterns and shapes that can be drawn based on these triangles. This use of ICT enhanced the learning and improved pupils' mathematical understanding.
75. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Detailed analysis is undertaken of the results of the national tests and tests set by the school. The information is used effectively to identify areas that need improvement and to set

targets for pupils. Teachers regularly and systematically assess pupils' progress to identify those who are having difficulty and those who need a greater challenge. Teachers take due account of this information when planning work. However, pupils do not gain as much as they could from these arrangements, as teachers do not share this information enough with the pupils, who are not sufficiently aware of the targets they are being asked to aim for and what they are being asked to get better at. Although teachers regularly mark pupils work, rarely is this linked to the targets that have been set for the pupils. Consequently, teachers' marking provides little advice for pupils as to how to improve. Homework is set and completed regularly and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Again, this is not linked enough to the targets set for pupils and so they do not gain as much as they could from their homework.

76. The subject is very well led by the knowledgeable co-ordinator and this has led to the improvement in teaching. Efficient arrangements have been established to ensure consistent and good planning across this large school. Pupils' levels of attainment are carefully monitored, as are planning and teaching. The information from these monitoring activities is used effectively to draw up and implement plans for improvement. For example, more attention has been paid to teaching problem-solving, with advice on how to go about the process of solving problems now being displayed in classrooms for pupils to refer to. The co-ordinator is fully aware that levels of attainment are not improving quickly enough and has been investigating why, given the good teaching and planning, this should be the case. Resources are good and have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

77. The quality of provision for science is good and it has a beneficial impact on the achievement of most pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils. Most pupils attain average levels, which are lower than at the time of the previous inspection but confirm the results of national tests over the past year. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and are supported appropriately by their learning support assistant. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar satisfactory progress.
78. One of the strengths is in investigative science and pupils in all year groups are confident when carrying out investigations and fair testing. This is a similar picture found during the previous inspection. As a result of good planning by teachers, Year 6 pupils successfully carry out investigations in depth, making predictions and suggesting outcomes. By then they have covered all the programmes of study in each of the attainment targets and have developed a comprehensive knowledge of the primary science curriculum. Teachers involve pupils in good levels of discussion using scientific terms and pupils record their findings thoughtfully using their newly learnt vocabulary accurately and produce a glossary of terms. This comprehensive approach has a good impact on the higher attaining pupils. Pupils of average ability also benefit from this approach and attain satisfactory standards.
79. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan well to make good links with other subjects, successfully including English, mathematics and ICT as recommended in recent national guidance, to give breadth to the topics. For instance, Year 6 pupils conducted an investigation into 'forces'. Besides carrying out practical investigations, they learned that weight varies and mass is constant. They learnt that units of force are called Newtons. Good planning is a strength based on the two-year programme of

topics which are repeated in the upper junior department with greater emphasis on breadth and depth of learning.

80. Teachers make good use of ICT in science by using the new software which has been purchased to help with the classification, knowledge and understanding, particularly in the teaching of living things. Pupils enjoy science and they take pride in the way they record their work. The teachers for their part, mark the work sensitively, offering praise for good work. However, targets for improvement are not often included and this is a weakness. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and gives good leadership. The new policy is good and the planning he produces for each year group is comprehensive and workable. Monitoring is carried out annually by the co-ordinator, who has discussed with teachers in Years 3 and 6, data handling as part of in-service training. Assessment of pupils' learning is carried out every half-term. The science planner in each year group sets a test every half-term on the targets covered in their lessons. Resources are effectively organised for easy access and the grounds and splendid new environmental area are an added bonus to pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

