

INSPECTION REPORT

BURDETT-COUTTS & TOWNSHEND
FOUNDATION CHURCH of ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Westminster, London

LEA area: Westminster

Unique reference number: 101122

Headteacher: Mr. J Dancer

(Acting Headteacher: Mr. Huw Edwards)

Reporting inspector: Miss Cheryl Thompson
22822

Dates of inspection: 19 – 23 March 2001

Inspection number: 224201

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Rochester Street
London

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: The Revd Ralph Godsall

Date of previous inspection: 20/01/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
(Ofsted No. 22822)	Cheryl Thompson	Registered inspector	Information Technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
(Ofsted No. 13828)	Ron Ibbitson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal developments. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
(Ofsted No. 22028)	John Paull	Team inspector	English Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
(Ofsted No. 17288)	Megan Warner	Team inspector	Under fives	How well are pupils taught?
(Ofsted No. 22831)	Clive Lewis	Team inspector	Science Art Design technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
(Ofsted No. 20324)	Vera Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burdett-Coutts and Townshend Foundation Church of England Primary School has a distinguished history and very close links with the local neighbourhood and parish church of St Stephen's. It is situated close to the Houses of Parliament and is bigger than most primary schools with 342 girls and boys aged three to eleven on roll. The nursery has places for 50 children to attend part-time. Pupils come from many ethnic minorities with the main being black Caribbean heritage and Bangladeshi. The school draws its pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds. Around 20 per cent of pupils live out of the area and are brought to school by their parents who work locally. Many pupils are from the immediate locality including the nearby Wellington Barracks. In some years, when regiments arrive and depart, the turnover of pupils can be as high as 42 per cent, but generally it is about 20 per cent. Currently, 22 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is considerably less than at the time of the last inspection but still above the national average. A high percentage of pupils speak English as an additional language with five at a very early stage of learning English. Fifteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs; this is lower than the national average of 23 per cent. Most of these pupils are identified as having moderate learning difficulties, with a few having behavioural problems. Attainment on entry is around average.

The school has experienced a period of instability in the past two years. There have been far more changes than the school would wish due to local difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers, early retirement of one headteacher and the unfortunate long-term illness of the newly appointed headteacher. In all, the school has had four headteachers and a turnover of eight teachers in just over a year. Another acting headteacher has been appointed for next term (summer 2001).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which provides good value for money. This judgement is a tribute to the excellent guidance of the governing body, the strong senior management team and the outstanding and sensitive management by the present acting headteacher. Overall, teaching is satisfactory with teachers working very well together as a team. In spite of all the recent difficulties and uncertainties, there is a commitment to the highest standards and to fulfilling the aims of the school. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science are well above average. The school has very recently received an 'Excellence' award for achieving better results in 2000 than most other schools with a similar intake.

What the school does well

- In English, mathematics and science National Curriculum tests, eleven-year-olds achieve standards that are well above both the national average and the average for similar schools.
- Very good teaching in the nursery gives children a good start to their education.
- Teaching for seven to eleven-year-olds is good and results in pupils making good progress.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors have a very clear sense of purpose and direction for the school.
- Standards and teaching in music are strengths of the school.

What could be improved

- There is no leadership for the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes). As a result, reading and writing are not taught as effectively as they should be and children are underachieving.
- Attendance and punctuality are poor.
- Results of tests are not used as effectively as they could be to set sharp targets for pupils' achievement.
- There are insufficient books for three to seven-year-olds. Nursery children do not have enough access to computers which restricts their opportunities to develop information technology skills by using a variety of software.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January, 1997 when it was found to be ‘..... an improving school’ and ‘... an orderly place whose links with the local community are a strength.’ Since then, improvement has been good. A key feature of this good improvement is that governors have developed a very good understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses and now provide a very clear sense of purpose and direction. Pupils’ good attitudes and standards of behaviour have been maintained. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds have improved and are now well above the national averages. The key issues raised by the last inspection have been resolved effectively, particularly the issue related to ‘devising and implementing strategies to unite the staff in a shared sense of common purpose’. The high turnover of teaching staff, noted in the last report, remains a great problem and is the main reason the school has not been able to make even better progress.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	A	A	A
Mathematics	D	B	A	A*
Science	C	A	A	A

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows standards achieved by eleven-year-olds have improved over time and are well above the national average and average for schools with a similar intake of pupils. Standards achieved in national tests by seven-year-olds vary from year to year and, in 2000, were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. The main reasons for the variable standards are the high turnover of pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes, and many pupils arrive at school with little English. Though these pupils make good progress, it is not until they reach Years 5 and 6 that their understanding of English meets the demand of national tests. Inspection evidence shows standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are above expectations in English, mathematics and science. These pupils achieve well but not as many will achieve the higher Level 5 this year. In information communication technology, standards are below the levels expected because over the past four years pupils have had limited access to computers. Since the school has had the computer suite, pupils are making much better progress but the current eleven-year-olds will not make up enough ground to achieve the expected standards. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds are in line with expectations for science, mathematics and information communication technology but below expectations for reading and writing. At both key stages, standards in other subjects, such as history and physical education, are in line with national expectations. Nursery children are achieving well in all areas of learning. Currently, there is underachievement by reception children in developing reading and writing skills because not enough opportunities are provided for them to learn to read and write. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well in relation to their starting points. Throughout the school, music is a strength; standards are above national expectations. Presentation of pupils’ work and standards of handwriting are inconsistent, but generally, not as good as they should be. The school sets realistic targets for results in National Curriculum tests.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their work. They work sensibly together in group activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in and out of classrooms. Pupils are polite, responsible and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the impact of their actions on others. There is no evidence of bullying or racism.
Attendance	Attendance is well below average. In spite of vigorous action taken by the school, there is a significant minority whose attendance has an impact on the overall attendance rate. Similarly, there are a few parents who do not make sure their children arrive at school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Ninety-five per cent of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better with just over a quarter very good or excellent. Three lessons accounted for the five per cent of unsatisfactory teaching with the main weakness being the organisation within a reception class. Over two-thirds of teaching observed in lessons was good or better. Teachers had given considerable time to planning and preparing their lessons for the inspection. However, it must be noted that the overall judgement also takes into account the scrutiny of pupils' past and present work. It is here that the high turnover of staff is noticeable. For example, there are differences in teachers' expectations for how much work pupils should complete and standards of presentation. Strengths in teaching are the strong team spirit and the effective system of ensuring an experienced teacher is paired with a teacher new to the school. This system ensures that similar work is planned for pupils in the same year group and that teachers new to teaching in England are supported in their teaching of the National Curriculum and the national literacy and numeracy frameworks. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory; lessons are well organised and teachers provide interesting and relevant tasks to develop pupils' skills. Teaching for seven to eleven-year-olds is good overall and promotes good learning. The reason for this is the teachers for this age group are mainly those who have been at the school for more than two years and are more experienced. In the main, teaching meets the needs of all pupils. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good in small groups as is the teaching for pupils with English as an additional language; pupils learn at a good rate and have good self-esteem. Teaching in the nursery was always either very good or excellent. Currently, nursery and reception class teachers have no leadership and, as a result, there is no clear direction given for the teaching of reading and writing in the reception classes. This is an acknowledged weakness and is preventing children learning to read and write at an appropriate rate.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a good quality and range of learning opportunities, which meets the needs of all its pupils. The curriculum is enhanced and enriched considerably by a good range of additional activities, which provide pupils with a wide variety of interesting and exciting experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good teaching and support, based on effective individual education plans, ensure pupils make good progress and have good self-esteem.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good, particularly for those at an early stage of learning English who receive very good teaching in their groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Close links with St Stephen's Church, assemblies and 'Circle Time' sessions give pupils very good opportunities to reflect on their values and beliefs. Principles of right and wrong are promoted consistently by all staff. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop social skills especially in the residential visits provided for Years 4, 5 and 6. The school values the cultural diversity of its community and seeks to celebrate the cultural traditions of all of its pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good procedures in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. Pupils feel happy and confident in school. Satisfactory procedures are in place to track pupils' progress. Procedures for child protection are good.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents hold the school in high regard. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. Currently, the lack of leadership for the Foundation Stage means that liaison with parents of reception children is not as strong as it should be. Year 1 and 2 pupils' home/school reading diaries are used profitably; pupils who read at home regularly make good progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is currently on long-term sickness leave. During the past two terms there have been two acting headteachers, with a third starting next term (summer 2001). It is a difficult time for the school. However, excellent leadership by governors together with the strong senior management team and outstanding management by the current acting headteacher, have united the school with a clear sense of purpose and determination to keep the school moving forward and fulfilling its mission statement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities extremely well. They benefit from the guidance of an astute and well-informed chairman. Governors have an extremely good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

The school's evaluation of its performance	There are sound procedures in place to monitor results of National Curriculum and baseline tests. Satisfactory procedures are also in place to monitor teaching and pupils' learning. In this academic year, with the high turnover of teachers and headteachers, the difficulty has been putting procedures into practice. The school recognises that it has not been as effective as it should be.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes appropriate use of the funding it receives. Financial management is very good. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching the National Curriculum.

Resources are satisfactory overall, but there is a serious shortage of reading material for children in the nursery and reception classes. There is no computer in the nursery. Staffing is unsatisfactory; the high turnover of staff slows the improvements the school is keen to make.