81. This subject has a high profile in the school and this contributes to pupils achieving standards above those expected for their age. The school has successfully maintained the good standards in this subject found at the time of the previous inspection. The subject co-ordinator leads with enthusiasm, expertise and a desire to reach high standards. Consequently, all staff use very clear plans that build on pupils' skills and understanding very effectively. The school also places a high emphasis upon pupils using sketchbooks to try out ideas and this is often set as homework. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 built a design using formal shapes and pattern in class. To do this they referred to patterns they had gathered from home and stuck into their sketchbooks and patterns they had experimented with in their sketchbooks. The results were very careful and thoughtful pieces of work from pupils of all capabilities.
82. The quality of teaching is good and often very good or excellent. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and this in turn encourages pupils to challenge and extend themselves. As a result most pupils use colour and shape with maturity and their observational work is more accurate than is usual for their age. For example, pupils in Year 3 confidently sketch pastel cats with a good awareness of perspective, while pupils in Year 4 achieve depth in their sensitive watercolours inspired by Monet.
83. This detailed system of planning provides good opportunities for pupils to use a wide range of materials and techniques, such as wax resist, 'scrunch' weaving, stencil design and block fabric printing as well as clay and papier mâché. Pupils become adept at selecting and mixing media. In Year 6, for example, they elected to use both paint and pencil purposefully to add texture to their representations of a local windmill. Additionally, throughout the school, teachers plan good links with ICT. Pupils use computer programs well to explore and extend their artwork. For example, in Year 4 pupils use software to produce highly individual portraits that are inspired by Picasso's, 'Weeping Woman'. In Year 6, pupils successfully import, manipulate and rotate images to produce floral patterns in the style of William Morris.
84. Teachers frequently plan to use art to support pupils' learning in other subjects. They test their painting skills when they produce stencil designs for papier mâché Roman shields. They combine their imaginations and historical understanding when they

make clay masks in the style of Viking gods. Similarly they enhance their appreciation of mathematics by designing tangram eggs and using Islamic pattern. Teachers make good use of the language of the subject to extend pupils' vocabulary.

85. The subject has a good range of resources. The co-ordinator has begun to work with colleagues on a shared approach to assessing pupils' work. She has compiled a helpful portfolio of samples of pupils' work that represent the new descriptions of different levels of work. Additionally, she has produced a format for assessment for teachers to use when a piece of work is finished. These systems are useful for ensuring consistency in teachers' assessment of pupils' work.
86. The rich curriculum helps pupils to express their appreciation of the natural world, to value creativity and the world of the imagination. This means that the subject makes a considerable and positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils produce dramatic paintings of St. Lucia using silhouettes to good effect, and display large co-operative work in the style of aboriginal painting.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Provision for the subject is satisfactory. Both teaching and learning are satisfactory as is the quality of the curriculum. These factors produce average achievement and attainment in the subject. Boys and girls display sound interest in the subject and they are keen to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. This drive to learn creates a sound ethos for working and learning.
88. The present standards are average and represent an improvement from the previous inspection when these were recorded as below average. Girls and boys display similar interest and consequently they learn and achieve in equal measure. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language receive sound support and make similar progress to other pupils.
89. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attain expected levels and make satisfactory progress. For example, they design and embroider a bookmark and a photo frame. The products are of satisfactory quality. Teachers plan interesting activities for pupils, such as learning how to design and make oat cookies and decorate them. However, insufficient attention was paid to the evaluation of the finished products. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 design and make a range of products such as a model of the Titanic and a house. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to investigate examples of axle construction and as a result, pupils design, make and evaluate a self-powered buggy with variable success. In a good lesson in Year 5, the pupils were given a good range of bread to evaluate. The class first discussed the range of vocabulary, which the teacher wrote on the board. The display of words and grouping helped all pupils to evaluate and describe appearance, texture and flavour of bread. The teacher organised the lesson well and enabled all pupils to move around the class in an orderly manner to carry out their evaluations of different types of bread displayed on different tables. Pupils developed good skills and knowledge as a result of the good strategies used by the teacher.
90. Teachers' subject knowledge is much improved. Staff are keen to teach design and technology well and demonstrate good commitment to succeed. The subject leadership is good and there is clear direction for improvement, for example introducing new assessment procedures and the use of assessment information for

consistency across the school. The use of ICT is currently limited but development in this area is planned by an adequate budget allocation for the subject. Literacy and numeracy make sound contributions to the subject, for example measuring accurately so that various pieces of a model house fit together well. Pupils also develop good speaking and listening skills when discussing their work and that of others.

GEOGRAPHY

91. Provision for the subject is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good as is the quality of the curriculum. The combined effect of these factors produces above average achievement and attainment. The pupils show good interest in the subject and work with good levels of concentration and industry. Their behaviour is seldom less than good. Their keenness to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding make effective contributions to creating an ethos for productive working and learning, often with enjoyment. The school has maintained pupils' attainment at above expected levels since the previous inspection despite other national initiatives. Boys and girls participate equally well in learning and consequently achieve equally good standards. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, as do most of the pupils who speak English as an additional language. Both make comparable progress.
92. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn and achieve well because their teachers think carefully about the resources that will intellectually stimulate their pupils. They make effective use of questions for sequential development of pupils' knowledge and skills. New learning is underpinned by developing conceptual vocabulary, for example of different types of houses in Year 3 and of terms that describe settlements from the farmhouses and hamlets to the cities. Pupils' understanding is enhanced by discussions about what characterises different settlements. Resources such as videos, maps, atlases and aerial photographs are used strategically to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding progressively.
93. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils respond well to teachers' good management skills which support good learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are keen learners and respond well to what their teachers offer. In a Year 6 lesson, the pupils learnt a lot about the Brazilian rainforest and the people that inhabit it. Pupils were encouraged to learn and reflect on the effects of the rate of decimation of these forests. They thoughtfully reflected upon statistics that really made them think about how these could affect their lives. They were inspired to develop questioning techniques that would yield geographical information to enhance their understanding of the world in which they live. For example, they considered the impact of the destruction of rainforests on the food, clothing and homes of the local inhabitants and on the global environment. Effective use of maps and atlases in a Year 5 class helped pupils to gain good knowledge and understanding of the geography of St. Lucia.
94. Whilst the elements of the programme of studies provide good reference points for short- to medium-term objectives, there is a need for pupils to understand the specific learning objectives of lessons more clearly, so that they can gauge their progress in acquiring new skills or consolidating past learning. This includes sharing the meaning of key vocabulary that underpins pupils' understanding at the start of each lesson. Improvement is also planned to develop assessment procedures and use this information for raising standards further. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills make satisfactory contributions to geography, as does the use of ICT. For example, to search for information about St Lucia. Co-ordination of the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to its development and direction.