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 coming to school. • Children are expected to work hard. • Teachers are helpful and supportive. • The after-school club. • Children behave well and know right from wrong. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are very concerned about the high turnover of staff. • More information about the topics to be covered in lessons. • More information on their children's progress. • More extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. There was no statutory inspection of the after-school club and, therefore, inspectors cannot make any judgement about this. Inspectors found that the amount of information provided for parents about work to be covered was inconsistent. Pupils' annual reports are informative. There are an adequate number of parent evenings when parents can talk to teachers about their child's progress. There are few extra-curricular activities available, but during the school year, there are many opportunities for pupils to go on trips and for older pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to experience a residential visit.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science have improved since the last inspection. The upward trend for all subjects is above the national trend. Standards are well above the national average and average for schools with a similar intake of pupils¹. Indeed, when compared to similar schools, results in mathematics in 2000 were similar to the highest five per cent of schools. These results are particularly noteworthy given the considerable turnover of pupils; this can be as high as 42 per cent per year but is generally around 22 per cent. Results of baseline testing in reception classes indicate attainment is around the level expected nationally. This starting point, compared to the well above average standards achieved when they leave the school, shows pupils who start and finish in the school make good progress at Burdett-Coutts. The school has very recently been awarded an 'Excellence' award from the DFEE for achieving better results in 2000 than most other schools with a similar intake.
2. The school sets suitable targets for achievement in national tests, however, the high, and sometimes very high, turnover of pupils can affect the correlation between targets and results. In nearly all cases, the targets are met and often exceeded.
3. Further analysis of data for the years 1996 to 2000, which uses pupils' average points scores, shows that in the past two years, boys have performed very well in English when compared to the performance of boys nationally. Similarly, girls do particularly well in science.
4. At the last inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics and above in science. Since then, results of National Curriculum test and teacher assessment have fluctuated. For example, in 1998, standards in reading and mathematics were well below average, in 1999, average for reading and well above average for mathematics and in 2000 below average. Results of teacher assessments in science in 2000 are above average. There are two main reasons for the fluctuations; firstly, there is a higher turnover of pupils in the younger classes and, secondly, pupils who have little or no English when they join the school make good progress but do not have enough skills in English to do well in the tests. For example, there are five pupils with very little English in Year 1 who are making good progress but will not achieve the expected levels when they are seven. As an example of turnover, in the last academic year, there was a 48 per cent turnover in Year 2 alone. Results in writing were particularly low in 2000 and the school is now involved in a Local Education Authority initiative to raise standards in this area. At Key Stage 1, there has also been a much higher turnover of staff in the recent past. Whilst turnover of staff may not be the cause of fluctuating standards, it undoubtedly unsettles young pupils.
5. Pupils identified with special educational needs make good progress as a result of good teaching based on appropriate targets in individual education plans. Pupils have good self-esteem and are well motivated. As a result, their pace of work is generally good which contributes to secure learning.
6. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress and are supported well by their teachers and the whole-school community. Those at an early stage of acquiring English are well supported and quickly learn enough colloquial English to play socially. As they move on through the school pupils acquire more subject specific vocabulary so that those who remain at the school to take National Curriculum tests in Year 6 attain as well as most pupils.

¹ Similar schools are those with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals.

7. Inspection evidence shows that standards achieved in the reception classes are above expectations in communication skills but below expectations in their acquisition of reading and writing skills, indicating that there is considerable underachievement in these areas, especially for the more able children. In mathematical development, the majority of children are achieving satisfactorily but the more able are not set tasks to extend them; therefore, they are underachieving in this area. The main reasons for underachievement are an unusually high turnover of staff and current lack of leadership to give clear direction for the teaching of reading and writing.
8. Inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 are attaining the standards expected for their age and achieving satisfactorily in relation to their starting point in speaking and listening, mathematics and science. In reading and writing, standards, overall, are below expectations although nearly all pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Whilst most pupils are reading at the expected level and several at a higher level, there are significant proportions of pupils for whom English is an additional language and those pupils with special educational needs who are making good progress but not yet achieving the expected levels. However, in handwriting, pupils are underachieving because not enough emphasis is given to teaching basic skills systematically and allowing pupils time to practise these regularly. In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils are attaining the expected levels for their age. In art and design, design and technology and geography, insufficient evidence was available for inspectors to make secure and fair judgements about attainment. In art and design and design and technology, there was enough evidence to show pupils cover the required curriculum, but in geography, scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils, suggest that the subject is not taught in sufficient depth. In history and physical education, pupils attain standards expected for their age.
9. Throughout the school, music is a strength. Standards are above expectations and by the time pupils leave the school, standards in singing are high; pupils achieve well. The standards achieved in music are attributable to very good teaching by the knowledgeable co-ordinator who teaches music to all classes.
10. At the end of Key Stage 2, inspection evidence shows attainment in English, mathematics and science to be above the levels expected and pupils achieving well, although fewer than usual pupils in this group are set to achieve the higher Level 5 this year. In information communication technology (ICT) standards are below the levels expected and pupils are underachieving. The main reason for unsatisfactory standards is pupils' lack of access to suitable hardware and software in past years. Now that the computer suite is in place, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making significant progress but Year 6 pupils will not have made up enough ground to achieve the expected level for their age. In art and design, history and physical education, pupils attain appropriate standards for their age. In design and technology and geography there was insufficient evidence for inspectors to make a secure and fair judgement about levels of attainment. The full range of activities is covered in design and technology but evidence suggests that this is not the case in geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and, together with good relationships, are a significant factor in their progress. These findings are broadly consistent with the findings of the last inspection.
12. Most pupils have good attitudes to their work and respond well in lessons. They listen to their teachers, are hard working and have sustained concentration. For example, in a Year 4 art lesson, pupils were totally absorbed in creating their own work in the manner of the painter Matisse; pupils in a Year 3 numeracy lesson showed their high motivation as they persevered in their desire to master fractions.

13. The behaviour of most pupils is good in lessons but there are, in some classes, one or two pupils who misbehave or do not participate fully in the lesson, thus diverting their teacher's attention. The behaviour of pupils as they move around the school is good. They use the stairs sensibly as other delegated pupils hold doors open for them. Pupils are polite to visitors and give a cheerful greeting when meeting them in corridors or in the playground. Behaviour at lunchtimes is good and pupils wait patiently and chat to friends as they queue for their meals. At lunch tables they continue to chat and treat lunchtime as an enjoyable social occasion.
14. Pupils are very aware of the school's rules for good behaviour and also of the sanctions for breaking the rules. In the past year there have been two fixed exclusions for unacceptable behaviour and these were given in accordance with the procedures agreed by the governing body. There were no signs of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment during the inspection. The school is very successful in creating and maintaining an ethos where pupils work and play together harmoniously.
15. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and share resources well in activities. Their relationships with one another are good and they show an understanding and care for each other. This was seen when a girl was quick to offer help to a physically disabled classmate in a Year 3 gymnastics lesson and also when a monitor escorted a younger pupil to the school office for first-aid after an accident in the playground. Pupils' relationships with teachers and ancillary staff are also good and this has a major bearing on their academic progress and personal development.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. The school's Christian ethos encourages pupils to consider the values and beliefs of others and they respond positively to this. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility by giving them various duties such as the returning of registers to the school office and older pupils serving as monitors. Pupils react well to these opportunities and cheerfully accept the duties. Pupils develop an understanding of others less fortunate than themselves through other activities, such as fund raising for a charity to help the homeless or comic relief.
17. Attendance and punctuality are poor. The majority of pupils attend school regularly but a significant number of pupils have a poor record of attendance. Although the level has improved since the time of the last inspection, the overall attendance of the school is well below the national average. Punctuality is also a problem. There are a few persistent latecomers.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. As with many inner city schools, recruitment and retention of teachers is an on-going problem. It must be noted that at the time of the inspection, there were five teachers on long-term supply contracts. These teachers hold recognised teaching qualifications in their own countries but are without British qualified teacher status (QTS). Three newly-qualified teachers were also on the staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator, also the teacher for pupils with English as an additional language, had joined the staff 10 weeks prior to the inspection and was the second person in this role in this school year. In all, half of the sixteen full-time teachers had been in the school for less than one year.
19. Overall, teaching across the whole school is satisfactory and has improved considerably since the last inspection, where only 80 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, compared to 95 per cent in this inspection. Three lessons accounted for the five per cent of unsatisfactory teaching and this was due mainly to poor organisation in a reception class. The percentage of very good or better teaching has also improved from 11 per cent to just over a quarter in this inspection. Over two-thirds of the teaching observed in lessons was good or better. Teaching in the Foundation Stage (nursery and two reception classes) is satisfactory overall, although teaching in the nursery is always either very good or excellent. Teaching in the two reception classes ranges from very good to poor. When teaching is poor, it is because of poor organisation and lack of structure and purpose to learning activities which means that children are not learning as well as they should. Another, important factor in the overall judgement on teaching in the Foundation Stage is that there is not enough emphasis and structure given to developing children's reading and writing

skills. As a consequence, children are underachieving in these areas. This is not the fault of individual teachers but lack of leadership. Currently, there is no leader for the Foundation Stage to provide teachers with clear directions. This weakness is acknowledged by governors who are doing their very best to appoint a suitable person to the post. Teaching for Year 1 and 2 pupils is satisfactory overall, with predominantly good teaching in Year 1 where the pace and organisation of lessons is crisp. Teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good overall because teachers of these year groups have, generally, been at the school longer and are the most experienced.

20. The enthusiastic team spirit engendered by the senior management team and the outstanding and sensitive management by the current acting headteacher are great strengths. Teachers work hard and feel valued. Their enthusiasm is transferred to pupils who are keen to learn. The 'buddy system' of teaming an experienced teacher with a less experienced or a teacher new to the school, within a year group is very effective; they plan together carefully to ensure that pupils in the same year group cover the same work. Teachers who have not had the experience of planning and teaching the national strategies for numeracy and literacy are given appropriate support. Literacy and numeracy are given high priority in all age groups. In Key Stage 1, literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily; all teachers have a good understanding of how to teach letter sounds (phonics) and basic numeracy skills such as counting and ordering. In Key Stage 2, teaching of literacy and numeracy is generally good, ensuring pupils learn at a good rate.
21. Throughout, relationships are good; teachers use praise appropriately and encourage pupils to be independent and show initiative as when setting out apparatus for a Year 3 physical education lesson. In the main, teachers manage their pupils effectively and lessons proceed at a reasonable pace; in the best lessons, there is a brisk pace and pupils are reminded of the time allowed to complete their tasks. A good example was noted in a mathematics lesson in Year 5 when pupils were given 20 minutes to achieve their set task of finding information from a variety of graphs; they worked very hard to meet their targets. Where the pace of lessons flags, or teachers do not set and reinforce their expectations for behaviour, pupils become restless and time has to be spent regaining their attention and this slows learning.
22. In the main, teachers' subject knowledge is related to their experience of teaching the National Curriculum. The more experienced teachers and newly qualified teachers have good subject knowledge whilst teachers new to this country and the National Curriculum and the numeracy and literacy strategies, generally, have satisfactory knowledge. Music is taught by a music specialist who has exceptional subject knowledge and enthusiasm for sharing this knowledge and making music enjoyable. Pupils learn very effectively in these lessons and take pride in their performance.
23. At both key stages, planning is good in terms of ensuring that pupils in the same year group, but in different classes, learn the same things. Teachers share the workload of planning and this is very effective. For most lessons observed, teachers had planned work to match pupils' different levels of attainment and this was effective, particularly for the older pupils. In nearly all lessons observed, teachers told pupils what they were going to cover in the lesson and what the teacher expected them to have learned by the end; in some classes this was written clearly for all to see. A good example was noted in a Year 1 mathematics lesson; pupils knew what they had to do and had a clear understanding about the purpose of the lesson and of estimating and then measuring accurately to check their estimations.
24. The acting headteacher has identified that there is a need to improve the quality and use of day-to-day assessment. Where teaching is very good, teachers incorporate their assessment of what pupils have already learned into the planning for subsequent lessons. In some classes, teachers have used their assessment to set pupils individual targets to achieve. Currently, there are inconsistencies in the quality and use of assessment and this is mainly because of a few teachers' inexperience in using National Curriculum Level criteria to pinpoint what a pupil knows and understands and what he or she needs to learn next.