HISTORY

95. Staff and pupils share an enthusiasm for history throughout the school. This makes a considerable contribution to the good level of historical knowledge achieved by most pupils. The history curriculum is enhanced by regular special events that are highly effective in promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding. These special events are powerful learning experiences. During this inspection, pupils new to Year 6 spoke eloquently about the anticipated Victorian week. Their expectations of how strict the teachers will be and how constrained their relationships with friends, arise from witnessing the event last year! The school has successfully maintained the good standards reported in the previous inspection.
96. By the age of eleven, pupils have a clearer understanding than is expected for their age, of daily life in the periods of history that they have studied. At the beginning of Year 6, pupils use this knowledge successfully to deepen their understanding that specific historical events or inventions have had a profound effect upon future generations. They cite as an example of this, Stevenson's Rocket that 'revolutionised transport because it was so fast'. They also understand the significance of the invention of the telephone beyond their own immediate experience, 'because it meant blind people could communicate'. Overall the teaching of history is good and is responsible for the good standards achieved by most pupils.
97. Younger pupils at the beginning of Year 3 develop their sense of chronology by beginning to distinguish between periods of time and correctly place them in a sequence. They grapple with this difficult concept with the level of understanding expected for their age. Pupils in Year 4 achieve well and have a good understanding of key features of life in Ancient Egypt. They know that the Ancient Egyptians were nomads and that the River Nile was of enormous importance to them. Pupils in Year 5 develop their historical understanding soundly by using their knowledge to deduce what is fact and what is mythology when they listen to the story of 'Theseus and the Minotaur'. During the inspection older pupils achieved very well and made rapid gains in understanding the enormity of differences between rich and poor in Victorian Britain. They were shocked that social position affected a family's access to a doctor. Links between this subject, reading 'Oliver Twist' and recent discussions in personal and social education, raised moral questions for pupils to debate. Throughout the school, pupils understand that there are various sources of historical information and older pupils relate this well to their individual work.
98. Teachers plan very well throughout the school to ensure that pupils have a good level of knowledge and experience of personal research. Together with the positive ethos of the school that encourages pupils to participate in discussion, this enables most pupils to begin to analyse the impact of significant historical events and changes. Teachers fire pupils with enthusiasm, encouraging them to work hard on personal research projects on people such as Florence Nightingale.
99. There are occasionally good examples of teachers marking work with comments that develop pupils' learning. For example, when teachers write developmental comments such as, 'You have identified the main differences but I expected you to notice the improved speed, efficiency and ease of use too', they are providing helpful feedback to further promote pupils' learning. Helpful comments such as these are, however, not used consistently.

100. The subject is well led with considerable commitment and enthusiasm. The co-ordinator has correctly identified a shared approach to assessment as a key priority, likely to develop the good work of the school further. The subject has a good supply of resources and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' extended and imaginative writing.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

101. The school's provision for ICT is very good and by the end of Year 6 when pupils are eleven they achieve well and attain above expected levels. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection when there was insufficient evidence to judge standards and provision was unsatisfactory.

102. The very good improvements which have taken place, have created a new stimulating learning environment for the subject. This includes the provision of a new computer room just after the previous inspection and the completion of a second computer room last term. The previous and current co-ordinators have led very effective staff development in the subject. As a result, all teachers have greater confidence and expertise and use the new resources to very good effect. Better planning, guided by a new scheme of work, provides detailed learning objectives to meet the needs of all pupils in each year group. As a result, standards in the subject are rising rapidly.

103. Following the guidance of the new learning objectives, teachers plan a wide range of experiences for pupils throughout the school. In Year 3, tape recorders/listening stations are used effectively at selected times to improve pupils' listening skills and to enhance their enjoyment of literature. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils develop satisfactory wordprocessing skills using the keyboard and other controls. In links with literacy, they create and amend text and access information on the Internet about their favourite authors such as Dick King-Smith. Year 4 pupils gather information about the Tudors to support history work and in mathematics, reinforce number through creating a series of instructions for enabling a screen turtle to follow a particular route. Teachers provide stimulating learning experiences and all pupils are highly motivated by the new developments in the subject, discuss their work enthusiastically and have good attitudes to technology. A well-qualified technician provides invaluable support for teaching and learning.

104. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 build systematically on their knowledge and understanding. Year 5 pupils support their learning in literacy, illustrating text with graphics and selecting different font sizes, styles and colours to write in the style of William Shakespeare, such as a description of 'Titania's Bad Dream'. Year 6 pupils use computers to extend their sequencing of instructions for creating signals and sound alarms using sensors. They create their own intricate and colourful designs in the style of William Morris by experimenting with colour, flower designs and rotation of patterns.

105. By the end of Year 6, pupils are aware of the importance of ICT in their lives when accessing the Internet to gather information in a range of subjects, such as monitoring and interpreting information from the 'weatherlink station' in science. They investigate the use of ICT in supermarkets in the control of cash tills, smoke alarms, thermostats etc. All pupils are inspired by the good guidance from the teachers to develop their skills. They share ideas well and support each other very positively. As a result of the determination of the school to do its best for all individuals regardless of their background or prior attainment, all pupils are confident in their use of computers. A

high proportion attain above expected levels, including those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with special needs make good progress in their learning due to specific support from teachers and classroom assistants. More than half attain expected standards in the development of new skills.

106. The quality of teaching is good overall. The direct teaching and reinforcement of skills takes place in a focused session each week. Good opportunities are provided during other lessons to enable pupils to put their ideas into practice, in the context of other subjects. Teachers and support assistants have a good knowledge of computing and plan good links with almost every other curriculum subject. Pupils work mainly in pairs and this successfully promotes their social development and ensures that all are included in well-planned tasks. Resources are much improved since the previous inspection with the new computer rooms. Teachers make good use of the Internet and a digital camera to extend learning at appropriate points in the progression of skills and understanding. The co-ordinator provides very good support and leadership and has significantly raised the status of the subject. The school has recently introduced a range of planned assessment procedures that are aimed at matching work more accurately to the individual needs of the pupils. The school is well placed to make further progress in the subject.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

107. Although the teaching of a modern foreign language is not a compulsory part of the National Curriculum for pupils aged from seven to eleven, the school chooses to teach French to pupils in all year groups and does so effectively. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in learning the language. This provides valuable educational, social and cultural experiences for all pupils. These judgements are similar to those of the previous inspection and show that expected levels have been maintained.
108. The school started the learning of French as a privilege for Year 6 pupils, developing their speaking and listening skills and their self-esteem. This was later extended down to Year 3. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 reinforce their use of a greeting, using 'Bonjour' and learn new introductory phrases such as 'Je m'appelle, Comment t'appelle tu?' They also learn to count to ten and beyond in French. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils build on their learning successfully by engaging each other in conversations such as, 'Bonjour. Comment ça va?', 'Très bien' and 'Au revoir' upon departure. They also learn a range of names of colours.
109. Year 6 pupils achieve well, developing good communication skills and laying good foundations for future language learning. French is used almost exclusively in these lessons and pupils listen carefully to their teacher and respond well to questions, demonstrating their understanding and their ability to convey their meaning. Good progress is made in the quality of their pronunciation and intonation when holding conversations. Most pupils communicate well with the teacher and each other. They understand and use a suitable range of vocabulary. All pupils have obvious enthusiasm for the subject as a result of the interesting teaching they receive. They are keen to communicate in the language and do so willingly.
110. Each session is usually only ten minutes long and in this short time the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers provide good role models, plan lessons effectively and create good relationships in a positive learning environment. Teachers plan the

involvement of all pupils in paired conversational work. This ensures that pupils of all levels of attainment gain in confidence and reinforce their knowledge and understanding. These factors successfully contribute to pupils' good attitudes and achievement. The co-ordinator has amended the policy and scheme of work to ensure progression in skills, topic by topic. Resources are satisfactory and include up-to-date books, other literature, videos and listening tapes. Future plans include assessment data based on vocabulary lists in the different year groups and introducing pupils to preparing and trying French food.