25. Teaching for pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English is very good when they are supported by the specialist teacher. Overall, teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. They do their best to make sure that pupils have sufficient knowledge of the vocabulary to be used in a lesson or have the necessary resources so that they can get on with their work.
26. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs promotes their learning well and is particularly good in the case of pupils with higher stages of need. The recently appointed co-ordinator is knowledgeable and constructs very precise plans for pupils at the higher stages. The quality of plans of pupils with lower stages of need is inconsistent, depending more on the knowledge of class teachers. However, in classrooms, both teachers and classroom assistants know pupils well. Consequently, progress is good overall, but is not quite as rapid when individual education plans are imprecise. The Special Educational Needs co-ordinator also teaches several pupils in small groups that are withdrawn from their classes. On these occasions, teaching addresses targets very well. For example, a group of pupils who find it difficult to concentrate were taught very well. The teacher read them a recipe from behind a screen. They needed to listen and concentrate carefully to manage to mix the ingredients successfully. This method worked very well because pupils saw it as a kind of a game.

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

27. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with a good quality and range of learning opportunities, which successfully meets the needs of all its pupils. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all National Curriculum requirements and religious education. Younger pupils in the nursery and reception classes are provided with an appropriate curriculum based on nationally determined Early Learning Goals. This is a considerable improvement on the situation at the time of the previous inspection. The school now has appropriate, largely nationally recommended, schemes of work for all curriculum subjects. These ensure pupils' skills and knowledge are built on as they progress through the school. The amount of time allocated to teaching each subject is appropriate. The school has implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies well.
28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Adaptations of the curriculum are made according to pupils' individual education plans. The precision with which their adaptation occurs is inconsistent, depending on the quality of the individual education plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well aware of this, but has only recently been appointed and has not yet had time to monitor fully either the identification of pupils' needs or all of the plans. However, this process is well under way and priorities that have been set for improvement are good.
29. The school ensures that all pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good; they receive very good, knowledgeable support when working in small groups and good support in their classes.
30. There is a limited range of after-school and lunchtime extra-curricular activities provided. However, throughout the school year, the curriculum is enhanced and enriched considerably by a very good range of additional trips and visits such as The Museum of London which provide pupils with a wide variety of interesting and exciting experiences.
31. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. At the time of the last inspection, the school did not meet statutory requirements to provide appropriate sex education for pupils; this has now been resolved and appropriate health and drugs awareness education is provided. There is now an enthusiastic co-ordinator for personal and social education and a detailed scheme of work to provide teachers with support and guidance. Personal

development is promoted effectively through the well-established “Circle Times” where personal, social and health issues are discussed sensitively, and in weekly themes in assemblies.

32. The school has very good links with the local community. For example, generous funding has been provided by the London Scottish Regiment for school journeys and the school’s 150th Anniversary celebration “Victorian Day” was well attended and supported by local residents. The school has sound links with local secondary schools and is planning to widen these links to local independent schools.
33. The school’s provision for pupils’ spiritual development is very good. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and insight into values and beliefs and reflect on their and others’ experiences. The weekly visits to St Stephen’s Church and lessons taken by the vicar provide older pupils, particularly, with thought provoking issues. For example, during Lent, pupils were asked to consider Jesus and his disciples and “Who was the weakest link?” “Circle time” sessions in classes give all pupils time to reflect on issues and formulate their opinions. In these sessions, all pupils and teachers listen to each other and show respect for the speaker’s ideas. The very good music provision provides pupils with an insight and knowledge of music by a wide range of composers.
34. Provision for pupils’ moral development is very good. Principles distinguishing right from wrong are promoted appropriately, and consistently, by all school staff, who provide good role-models. The whole-school programme of themes for assemblies such as “Friends” and “People Who Inspire Us” and the use of “Circle Time” to discuss issues such as loss, anger and disappointment, allow pupils time to reflect and consider their behaviour.
35. Provision for pupils’ social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and take responsibility for their work and for others. Responsibilities increase as pupils get older. Key Stage 2 pupils have roles to play in monitoring pupils coming in and out of school at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are involved in residential visits which provide very good opportunities for the pupils’ moral and social development. Pupils support a local homeless charity through fund raising and Harvest Festival collections. They visit the local almshouses to sing to residents.
36. The provision for pupils’ cultural development is very good overall. A wide range of visitors talk to, perform for and work with the pupils. Pupils are taught to appreciate the local cultural traditions, taking part in a range of local events and visiting local historical and cultural sites such as the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, the Millennium Dome, the Toy Museum and the Wallace Collection. The school seeks to celebrate the ethnic diversity of all its pupils. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop an understanding of the diversity of other cultures through stories in literacy lessons, studies of contrasting communities in geography and the study of other religions in religious education lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school has maintained the satisfactory quality of its welfare and support of pupils mentioned in the last inspection report.
38. Burdett-Coutts is a caring school with the provision for personal support and guidance based on the good relationships that teachers have with their pupils. Pupils feel secure in the caring environment provided by the school.
39. The arrangements for child protection are good and records are securely maintained. The named person to deal with child protection issues has received training and ensures that all staff are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a pupil being considered at risk.
40. The promoting of pupils’ well-being takes place at all levels by caring teachers and support staff and there are three qualified first-aiders in the school. The school’s health and safety

arrangements, set out in its health and safety policy, are satisfactorily implemented but the records of some health and safety checks are not being maintained. At the time of the inspection, for example, the records of fire alarm tests and fire drills were not available because the caretaker was on holiday and the acting headteacher could not find them.

41. The procedures for encouraging good behaviour are good and the school's rules are displayed in each classroom. There is a good behaviour and discipline policy that includes a system of rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for poor behaviour. All staff operate the policy consistently and successfully. The caring behaviour of adults in the school also provides good examples for pupils to follow. In keeping with its Christian ethos, the school encourages pupils to have respect for the values and beliefs of other people. The school actively promotes racial harmony and, through the discouragement of any form of discrimination, ensures that all pupils are included in all areas of school life. The school does not tolerate bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour and has good procedures in place to note and deal with any incidents, should they occur.
42. In personal, social and health education, pupils receive advice and support on topics such as the misuse of drugs and sex education, which develops their independence and self-confidence. Pupils are also taught personal skills which enable them to think and behave sensibly in different situations. Year 2 pupils for example discussed personal safety and thought about places which were safe and unsafe.
43. The school recognises the problems of irregular attendance and lateness by some pupils and is taking appropriate measures to deal with them. The arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are good and improvements in attendance and punctuality are beginning to take place. The school works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer who visits the school regularly and investigates cases of unexplained absence. As part of its drive to improve attendance and punctuality the school has recently purchased two cups to be given to pupils with good records of attendance and punctuality. The school's system of recording electronically absence rates ensures that records can now be readily retrieved and attendance closely monitored.
44. The school has satisfactory systems for checking pupils' academic performance and progress. In English, mathematics and science, attainment is regularly assessed and recorded. Baseline assessments are undertaken when children start in the reception classes. This assessment is used to predict how pupils might be expected to achieve at the age of seven, however, the outcomes of testing are not yet used to set targets for individuals or groups. As they move through the school, each pupil has a separate book in which pieces of work are collected and assessed against the levels of attainment provided in the National Curriculum. This work is then used to track their progress, to adapt or alter predictions, and to set or renew targets for future progress. Statutory National Curriculum tests at seven and 11 years old, as well as further optional tests, are also used in this process. However, these procedures, though sound, are affected by the turnover of staff and the individual teacher's familiarity and accuracy in assessing attainment. Currently, the setting of targets for individual pupils to achieve is inconsistent across the school. In science, a particularly close link exists between assessments and what is taught in lessons, but in English and mathematics this link is not as strong. However, adaptations to the curriculum have been made, based on the analysis of this information. For example, weaknesses in pupils' writing at Key Stage 2 have been identified and are being addressed through the school's inclusion in a local authority scheme to improve standards. In other subjects of the curriculum, the use of assessment is often at an early stage of development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The schools' good partnership with parents, mentioned at the last inspection, has been maintained and is an important contribution to pupils' learning. Parents are satisfied with their children's progress at school and are very supportive of the school.
46. Although at the pre-inspection meeting some parents were concerned about the information provided by the school, inspectors found that the quality of information given to parents is good. However, a concern of some parents is the difficulty in understanding how the standards their children achieve relate to national standards. One parent, for example, said that although she knew her child's standard in reading she did not know whether this was an acceptable standard. There were also other concerns regarding how the curriculum is structured and in particular what the stages and levels mean.
47. There are frequent newsletters from the school giving parents details of school events. Parents appreciate the school's annual reports on their children's development and progress. The reports contain suitable comments on each subject and give a record of the attendance; there is also a space for parents to add their comments. The school prospectus and the governors annual report to parents both fully comply with statutory requirements and are well presented as well as being very informative. All parents have received a copy of the home / school agreement. This is a comprehensive document setting out the responsibilities of those at home and at school and gives parents a greater understanding of how they can contribute to their children's education. The school uses reading diaries or contact books, which are a useful means of communication between parents and class teachers. The books enable parents to see the progress their children are making and they can, as many parents do, add their comments.
48. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and developments. Open relationships exist with parents of pupils with English as an additional language. Ten hours of extra support per week are available from local authority funding. On occasions when parents have restricted understanding of English, the school uses this time to provide translators so that documents can be understood and parents involved in discussions.
49. Parent evenings are held three times per year at which there is the opportunity to discuss their children's progress. Parents can usually see teachers after school for a brief word and appointments can be made if further discussion is needed.
50. There is an active friends' association that, through its fund raising events, has given considerable donations to the school. The association has provided such items as new curtains for the hall, a cooker for the staff room and small white boards in classrooms. Although the events arranged by the association are primarily to raise funds they also serve as useful times for parents, pupils and teachers to meet socially, for example at the association's largest event which is the Summer Fair. A further example is the regular coffee mornings for parents which are held in the school and enable parents to show their interest in the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school has experienced a period of instability in the past two years. There have been far more changes than the school would wish due to the inability to recruit and retain teachers, early retirement of one headteacher and the unfortunate long-term illness of the newly appointed headteacher. In all, the school has had four headteachers, plus the acting deputy headteacher becoming the acting headteacher for a short period, and a turnover of eight teachers in just over a year. Another acting headteacher has been appointed for next term (summer 2001). Within this context and at the time of the inspection, it was judged that leadership and management are good overall with significant strengths and understandable weaknesses.