MUSIC

111. The enthusiasm, of the teachers and the pupils, is the key to the good levels of achievement in the school. This maintains the overall position at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be good. The full and detailed planning by the teachers generally ensures that the pupils' listening and performing skills are developed systematically. The newly developed assessment procedures are good but there has been insufficient time for them to have a significant impact upon standards.
112. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding which gives them the confidence to widen the pupils' musical experiences and skills. This is as a result of the school's very effective planning procedures. Teachers with a limited musical background are very effectively assisted and guided in planning by those with more highly developed understanding and skills. This ensures a consistency of approach, which has a very positive impact upon the progressive development of the pupils' musical experiences, knowledge and skills. The regular evaluation and monitoring of the planned lessons help to ensure problems are identified early, for example if insufficient time is available for the musical activities suggested. This leads to a good pace to the pupils' learning being maintained in most lessons.
113. As a result of the teachers' high expectations for the standard of performance and listening, pupils in Year 6 show a very successful ability to replicate the rhythms they hear on a tape of African music. They play a range of percussion instruments with sensitivity, well assisted by the very clear objectives set by the teacher. Learning is assisted in all years by the general willingness of pupils to listen to and respect the playing of others. This is because the teachers establish good relationships with the pupils, allowing all to feel confident to volunteer to perform in front of the class or school. The teachers ensure that all pupils feel included whatever their level of musical ability.
114. Pupils' enthusiasm for music is helped by the broad range of methods used to motivate and stimulate them. In Year 3 for example, the teachers successfully introduce the pupils to an understanding of rhythmic variation by clapping the syllables of their names. In one of these lessons, the pupils were greatly motivated by the teacher randomly selecting names from previously written name cards. It also effectively ensured all pupils were included in the activity and added significantly to their enjoyment.
115. The extension of the pupils' musical vocabulary and knowledge is given a high priority by the teachers. For example, Year 3 pupils learn about Prokofiev, instruments of the orchestra and musical terminology such as pitch, tempo and timbre. The pupils show considerable pleasure when they use this knowledge and understanding correctly. It gives their learning a considerable boost. However, musical learning was not so well

supported during a hymn practice. Although the pupils sang with enthusiasm, the practice was a familiarisation with the words and tunes of two hymns, without giving any attention to improvement, for example phrasing or dynamics. Singing in assembly was, nevertheless, energetic, generally at the right tempo and in tune. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Recorded music is played as the pupils enter and leave the assembly hall and brief reference is made to the composer and/or performer. This widens the pupils' musical knowledge.

116. A key element of the good quality of teaching is the sharing of the lesson objectives with the pupils. In the most effective lessons, an evaluation of progress towards these targets at the end of the lessons supports the pupils' learning well. Again, in good lessons the pupils are motivated when the teacher outlines what they will be doing in the following lesson.
117. The musical experience of pupils is widened by the opportunity to join an open access choir, to attend musical clubs such as guitar, and to learn a range of orchestral instruments. All the pupils who attend these groups enjoy the experience and are motivated by the opportunity to prepare a range of performances for assembly and events in the local community. Year 6 pupils participate in an annual production and all year groups participate in the school's annual Christmas production in a variety of ways, from music and drama to control of lighting and designing and distributing tickets. Pupils' interest in music is also sustained by visits from musicians, for example a percussion session by the former drummer of an internationally known pop group.
118. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. She is aware of the absence of any formal assessment procedures. However, a scheme that identifies opportunities for assessment within the planning procedures has just been introduced. This is an important, positive and useful development. Some of the identified opportunities are currently too general to assess accurately. An evaluation is to be made of the effectiveness of these procedures. The opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor her subject is used well and contributes to the development of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. It was possible to observe mainly games and gymnastic lessons during the week of the inspection. Available evidence indicates that the standards attained in the subject as a whole are at average levels. In gymnastics, the achievement of the eleven-year-olds is satisfactory with most reaching the standards expected for pupils of this age, as was the case at the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum and make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 3, approximately two out of every three pupils have reached a satisfactory standard by swimming the required 25 metres. Teaching is satisfactory and good provision is made for the subject, including sporting and dance activities after school.
120. Overall, teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned as effective arrangements within each year group ensure that a teacher with a good knowledge of the subject leads planning for physical education. Most eleven-year-olds satisfactorily devise a sequence of movements involving springing, twisting and turning, which they perform reasonably well on the floor and on the apparatus. An area for improvement is the quality of balance they make at the end of their sequences. Where the teaching was very good, pupils were given detailed criteria for their performance, for example 'skip lightly' and 'stop quickly'. They were asked to think about the muscles they were using as they performed specific actions. This

attention to detail led to pupils making good improvement in the quality of their performances.