52. The outstanding and sensitive leadership of the current acting headteacher has been a strength at a time when the school was at a low ebb. Through his clear identification of areas to improve, partnership with governors and perceptive management, he has revitalized the staff's enthusiasm and moved the school forward in terms of improvement. A short-term improvement/school development plan is now in place; this plan has been agreed by staff and governors.
53. Unfortunately, due to the headteacher's continued ill health, another acting headteacher will take up post at the beginning of the summer term (2001). A significant and abiding strength is the excellent guidance provided by the governing body. When vacancies occur, the chair of the governing body has actively sought out knowledgeable people from the community and encouraged them to become governors. Governors have had Local Education Authority (LEA) training on school development planning and have analysed LEA and government supplied data about the school's performance compared to other schools in the area and those with a similar intake of pupils. Each governor has an interest in a particular subject area and is attached to a class and will follow the class as it moves through the school from year to year. Thus, there is a well-led and astute governing body who have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within the school. Roles and responsibilities are defined with appropriate committees in place which make the best use of an individual's expertise. Excellent lines of communication exist between the chairmen of the various committees if a quick response to an issue is required. Governors have a very clear sense of direction for their school and share a tenacious commitment to fulfilling the school's aims and maintaining the high standards achieved. They have been very supportive of staff during this time of upheaval.
54. The financial management of the school is good. The governing body's finance committee meets once a month and monitors expenditure against budget forecasts. It reports back to the full governing body regularly. The governors ensure that budgets are set to take account of educational priorities and that expenditure is planned to meet these. The school's long-term planning has improved since the last inspection and enables a greater focus to be made on educational priorities.
55. The school's current deficit is mainly caused by maintaining classes of single year groups, which incurs heavy expenditure on staff, but the deficit is also exacerbated by substantial back payments for electricity. These back payments are due to be cleared within two years and the finance committee is planning to eliminate the school's deficit within a year.
56. The day-to-day management of finance is conducted by the headteacher and bursar; this was found to be effective by the Local Education Authority audit in January 2001. With the exception of one recommendation, all the other recommendations contained in the audit report have been implemented. The exception refers to the need for written financial procedures; this is being addressed and the procedures should be in place by June 2001.
57. The senior management team are also a strength. They have supported their colleagues and provided clear leadership in difficult times. Together with the governors, they have provided the stability the school and pupils have needed.
58. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and music are providing effective and knowledgeable leadership for colleagues. Other subjects are led by teachers new to the school and, in some cases, teachers who are new to the National Curriculum. To their great credit, they have taken on their roles enthusiastically and many have already brought about substantial changes. For example, new schemes of work have been adopted and implemented for art and design and design and technology.
59. Provision for special educational needs is managed well. Although only 10 weeks into her role, the co-ordinator has already identified and prioritised weaknesses such as the lack of precise, measurable targets in some individual education plans and has good strategies for improving and correcting deficiencies. In her other role, as co-ordinator for the provision for pupils with English as an additional language, she has also made a very good start by putting in place a more formalised type of assessment to pinpoint more accurately where pupils need specific support.

The co-ordinator understands pupils needs well and works closely with staff and senior managers, ensuring information about pupils and their language development is known and used in classes to ensure pupils make good progress.

60. The school has sound procedures in place for checking on standards achieved and quality of teaching and learning. Recently, with the high turnover of teachers and headteachers, these procedures have not been put into practice with the usual rigour. Therefore, there are acknowledged inconsistencies in the amount of work completed by a year group and in standards of handwriting and presentation. Results of baseline testing show children's attainment on entry to be around the level expected for their age. However, these results are not used to highlight children's strengths and areas for improvement with the result that those children who are keen and able to learn to read and write are not making the progress of which they are capable. Results of National Curriculum tests are analysed and used to set targets for achievement in future tests. However, there are not enough checks to ensure that pupils are on track to reach the targets or could, with help, achieve better results. In this area, there is also the added difficulty that teachers 'new' to the National Curriculum do not have sufficient experience of assessing pupils' levels of attainment as measured by National Curriculum criteria. In science, results of the annual end of Key Stage 2 tests have been analysed carefully and, as a result, changes made to the curriculum to stress experimental and investigative activities. Currently, the school does not have an assessment co-ordinator; leadership in this area is a priority.
61. The weakness causing most concern to the school is the lack of leadership for the Foundation Stage. The school is aware of the need for clear leadership with a strong focus on the standards achieved by reception class children. An appointment was made recently, but the candidate withdrew; as a result the school is to go through the process again.
62. Through no fault of its own, and certainly through no fault of individual teachers, the school's current staffing arrangements are unsatisfactory. The high turnover of staff is having a detrimental effect on the standards achieved in reception classes because there is no leader to give direction to the work in the Foundation Stage. The school has a performance management policy in place but, as yet, teachers do not have targets to work towards.
63. Resources for the development of reading in the reception classes are poor and inhibiting progress in this area. There is no specific library for the nursery, reception, Year 1 and 2 classes. Though these pupils may use the school library on the top floor, it is a long trek. The present arrangements are unsatisfactory and restrict pupils' access to non-fiction material and opportunities to develop basic study skills such as locating books in a library. There is no computer for nursery children to use, which restricts their knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology. The range of materials available for art and design are unsatisfactory as are the resources available for design and technology. In all other areas, resources are satisfactory with particularly good use made of the local area to enrich the history and geography curriculum.
64. The accommodation is satisfactory and is used effectively for the delivery of the curriculum. Despite the age of the building, the accommodation is well maintained and is very clean. Through the display of pupils' work and by other displays to support learning, classrooms provide stimulating learning environments. All classrooms are adequate and of sufficient size.
65. There is a computer suite with 13 work stations and this room is sectioned off to provide storage for the larger musical instruments. Whilst the careful storage of the instruments is important, the space they take up prevents the computer suite being used to the full in terms of allowing space for pupils to sit comfortably and study at tables when they are not using the computer.
66. A plane tree in the playground, although beautiful, is causing some unevenness of the surface and is also blocking the drains. There are also problems with the surface of the roof garden and leaks are occurring in one classroom. The governing body's premises committee is well aware of these

problems and is taking appropriate action to rectify them. The Local Education Authority is providing a substantial sum of money to resurface the playground in the near future.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. To improve standards the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- Continue making the best efforts to secure leadership for the Foundation Stage. Take full account of children's attainment as indicated in baseline assessment and build on this accordingly to ensure optimum progress, especially in developing children's reading and writing skills;

(Paragraphs: 7, 27, 60, 61, 62, 75, 77, 89, 92)

- continue to promote good attendance and punctuality;

(Paragraphs: 17, 43)

- make better use of the outcomes of regular assessment to pinpoint a pupil's level of attainment and identify what he or she needs to learn next in order to make the best possible progress;

(Paragraphs: 22, 24, 44, 60, 111)

- provide a good range of reading material for three to seven-year-olds to ensure effective progression in reading from reception to Key Stage 1. Ensure that there are enough books for children to be able to take a book home to share with parents on a daily basis;

(Paragraphs: 63, 90, 91)

- provide suitable opportunities for nursery children to use computers.

(Paragraphs: 63, 79, 90)

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- In line with the requirements of the Performance Management policy, ensure teachers have appropriate targets in place;
- improve the way handwriting is taught in Key Stage 1;
- ensure that the geography scheme of work is covered;
- improve the quality and quantity of resources for art and design and design and technology;
- put into place priorities identified by the special educational needs co-ordinator as quickly as possible, especially those related to writing more precise, measurable targets for pupils to achieve;
- review the use of the assertive discipline policy and ensure that all staff are using this in a consistent manner across the school;
- ensure a whole-school consistency in expectations for presentation of work and, in year groups, a consistency in the expectation of the amount of work to be covered;

- consider alternative storage for large musical instruments so that the ICT suite may be used more profitably.

(Paragraphs: 8, 13, 21, 26, 28, 59, 62, 65, 98, 99, 100, 114, 138, 140)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	22	40	28	3	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	342
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	77

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	51

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	60
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	75

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.2

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 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	23	15	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	20
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	28	25	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (82)	66 (89)	87 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	21	21
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	27	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (89)	89 (89)	95 (92)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	28	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	16
	Girls	25	27	28
	Total	39	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (91)	98 (85)	100 (97)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	15
	Girls	13	16	17
	Total	23	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (79)	67 (85)	74 (94)
	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	50
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	12
Chinese	4
White	154
Any other minority ethnic group	34

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
**Plus 6 qualified teachers who do not hold qualified teacher status in this country.	Total 17.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	108

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	704776
Total expenditure	722643
Expenditure per pupil	2184
Balance brought forward from previous year	6864
Balance carried forward to next year	-11003

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	351
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	34	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	38	13	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	38	0	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	49	16	0	7
The teaching is good.	54	37	2	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	51	21	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	28	11	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	47	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	23	53	21	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	33	46	11	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	52	7	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	38	9	17	15

The return rate for this questionnaire is only 13 per cent, therefore, these views may not be truly representative.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

68. During the inspection, there were thirteen full-time children and twenty-one part-time children in the nursery, attending either in the morning or afternoon. The full-time children are given extra teaching time, on their own, between the two sessions. This is proving to be a very enjoyable and successful short session. Six children in the nursery have English as an additional language, one of whom is at an early stage of English language acquisition. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

Personal, social, and emotional development

69. The nursery and two reception classes have a well-developed 'snack-time' session when children learn to hand out plates of fruit to one another, read the names of children on the mugs, change the day of the week, the date and the weather record and talk in some detail about the activities in which they have just been taking part. It is a very well-managed session in all three classes and makes a very positive contribution to many areas of the curriculum. Children's personal development is also promoted well when they are given specific jobs to do when helping to tidy the classroom or when there is adult interaction during role-play, such as when the home corner has become untidy and it is pointed out that, "You wouldn't put the shopping all over the floor at home, would you?" Time, however, is wasted when the classroom is left to become very untidy instead of children being encouraged to keep it tidy all the time, clearing up after themselves. In the nursery children learn to take their coats on and off independently, but reception children are not taught how to change for physical activities in the hall. Social skills are developed well in the nursery; for example, children are clearly aware of the need to say 'please' and 'thank you' in appropriate situations.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Communication skills are above expectations in both the nursery and reception classes. Most children are confident speakers and listen very well and the less confident use gestures to explain what they want until they gain confidence. Planned sessions, such as when the policewoman visited, provide opportunities for children to ask prepared questions and listen to the answers. Following this visit, children learn to set up a police station, make notebooks to write in and interview each other and talk to one another about 'the case' on imitation mobile and landline telephones. This role-play continues at other times of the day and promotes language very well. In the nursery, both adults continually develop the children's language very well through constant questioning, answering and conversations about their work.
71. In the nursery, children are enthusiastic about books and enjoy sharing them with each other. They talk about the pictures and the songs they know, such as, 'The rain came down and the floods went up', connected with the books. Children also demonstrate a real sense of enjoyment when sharing a large text 'Big Book' with the teacher and nursery nurse. In groups, they fill in the missing rhyming words whilst the teacher is reading and a smaller group of children say, for example, what was taken on the picnic. The two adults meet the needs of different attaining children well in these groups. Personal skills, such as taking turns to answer questions, are also promoted and developed well in these sessions.
72. Of the children who shared a book with the inspector, almost all demonstrated a love of books. In the nursery they could hold a book up the right way, start at the beginning and turn the pages correctly. They responded well to humorous aspects of the books, laughing and talking about the pictures and what was happening in them. They also have opportunities to share books with one another when choosing activities and one child was observed imitating the teacher and holding a

book up to another child while telling her the story, both children enjoying the experience immensely.

73. In reception classes, lack of books is a serious weakness. The opportunities available to children in the nursery are not developed sufficiently in the reception classes, mainly because there are very few books to share and look at. Some children are, however, pretending to read from the pictures in a book and a minority is beginning to tell a story using appropriate 'story language'. Whilst children in reception can distinguish text from pictures, half the children who shared a book with the inspector could not indicate separate words. Of those who could, only one had a sight vocabulary of more than ten words and could say what the book was called. A lower-attaining child was very interested and responsive, enjoyed the one-to-one attention and could clearly have reached higher standards and begun to recognise words if he was heard to read more regularly and often. An average-attaining child showed equal enthusiasm saying, "Can we get some books so I can know them all?" A higher-attaining child could, without doubt, be reading Level 1 books, as she managed to read a story book successfully but was sent to the inspector with a reading book with only five, constantly repeated, words in it. Children's progress in reading in the reception classes is unsatisfactory. The only reading records kept are a list of books that children take home on a Friday. The Early Learning Goal to 'read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently' cannot be promoted well when there are so few books for children to read.
74. In the nursery, good opportunities are given for children to explore letters and sounds. They 'write' in their police notebooks. They make up their own 'words' with plastic letters, excited when they find one that is in their own or a friend's name. A scrutiny of their work shows that higher-attainers have excellent phonic awareness and can identify objects for most sounds.
75. In reception, children use words on display to help them write and think of an adjective to describe, for example, the wolf in the story. Children work in supervised groups at handwriting and at guided reading. This means that they only cover these activities once a week. Other group activities do not promote literacy sufficiently well. Time for developing literacy skills well is limited in the reception classes. In 'activity times' the expectations of children with different standards of attainment are not always high enough, for example, during one of these sessions, when children were making their own books, the same standard was accepted regardless of children's capabilities. There was no adult input to the activity. A scrutiny of children's work shows that higher and some average attainers can write all letters of the alphabet, their own and a friend's name and that they know that words make up a sentence. They are beginning to write words with similar sound such as 'hat', 'cat' and 'mat' and put in a few missing words of a letter. Lower-attainers' writing is emerging; they are clear about what they want to say in their writing and are learning to form letters.

Mathematical development

76. In the nursery, time is used particularly well at lunchtime when the full-time children have a fifteen minutes teaching time on their own before the afternoon children arrive. During the inspection this time was used for teaching mathematics. The full-time children can count up to and recognise numbers to eight. They can name shapes with a different number of sides, from a triangle to an octagon, and a child with English as an additional language showed particular pleasure at being able to name a triangle. A lesson with a similar content is taken well in reception at a good pace and most children can name all the shapes and reach standards in line with expectations for their age. The teacher assesses what the children know and targets questions appropriately to children of different attainment. From scrutiny of their work, higher-attaining children can count to twenty, predict what number will come next up to five and need not count dots on a dice because they have a good understanding of the pattern, for example, of five. Average-attainers have a good understanding of one-to-one correspondence to four and lower-attainers to three.
77. In reception, however, there is no planning for higher attainers and those who are quite capable of going well beyond eight are not challenged sufficiently. In such a lesson, better use could be

made of the classroom assistant. From a scrutiny of children's work, however, it can be seen that higher-attaining children are able to order numbers to twenty and an average attaining child can count to thirty and recognise numbers to ten. Even a lower-attaining child can recognise numbers to seven. The majority of children reach standards expected for their age when they learn about two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They are given a variety of practical experience to help them to develop the concepts well. Higher-attainers, however, are not given the opportunity of following practical experience with written work in the same lesson because the pace of the lesson tends to be slow and there is no planning for children of different attainment.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. Good use is made of the local environment. When studying homes, children have visited Buckingham Palace to see how the Queen and her family live. They have seen a video of her coronation and studied the Union Jack when taking about flags. A local police woman has come into school and joined in the nursery class's search for the 'Big ,bad, wolf', with the promise to come again at the end of term 'to close the case'. Scientific knowledge and understanding is promoted through group teaching about magnets, when new vocabulary is introduced and children begin to understand the meaning of words such as 'attract', 'magnet' and 'investigate'. Children in reception class are able to talk about past and present in their own lives, setting the foundations for history. Work scrutiny shows an appropriate level of attainment when they paint pictures of rainbows and trees and fish.
79. Nursery children do not have enough opportunities to use computers and, therefore, children who do not have a computer at home are well behind others in their knowledge and understanding of a key board and mouse to control a software program by they time they reach the reception classes. During the inspection, the computers in the reception classes were not used, nor were listening areas with tape recorders. Many opportunities to teach, reinforce and consolidate literacy and numeracy, as well as information and communication technology skills, were therefore missed. The programmable robot, however, was used well and children worked in groups with classroom assistants discussing the best way to program it. These were productive and successful teaching and learning sessions.
80. The Foundation Stage visit St Stephen's church once a week. This visit promotes children's personal development as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world. The silent procession into church led by three children with cross and candles, the singing of songs and the respectful way children listen and join in is developed further by different teachers leading the session each week. For example, children learn about the furniture in the church and also that one should be respectful when visiting God's or anyone else's home. They learn that Jesus was cross with people who did not use the temple well and that a temple is another name for God's house. All children are developing a good awareness that not all people have similar beliefs but respect is shown for everyone.

Physical development

81. Children's fine motor control is promoted satisfactorily in the various activities provided in classrooms. They can use staplers and scissors, write with a pencil and use glue to make small books. They use construction kits to build models and move toy vehicles along a play mat, talking about what they see on their way to school. They can use different fastenings, such as buttons and zips.
82. In the nursery, excellent provision is made for children's physical development, as when they work in the hall on role-play linked to a poem about animals. In such lessons, their attainment is above that expected for children of their age. Their creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world is also very well developed in these lessons. Children learn to move in different ways, such as on their toes, heels, walking, skipping or on all fours in a similar way to different animals and birds. Team work is exceptionally good with the nursery nurse and teacher taking turns to act out and tell the story. The lessons move on at a good pace and children's

language is developed very effectively through the introduction of new vocabulary. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted very well by learning how animals move and where they live when sentences are read out such as, "Frogs like to live on a log", or "Lions live out in the open". Humour and drama add to the lesson when bears are found to be in a cave and children have to run to adults for protection. Every child is totally involved throughout the lesson and personal development and citizenship are promoted at the end of the lesson when they all say together, "The earth is the home of us all."

83. In reception, children's attainment is in line with expectations. Children move rhythmically and with control. They recognise different beats and walk, skip, run and sway in time to different rhythms. They listen very well and show enjoyment at the different feelings involved in, for example, swaying and marching. Personal development, as well as ease of movement, would be promoted more effectively if children changed for indoor physical activities.
84. The playground also provides satisfactory opportunities for physical development and role-play for both nursery and reception children. There are a limited number of bikes, scooters, trucks and satisfactory climbing and sliding equipment. The use of the large toys needs developing to promote not only physical but also personal development. Climbing equipment is used imaginatively in reception. For example, it was used as part of the route that children in this age group used when they pretended to search for the 'Big, bad wolf', then drew a plan of the route they had taken, leading to knowledge and understanding of the world and basic geographical skills.

Creative development

85. The nursery environment has many opportunities for children's creative development. They have made models of animals' homes out of junk and have made animal masks. Children in reception build models of homes out of large wooden floor blocks whilst dressed as builders wearing hard hats. Children in both classes paint pictures on the easels, mixing black and white paint to make different shades of grey. They also learn to print. They make models out of duplo and other construction kits. There is some creative play at the sand tray but there is little sense of purpose here.
86. The music co-ordinator for the school teaches music in the nursery and reception classes. The teaching of activities which promote musical development is excellent in the nursery and as a result learning is very good and sometime excellent. Standards are generally well above those expected of children of their age. Children suggest the name of an instrument when the Nielson Symphony is played, suggesting the music might be used for a king. They play their own instruments enthusiastically and almost all stop exactly when the teacher 'holds a hand up like a policeman'. They play and sing loudly or softly as asked, and their singing is tuneful. Almost all can play four beats in time with the teacher and about half know when to play when those with wooden, metal or drum-like instruments, or boys and girls, are asked to play on their own. They know a range of nursery rhymes and pass instruments on to other children sensibly, demonstrating very good learning and attitudes throughout the lesson.
87. Standards and learning in music activities are above expectations in reception, as a result of very good teaching and children's good attitudes. They enjoy listening to music such as 'Greensleeves' and sing in tune and sweetly, songs such as 'Hot, cross, buns'. During the lesson, their ability to play only in time to the words, 'Hot, cross, buns', and not during the rest of the song, improves. At the end of the day children enjoy singing songs to each other and children who know songs in other languages, such as Gujurati, are encouraged to sing these to the class.
88. While role-play activities in the nursery are good and children play well and purposefully together, these activities are not sufficiently developed in the reception classes. In these classes, there is little direction, either explicitly or implicitly, through what is provided. The Early Learning Goals 'to use language and recreate roles and experiences' and to 'use talk to organise, sequence and

clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events' are not promoted well through role-play. As a result, older, more boisterous children become bored and bad habits are formed when they misbehave without being reprimanded or redirected. There is also potential for accidents and two children hurt themselves while different inspectors were in the room. The role-play area takes up a considerable amount of room and lacks purpose. Less space and a clear focus would better provide for the development of children's personal, literacy and numeracy development as well as for their growing understanding of the world and expectations for good citizenship.

Leadership

89. Since September, when the new Foundation Stage curriculum was introduced, the nursery and the two reception class staff have worked closely together; the three teachers and the nursery nurse now plan together weekly. The well-established classroom assistants' ideas and comments are also welcomed. Although there is no named co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage, the nursery teacher has taken a strong lead in ensuring that all children are working towards the nationally determined Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The overall planning in the nursery is very good. However, some aspects of the reception year curriculum are good but there are weaknesses in the curriculum provision, resources and organisation of this year group. The nursery teacher is aware of these weaknesses but does not have the authority to take the appropriate action. The teachers of the two reception classes are long-term supply teachers who have built up very good relationships with their children but do not have the opportunity or authority to develop the curriculum further. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is, therefore, an issue that the school should address as soon as possible.