121. In the majority of lessons seen, the teaching had a greater emphasis on the organisation of the lesson than on improving pupils' performance. As a result learning was only satisfactory. Most teachers had only had one or two lessons in the hall with their new classes and, understandably, they were making sure that pupils clearly understood the routines expected of them and attention to rules regarding safety. Opportunities were provided for pupils to discuss and evaluate their work. Teachers work hard to impress the need for them to listen carefully and to concentrate on their tasks. In all lessons seen, pupils' performance had improved satisfactorily by the end of the lesson. Due attention is paid to pupils' safety. For example, teachers check to make sure jewellery has been taken off before the lesson starts and pupils are shown how to get the apparatus out safely.
122. The curriculum is well planned and provides a good range of learning opportunities. It is enhanced by a good range of sporting and dance activities that are well attended and are open to girls and boys. Good opportunities are provided for outdoor and adventurous activities during residential visits for Year 6 pupils to the Isle of Wight. In swimming, pupils are encouraged to join local swimming clubs. Their success is reflected in the results the school gains in local and county swimming galas. In dance, teachers use video recordings of sequences to help pupils improve their performances. The new co-ordinator has just joined the staff and has already identified the need to improve the arrangements to assess and record pupils' progress and attainment. Resources are good and well organised.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123. By the age of eleven, pupils attain standards which are above the required levels of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards broadly in line with the expectations in the targets on their education plans. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress across the school. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' awareness as a pluralist society.
124. By the end of Year 6 when the pupils leave the school, they have a good knowledge of the world's major religions. They understand symbolism in these religions and know the importance of religion and its effect on their cultures. In Years 3 and 4, they are also taught the principles of kindness and tolerance and how these are the cornerstones of the major religions. Through the school's 'Golden Rules' they write about how they feel and how to react to situations, for instance the importance of apologising to someone they might have offended. They have a good knowledge of the chronological life of Jesus and some of the stories of the Old Testament, such as Samson. They know important festivals such as Lent and laws such as the Ten Commandments. They learn about, and have a good knowledge of, other religions such as Judaism and Sikhism and festivals such as the Passover and Hanukkah.
125. In Years 5 and 6, pupils gain a greater understanding of the world religions particularly Islam, which is closely associated with Christianity with its prophets and messengers. They learn about the life of Mohammed and later Buddhism. Through their study of world religions they learn that ethical and moral questions rarely have clear-cut answers. Pupils learn that at critical times in their lives, many people turn to their own God for help and support. This was best emphasised in a very good lesson when pupils were expressing their 'wish for the world'. Pupils take pride in their written work,

which is of good quality through all ability groups. Marking is satisfactory but there are few positive comments to tell the pupils what to do next to improve.

126. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. There was one example of very good teaching, two good lessons and one unsatisfactory lesson. The most effective teaching was characterised by high expectations and good planning. Teachers had confidence in the subject and provided a lively interactive approach that promoted pupils' interest and built well on their previous knowledge. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils discussed the role of angels as messengers of God and their own wishes. Very good relationships and positive attitudes to the subject enabled pupils to make positive contributions and learn from listening to the views of others. One unsatisfactory lesson reflected a lack of detailed planning, weaknesses in the management of pupils and their learning and the teacher's limited knowledge. Much of the learning depended upon pupils reading in rotation from a printed sheet. This led in turn to passive listening and a number of pupils becoming unsettled.
127. The curriculum is good overall. The scheme of work provides a well-considered programme of topics, which ensures pupils progressively find out and learn from several religions as they move through the school. Guidance on planning the curriculum is good and the co-ordinator shows enthusiasm and good leadership in promoting the subject. Monitoring takes place every other year when the co-ordinator has the opportunity to review pupils' work in depth. Teachers make good use of pupils' written skills in producing well-written accounts of their topics. Resources are good and visits to local churches have a beneficial impact on pupils' understanding. There are plans to develop a portfolio of pupils' work, which will help the staff monitor standards more closely.