Provision

90. The nursery class is housed in a separate building and until last September (2000), had an enclosed outside play space for its sole use. The staff of the Foundation Stage now plan for the joint use of this space as an outdoor classroom as well as for recognised outside activities such as climbing, sliding and large toys. Children may be outside or inside as they wish throughout the day. Whilst this is appropriate for nursery children, the majority of whom are part-time, two sessions outside for the reception class children takes time away from more formal reading and writing activities. One session a day would be adequate. The two reception classes are organised as one, with different activities organised in the two rooms. While this is successful when children are involved in a range of different activities, it does mean that there are not enough tables for a whole class to sit at comfortably if a class lesson is planned, for example, in handwriting. Therefore, time is wasted teaching the same thing to different groups. The lack of books in the reception classes is a serious weakness. There is no pre-reading scheme in the classrooms that children can browse through and return to once a book is known. The inadequate number of picture and storybooks is totally unacceptable. There are no books on display around the room alongside other displays and in one room the number of books is limited to approximately a dozen on a wall rack and a further, less than a dozen, in a store cupboard. A further weakness in provision is in equipment for role-play. For example, there are no prams, so children cannot push a pram from a home in the classroom to a shop in the playground to do some shopping and return, developing personal, social, literacy and numeracy skills. A further lack of resources in the Foundation Stage is in information and communication technology equipment. This needs to be addressed as soon as possible.

Parents

91. Staff generally have good relationships with parents and carers who come into classrooms at the start and end of the day. However, the start of the day is sometimes delayed in the reception classes when teachers speak to parents and carers at this time and the role of the classroom assistant should be reconsidered so that lessons can start on time. Further consideration should also be given to the place of a home/school book to accompany reading books home so that teachers and parents (particularly those working) can inform each other about the children's reading and personal needs.

Teaching

92. Overall, the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory. This overall judgement is based on observations of Foundation Stage lessons, scrutiny of children's work, the fact that there are serious defects in curriculum resources such as books and the development of reading and writing skills. The quality of teaching, as seen during the inspection was good overall, with the teaching in fifty per cent of lessons being very good or excellent. In the small percentage of lessons, in a reception class, where there was unsatisfactory or poor teaching, this was directly linked to unsatisfactory provision, planning of and interaction with, children's role-play. As a result of this unsatisfactory provision, inappropriate behaviour and attitudes were being developed. Baseline assessment is carried out and shows average attainment, overall. Teachers keep a record of day-to-day achievements through 'post-its' which are added to a child's profile. There is no overall record, however, of each child's progress along the stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals and in to the National Curriculum. It cannot be seen, therefore, which children are moving at a faster and which at a slower pace and how they can be planned for individually or as part of a higher or lower-attaining group. If such a record were available it is less likely that areas of the curriculum, particularly with regard to writing and reading, would be missed.

ENGLISH

93. At the time of the last inspection in January 1997, standards at the ages of seven and 11 were in line with national expectations, and the results of National Curriculum tests had improved in comparison with previous years. The overall quality of teaching was satisfactory, including several lessons that were good and a little unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is now good, including a significant proportion of very good lessons, and none unsatisfactory. Currently, the attainment of seven-year-olds is below average, but by 11 is above average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests of 11-year-olds were well above average. These comparisons suggest that clear improvements have occurred since the last inspection.
94. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests of seven-year-olds were below the national average in reading and well below in writing. These results were well below the averages of similar schools. However, the results of 11-year-olds were well above average in comparison with all schools nationally and also when compared with similar schools alone. Trends in the results of both age groups have been a little erratic. For example, for 11 year-olds in 1996, they were broadly in line with national figures; rose above in 1997; dropped below in 1998, and have been well above in the last two years. Nevertheless, the school's trend over these five sets of results is above the national trend. In general, over this period of time, the results of 11-year-olds have been better than those of seven-year-olds, and this remains the case now. It also reflects the pattern that was found during the inspection. Several contributory factors were found. Pupils for whom English is an additional language tend to join the school in the younger age group. Several of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. By the time they take the tests at the age of seven, they have not had enough time to catch up with most native speakers. As a result, the overall level of attainment in tests is reduced. However, by 11, these pupils perform as well as other groups, and the effect of this is that overall results are comparatively higher. Other reasons include a high turnover of pupils as families move in and out of the area, which affects attainment year on year, and a high turnover of staff, which leads to fluctuations in the quality of teaching in

the school from one year to the next. During the inspection, while teaching was satisfactory in classes for five to seven-year-olds, it was generally good in classes for older pupils, thereby improving the quality of learning as pupils get older.

95. At age seven, pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally in line with what is nationally expected. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers, and to each other, following explanations and asking logical questions of their own. When speaking, most pupils are confident to express an opinion, give an answer or offer an idea in front of their class. Furthermore, several were prepared to speak in response to questions, even in front of the whole school. For example, when the headteacher asked about the importance of their mothers in an assembly about Mothering Sunday, many pupils of this age group were amongst those who put up their hand to volunteer an answer. These skills are developed through classroom discussions and similar activities as pupils move through the school. By 11, standards in this aspect of the subject are above expectations, and often well above. Pupils are encouraged to discuss ideas and topics freely. In literacy hours and in subjects across the curriculum, pupils are often put into groups and asked to produce ideas or strategies for taking learning further. For example, in music lessons, pupils in classes of different ages through the school were expected to work on their own compositions. Nearly all of them discussed in their group, how to use different instruments to achieve an effect, and which instruments would play together and when. As a result, by 11, most pupils are skilful in discussing ideas. They listen to others, adapting and responding to their views. On these occasions, they display a good sense of the needs of listeners, speaking up so that everyone in the classroom can hear easily.
96. Literacy hours are generally well taught. Most teachers, even those originally trained abroad, or recently arrived in the school, understand the structure for lessons that is recommended in the National Literacy Strategy. The co-ordinator and senior managers ensure that teachers who are experienced in its use and planning work alongside others, so that expertise is shared and spread. Many pupils apply skills acquired in literacy hours to other situations. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 use non-fiction books well to find information to support a range of topics. Promotion of skills to sustain writing at length and for a variety of purposes have benefited from a local authority initiative. This scheme has helped to enhance pupils' awareness of how to write in many different styles and genres, both imaginative and creative. However, the skills to seek books for themselves in a library and to prepare a study independently are severely restricted by deficiencies in the stock of books.
97. By age seven, the reading of most pupils meets national expectations, and several attain at a higher level. However, several pupils do not achieve these standards. Currently, for example, significant proportions with English as an additional language and with special educational needs are below expectations. As a result, overall standards are below average. Nevertheless, most pupils read simple texts accurately and with good expression. They understand what they read and offer good explanations of characters' actions. Pupils' strategies for reading unfamiliar or new words are sound. Higher-attaining pupils read fluently and independently. Teachers, and classroom assistants when in place, support lower-attainers well, helping them to progress. As they move on through the school, pupils read frequently in literacy hours. Sessions with the whole class focus on appropriate texts, and groups share texts together, reading individually to each other and as a group. These methods were seen in classes of all age groups. For example, in Year 5, classes used demanding factual texts about *The Water Cycle* and in Year 6 a complicated argumentative text was employed. This difficult passage, entitled *Should cars be abolished?* was read by taking turns around the class. Several pupils read aloud with considerable accuracy and aplomb, coping with phrases, such as "...Surely you cannot envisage our society continuing to progress..."; "...abolishing cars would be a drastic measure...", and "...scientists to research into even better environmentally friendly fuels..." As a result of these good methods, the overall standard of pupils' reading is above average by the time they leave the school at 11 years old.
98. Standards of attainment in writing are below average at the age of seven, and a little above average at 11. Many seven-year-olds are well motivated to sustain the length of their writing well. However, a scrutiny of work showed a very wide range of attainment, with several pupils attaining

a level below what is expected nationally. Higher-attainers produce well-organised writing, often employing a rich vocabulary for their age. Conversely, lower-attaining pupils write in very short sentences and their spelling of even simple words is insecure. In Year 1, however, a higher proportion of pupils are writing well for their age, suggesting that standards are set to rise. As pupils move through the school, an emphasis on the development of writing has had a positive impact. For example, in Year 3, pupils learn successfully about the style and use of language in traditional stories. A local authority initiative has placed further impact on improving writing skills. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils used knowledge of the water-cycle to produce an explanatory text of their own. Good teaching resulted in most of them organising this type of writing well, understanding the need to employ technical terms, a logical sequence, and connective words and phrases. By 11, many pupils write freely, using language adventurously in a wide range of styles and genres. Although most pupils in Year 6 use a joined, legible handwriting, lower down the school, pupils are often untidy in this respect. One important reason is a lack of rigour. Teachers do not insist enough that pupils who write neatly in their handwriting books transfer these skills into other aspects of the subject and across the curriculum.

99. Generally pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. They listen well to teachers and classroom assistants, and put in a good effort. These qualities result in good uses of time in most lessons. Occasionally, behaviour falls below these high standards. When it does, it affects the quality of learning, as teachers then need to spend time to control restlessness, and to prevent chatter about matters unrelated to the learning process. As a result, pupils' pace of working slows down, and they acquire skills less effectively than they might otherwise.
100. The overall quality of teaching in classes for five to seven-year-olds is satisfactory, and often good. Very good teaching occurred in a Year 1 lesson in which the class teacher was working in partnership with the teacher of pupils with English as an additional language. Planning conveyed clear information about what each teacher would do in the lesson. This information was used to ensure that the lesson proceeded with a good pace and that pupils knew what was expected. As a result, all of them were able to understand how to make progress, and learning was particularly secure. What was found more in the good, rather than in the satisfactory teaching was a more secure management of pupils. In the good lessons, therefore, less time was spent on controlling pupils' restlessness than in the satisfactory ones. As a result, the good teaching resulted in a faster pace of working, so that pupils acquired skills and knowledge faster. In classes for seven- to 11-year-olds, teaching was more consistently good. Lessons were based on good planning, and therefore proceeded at a brisk pace. Teachers nearly always shared with pupils what they expected them to learn by the end of lessons. Often, this information was used very well in the closing, whole-class sessions of lessons to check and reinforce whether the expected had in fact occurred.
101. Co-ordination of literacy is very good. A lot of thought has gone into plans that address and ameliorate difficulties that the school experiences. For example, the good practice of linking teachers who are new or inexperienced with others who know the school's procedures and strategies well goes a long way to counteract the effects of a high turnover of staff. Furthermore, joint planning of lessons helps to ensure equality of access to the curriculum, lessening effects of the same feature. Considerable improvement has occurred since the last inspection in arrangements for assessing and tracking pupils' progress through the school. The co-ordinator also checks and audits teachers' requirements for in-service training and whether day-to-day resources are sufficient.

MATHEMATICS

102. At the time of the last inspection in 1997, standards were judged to be *'sound at the end of both key stages and pupils make satisfactory progress'*. Results had also improved on those of the previous year. Teaching was judged to be *'generally satisfactory with some examples of good teaching at Key Stage 2 and a percentage of unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 1'*. The findings of this inspection show improvement in standards and teaching, especially at Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows standards attained by seven-year-olds are in line with expectations. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are above expectations. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and teaching for seven to eleven-year-olds is good with several very good lessons and one excellent lesson observed.
103. The results of National Curriculum tests for 2000, which use average points scores, show standards achieved by seven-year-olds to be below both the national average and average for schools with a similar intake of pupils. Since the last inspection in 1997, the pattern of results at Key Stage 1 has been somewhat erratic. At first it showed a downward trend followed by a sharp improvement above national standards in 1999, only to drop back in 2000. There are two main reasons for the variability in standards achieved by seven-year-olds which impact on all subjects. Firstly, there is a higher turnover of pupils between reception and the end of Year 2. As an example of this turnover, last academic year there was a 48 per cent turnover of pupils in Year 2 alone. Secondly, pupils starting school with little English make good progress but do not have sufficient grasp of English, especially specific mathematical vocabulary, to do well in tests. Results achieved in mathematics are similar to those in reading and above those achieved in writing.
104. By contrast, in 2000, standards achieved by eleven-year-olds were well above the national average and in the highest five per cent in the country when compared to similar schools. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds have fluctuated a little since the last inspection but have generally remained above the national average except in 1998. Over time, the trend of improvement in standards is better than the national trend. Pupils achieve similar standards in English and Science. The school sets realistic targets for pupils to achieve in National Curriculum tests. However, there are years when a particularly high turnover of pupils means that targets and results do not come anywhere near matching because pupils on whom the targets were based have left the school and new pupils may be at different levels.
105. Inspection evidence shows that at Key Stage 1 pupils make rapid progress in Year 1, gaining confidence in solving number problems to 100, demonstrating quick mental ability and accuracy in numbers. They use appropriate vocabulary and readily explain the reasoning for their answers. Pupils demonstrate skills in accurate measurement using standard and non-standard units of measurement. Shapes are readily recognised and described. In Year 2, pupils consolidate their knowledge of numbers and measurement. They begin to solve problems using fractions of space and time. However, the rate of progress in Year 2, though satisfactory, is slower than in Year 1, building less rapidly on skills and knowledge.
106. By Year 4, pupils demonstrate an ability to integrate their skills in different elements of the subject, bringing knowledge of numbers, fractions, percentages, bar charts and measurement to bear on problem-solving. This was illustrated well in a Year 4 lesson based on a temperature weather chart of Paris. Pupils could identify key features on the chart, compare weather patterns at different times of the year, estimate the rate of climate change from one season to another, and comment on the range and distribution of their observations. Pupils gave clear and precise explanations for their reasoning. They were able to integrate the data with careful and often complex questions.
107. By Year 6, pupils are secure and confident in mathematical skills, using a range of mental and written strategies to solve problems. They use place value to 1000, and convert fractions to percentages. They identify and rectify their errors. Pupils had the opportunity to demonstrate their skills in a lesson in which they had to create weekly train timetables within tight time constraints, with departure and arrival times, fast and slow trains, with different stopping and

change-over schedules, and differing speed limits. They enjoyed and rose to the challenge most successfully.

108. Scrutiny of a range of pupils' books revealed high pupil productivity and progress at Key Stage 2 with especially marked progress in learning from Year 5 through to Year 6. At Key Stage 1, some of the momentum built up in Year 1 is not always maintained in Year 2, where progress slows. Numeracy is in evidence across much of the curriculum such as travel and weather surveys in geography.
109. The quality of teaching is good overall; this has a very positive impact and promotes effective learning throughout the school. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all of the lessons observed during the inspection. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was always good and in several lessons it was very good and, in one lesson, excellent. Teachers are secure with the National Numeracy Strategy which is used effectively to promote learning. Lesson planning is good and clearly defined lesson objectives are shared with pupils at the start of each lesson. At the end of each lesson, teachers return to these objectives and discuss what has been learnt. All lessons are well structured and provide a range of activities which are carefully selected and well timed to meet the learning objectives. Lessons always include a variety of activities such as mental skills, opportunities to use and test out newly acquired skills in written and oral work, as well as opportunities to work independently and in groups. Teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject is readily transmitted to pupils who respond with equal enthusiasm. Lessons move at a good pace. Most pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject, they enjoy their lessons, are confident in their understanding, willingly accept new challenges, and experience a real sense of achievement. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to lessons, sharing their ideas.
110. The key difference between the good lessons observed in Key Stage 2 and the satisfactory lessons observed at Key Stage 1, lay in: the clarity of explanations; the pace of lessons; and the amount of time allocated to mental mathematics at the start of the lesson. In the best lessons explanations were clear, using step-by-step short sentences to ensure pupils understood new processes. Satisfactory lessons sometimes made heavy weather of the mental mathematics at the outset devoting too much time here, which tended to slow the pace for the remainder of the lesson. In good lessons the mental mathematics session was used to introduce increasingly difficult problems.
111. The subject is well managed by the new co-ordinator and an appropriate subject policy document is in place. The work of the co-ordinator is greatly strengthened by the active support of the governors with special responsibility for numeracy. A development plan for mathematics establishes clear objectives, priorities and success criteria. A new numeracy assessment strategy is in place to track pupil progress and attainment through the school. At present, daily lesson assessment is recorded on the weekly planning sheet, each half-term pupil's work is assessed and recorded. Use of assessment to inform future curriculum development is an area for development, as is the use of individual pupil targets.

SCIENCE

112. At the time of the last inspection standards in science were judged to be '*above national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school*'. One science lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and four lessons in Key Stage 2. Based on these lesson observations and a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, attainment in science is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils undertake a range of appropriate science activities covering all attainment targets, studying life processes and living things and materials and physical processes. Provision for investigative and experimental science is good throughout the school. From the start, pupils are expected to use simple apparatus and equipment correctly, ask questions about their work, use focused exploration and investigation to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding and attempt to explain their discoveries and draw conclusions using scientific understanding.

113. In Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils learning about forces stated that gravity “pulls you down” and that forces are “pushes and pulls”. Using a ramp and a model car, pupils, with help, measured the distance cars traveled after leaving the ramp. However, although most realised there was a reason for things speeding up or slowing down, when asked by the teacher, no pupil could identify correctly whether the car responded to a “push” or a “pull” force. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils set up an experiment to see whether a magnet would work through a range of materials. They understood that some materials are attracted to magnets and others are not or less so. They knew that a paper clip will move towards the magnet “because it’s made of iron” and predict whether a paper clip on the other side of the material being tested will move or not move. Pupils develop a good understanding that science is about establishing connections between causes and effects and that it is important to test ideas with evidence from observations. Year 4 pupils study the changes that take place when some solids are added to water. They make observations of whether each of six substances, when added to water, dissolve, recording their results in tables provided and making comparisons. Pupils in Year 6, having planned group experiments in a previous lesson, investigate scientific questions relating to electricity such as: “Which kind of wire makes the bulb brighter?” and “How many bulbs can we link in a parallel circuit?” They know that copper wire is a “better conductor” and understand the concept of “parallel circuits”. They understand what makes a test “fair” and that it is crucial to test ideas with evidence from observations. They are posing questions open to scientific investigation, deciding how answers can be found, anticipating the evidence needed and the type of equipment required. They are conducting a “fair test” by changing one variable only, setting out their experiment plan and recording their evidence confidently, without guidance or assistance from the teacher, and predicting the outcomes of their experiments.
114. Although it is not possible to make judgements about the overall quality of learning in Key Stage 1, in the one lesson seen, the quality of learning was unsatisfactory due to the unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour of the pupils who were not managed effectively by the teacher. The quality of learning in lessons at Key Stage 2 ranged from very good to satisfactory and was good overall. Where learning was very good, clear progress was made due to the very good classroom management and subject knowledge of the teacher and the high level of pupil motivation generated. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress overall. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour in lessons observed were good overall at Key Stage 2. In the best cases, pupils show great interest in the activities and are very keen to answer the teacher’s questions, replying with enthusiasm and confidence. Most work quietly and conscientiously, clearly enjoying their science lessons. In the Year 2 lesson, attitudes and behaviour were unsatisfactory; pupils were very restless, finding concentration difficult, chatting when the teacher was talking to the class, for example. This was due to some extent to poor classroom management by the teacher and to some extent to pupils not understanding what was required of them by the teacher.
115. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1, therefore it is not possible to give an overall judgement on teaching in this key stage. In Key Stage 2, teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory and was good overall. In most lessons, teachers give clear explanations and are confident in their subject knowledge. They motivate pupils well, maintain a brisk pace throughout the lesson, have a good rapport with their pupils and appropriately high expectations of work and behaviour. In the one very good lesson, the teacher used questioning very well to probe and direct pupils’ learning, made very good use of scientific vocabulary and motivated pupils very well so that very good progress was made. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory this was because of the teacher’s lack of subject knowledge and ineffective classroom management skills.
116. The co-ordinator for the subject is relatively new to the post. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for the subject. Results of the annual end of Key Stage 2 tests have been analysed carefully and, as a result, changes made to the curriculum to stress experimental and investigative activities. There is good use of assessment in science with half-termly assessment tasks undertaken and the results recorded. Resources for the subject are satisfactory overall.

ART AND DESIGN

117. No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection in Key Stage 1, providing insufficient evidence on which to make secure judgments about pupils' attainment, attitudes and behaviour or on the quality of teaching in the subject at the end of the key stage. However, in Key Stage 2, where three lessons were observed, attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with national expectations. A scrutiny of work on display around the school confirms that pupils in both key stages undertake an appropriate variety of art and design activities, printing repeated patterns, making collages, drawing in a variety of materials including chalk and charcoal and making pencil studies. In Key Stage 1, for example, work was on display showing that pupils had undertaken observational studies of buildings in the local environment, looking at textures, making rubbings, and designing their own buildings. Year 3 pupils have studied symmetrical patterns in art, looking at Islamic tile designs and Maori patterns and have made collages of "Rainbow Fish". In a Year 4 lesson, pupils, after studying the work of Matisse, are adapting art work from a previous lesson, reducing their work to a black and white image and creating a simplified version in the style of Matisse. Year 5 pupils have made charcoal drawings of animals on a field trip, made pencil portraits, looked at patterns in Ancient Greek art and designed posters. They have produced effective "Sunflower" tonal studies, after looking carefully at Van Gogh's work, using one colour only. Pupils in Year 6, in a continuation lesson, are making "Easter Hats". Previous to the lesson observed, pupils have applied papier-mâché to a balloon and are at various stages of making their hat after designing, labelling and making a list of procedures. They are cutting and shaping, painting and adding decoration, utilising their experiences of materials and processes and extending their control of tools and techniques. In a previous lesson, pupils have made paint studies of trees in winter.
118. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during their art and design lessons in Key Stage 2 ranged from good to satisfactory and were good overall. Pupils' attitudes have a positive impact on their learning; they work well together and learn particularly well when teachers conduct lessons at a brisk pace and set high expectations for work to be finished in a set time. The quality of learning in the lessons seen ranged from very good to satisfactory and was good overall. Where teaching was very good, pupils were motivated well by the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject; they set about their work with zest and made very good progress.
119. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work for the subject and this has been in place throughout the school since the beginning of the school year. The co-ordinator for the subject is well qualified and keen to take the subject forward and has prepared a detailed "Action Plan" of developments in art and design for the future but is very new to the role. Although basic paint and paper resources for the subject are satisfactory, the range of additional resources for art is unsatisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. Only one design and technology lesson in Year 3 was observed during the inspection. This one observation provided insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on attainment or on the quality of teaching, learning or behaviour and attitudes in design and technology at both key stages. Evidence obtained from a survey of samples of work on display throughout the school, design work in pupils' sketch books, and from discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that, in both key stages, pupils undertake an appropriate range of activities in which they design, make and evaluate products. There has been some improvement since the last inspection where it was found that not all areas of the curriculum were being covered appropriately in Key Stage 2.
121. In the one lesson seen in Year 3, pupils developed their understanding of how materials may be combined. This was an introductory lesson to a series of lessons culminating in the making and evaluation of a photo-frame. Pupils were choosing techniques appropriately to make their product as strong as possible, considering folding, rolling and layering paper to make it more stable. Attitudes and behaviour in this lesson were satisfactory although a significant minority of pupils

needed constant reminders to concentrate and pay attention. Teaching in this lesson was satisfactory overall; the teacher had a very enthusiastic manner and worked hard to ensure all pupils were involved and taking part in the lesson.

122. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows pupils in both key stages have undertaken an appropriate range of "design and make" activities. Year 1 pupils have made masks, and produced designs for an improved playground and for building a home. Year 2 pupils have designed a label for a bottle or box. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils have designed, made and evaluated a "Rainbow" box and designed and made papier-mâché masks. They have investigated sandwich snacks, looking at and evaluating different spreads and breads and have designed, made and evaluated a sandwich. In Year 4 pupils have designed and made a chair for a literary character, making preparatory sketches, labelling and annotating their designs. They have also made a money wallet using paper templates. Year 5 pupils have designed and made "rain-sticks" and Year 6 pupils have designed and made slippers using paper patterns.
123. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator assumed the role at the start of the current school year and has introduced the nationally recommended scheme of work for the subject, produced a whole-school plan for design and technology and has begun to develop a portfolio of examples of work. However, as the nursery teacher, in a building separate from the main school, it is difficult for her in her design and technology co-ordinator role, to have an overview of standards, both in teaching and attainment, in the subject throughout the school and, at the time of the inspection, she had only had the opportunity to observe one lesson. There is a barely satisfactory range of resources for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Only one lesson of geography was observed during the inspection, so judgements are based on scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work; discussions with pupils from Year 2 and Year 6, and discussions with the humanities co-ordinator.
125. The last inspection found that *'generally pupils' attainment is satisfactory'*. Findings of this inspection indicate standards have declined. There are few examples of good written work and a significant part of the work seen at both key stages is below expectations. This indicates that the subject is being taught with insufficient depth and content. There was little evidence that pupils could identify or describe the physical and human features of places, or that they had any firm grasp of world geography. There was little evidence that pupils could explain or make comparisons of similar and different features in different localities.
126. Discussions with Year 2 and Year 6 pupils revealed little recall or understanding of geographic terms such as: maps, physical features, weather conditions. Pupils had little understanding of human life in different parts of the world and how the climate affects this. Pupils were somewhat more confident about the local area but were unable to use geographic skills in their answers. However, pupils did recall a field study with obvious enthusiasm.
127. The curriculum is based on a nationally recommended scheme of work, which is, currently, not supported by more detailed lesson planning. In the recent past, the subject has not benefited from clear leadership and this is the main reason for the decline in standards noted in this inspection. A humanities co-ordinator has been appointed recently but has not yet received any professional training, nor been able to undertake any professional development courses. A formal assessment strategy is to be introduced to monitor pupil progress.

HISTORY

128. Just two lessons of history were observed during the inspection, so overall judgements are based on these lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 and discussions with staff and the humanities co-ordinator.
129. Standards are in line with national expectations at both key stages. There are some examples of good written work, especially in Year 6, but more frequently, pupils' level of attainment is in line with expectations.
130. The quality of teaching in both lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory and based on sound subject knowledge. Pupils explored how life had changed in the locality in Victorian times using their own school as a case study. They were able to distinguish between primary and secondary evidence based on observations from two large portraits of the school's founder, Baroness Coutts, as well as other early drawings of the school and locality. The background and context of changes in Victorian England were well developed in one lesson, and reinforced by careful questioning which allowed pupils to contribute their own ideas to the discussion. Pupils were interested and responded well. They added their own questions about the early history of their school, and past pupils' experiences. Using worksheets, with rather simple questions, pupils were able to record their judgements and make their own deductions.
131. Scrutiny of written work in Year 6 showed that a few pupils had used a wide range of sources to investigate the lives of rich and poor people in Tudor times, and that they had made thoughtful comparisons to arrive at their well argued deductions. More often the written work was repetitive and showed little depth of thought. Discussions with pupils from Years 2 and 6 revealed they had difficulty placing events such as the Fire of London, or famous people such as Florence Nightingale in a historical context, nor could they identify or describe different periods of history in any chronological order. They also had little understanding of the importance of social or economic changes such as the development of new transport systems. The pupils clearly enjoyed their visits to places of historical interest.
132. The new humanities co-ordinator had produced a curriculum map for the subject based on government recommended schemes of work, but this still needs to be used to the full in lesson planning. Assessment strategies are being developed but not yet in place. The co-ordinator has not yet received professional training.
133. Some development has taken place in the subject since the last inspection but several weaknesses identified then remain, in particular the lack of depth in lessons, their slow pace, low expectations and a lack of open-ended investigations.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in information technology was *'... below national expectations for most pupils; they make unsatisfactory progress overall, although there are some instances where progress is satisfactory in a limited area of the curriculum'*.
135. The findings of this inspection show standards achieved by five to seven-year-olds have improved and are now in line with national expectations but standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are below. The main reason for standards being below expectations is that the eleven-year-olds have not had enough access to adequate computers and suitable software in the recent past. It is only since the computer suite has been operational in this academic year that reasonable progress has been made. Currently, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are on track to reach the required standards and if Year 5 continue their present progress, they too will just reach the required standards although few, if any, will exceed these.

136. Seven-year-olds are able to 'log on' to the Internet, locate 'Living Library' and download information about Florence Nightingale and a picture of tadpoles. Their teacher's high expectations for them to listen carefully and her clear explanations made sure that they could follow instructions and achieve well. Pupils were very interested in what they were doing because they were using the Internet and the information they were finding could be used in their class work. They worked together happily and helped each other sensibly.
137. Eleven-year-olds can open a data base containing information about colour of eyes, gender, weight and height of a sample of children. Pupils could show and interpret information using a variety of graphs. They were secure in interpreting one set of information, for example, the percentage of children in the sample with a particular eye colour. When it came to interpreting two sets of information, for example height and weight, pupils struggled. It was noticeable in the lesson observed, that pupils were very keen on using the computers but many of them were unsure or lacked confidence in some very basic skills, such as familiarity with the shift key and print function.
138. Pupils in Year 3 know that 'e-mail' means electronic mail and that there are advantages, such as speed, associated with e-mail and disadvantages, such as messages can get lost. They know the sequence of sending and accessing e-mail. Unfortunately in the lesson observed, the whole system took a great deal of time to access all the pupils' e-mail messages. However, pupils waited patiently. At the present time, pupils in Year 4 are only just making a start on the work Year 2 are expected to cover, formulating instructions for a 'screen turtle' to draw a specific shape on the screen. They worked hard and persevered at the task and made sound progress in their lesson. These pupils have a great deal of ground to make up but given the time available in the computer suite to practise their skills and the satisfactory teaching in the subject, it is more than likely that they will achieve the expected standards by the time they are eleven. In a very good lesson observed for Year 5 pupils, they covered the same area as the Year 4 pupils. However, they had more skills to bring to the lesson and made very good progress, demonstrating that they too will be able to achieve the expected standards by age eleven.
139. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. The knowledgeable co-ordinator for the subject provides very good leadership and support for her colleagues, so that teachers have sufficient knowledge and feel confident teaching the subject. Planning is good with very clear statements of what it is teachers expect pupils to learn in the lessons; however, these plans often go awry because the school's system is slow to respond to the demand of a whole class logging on to the Internet or printers cannot deal with the number of requests for 'print'. The main reason that teaching is satisfactory rather than good is the disproportionate amount of time teachers have to spend managing pupils' behaviour at the introductions to lessons; this takes up time and slows pupils' learning. The difficulty in management of pupils is exacerbated by the awful squeaking chairs; even the slightest movement results in a creak or squeak! Therefore, teachers tend, understandably, to opt to assemble pupils on the floor of the ICT suite for the introduction to lessons. The cramped conditions mean that pupils at the back of the group cannot see the demonstration given 'on screen' by the teacher. Pupils are restless and though teachers' questioning is good, too many pupils are not giving their full attention. The unsettled start to lessons has an impact on the rest of the session. When pupils are working at the computers; the noise level tends to be too high and escalates so that teachers sometimes have to stop the lesson to regain calm. The best lesson observed in a Year 5 class started calmly in the classroom with very good questioning to help pupils recall what they had learned in their last lesson. The teacher ensured that all pupils knew what they had to do when they reached the ICT suite so that they could quickly start their 'warm up' exercise and not waste any time. A very good start was made by all pupils when they arrived in the suite. They behaved very sensibly and from the 'warm up' exercise, progressed to extending their learning by making good use of a 'control' program where they had to write instructions for a robot to move around a set path. Their teacher moved from pair to pair to check on learning and encouraged pupils, by skilful questioning, to learn from their mistakes.
140. The computer suite is an asset to the school and promotes at least sound progress in the subject. It is planned to purchase an overhead projection system, linked to a computer, which

will solve the problem of pupils who sit at the back of the group not being able to see teachers' demonstrations. The current practice of storing the larger musical instruments in half of the room restricts opportunities for different types of lesson organisation. For example, half a class could work at computers on their own whilst half sat and prepared or finished off work at a table.

MUSIC

141. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in music at the ages of seven and 11 was "...satisfactory in most elements of the subject, although..." some aspects were "...not covered in sufficient depth to allow full achievement." The main weakness was that little evidence of musical notation was found; to some extent, this is still the case. However, the use of computers to compose music, together with sessions when pupils record their ideas on large sheets of paper, go some way to putting this right. In other respects, standards are now higher. For example, by the time pupils leave the school at the age of 11, singing is of high quality, based on the very good teaching of this important aspect of the subject. In addition to what is taught in music lessons, pupils attend one of three weekly singing sessions. These sessions are arranged particularly well, so that the learning requirements of two year groups at a time are focused. As a result, the needs of pupils of different ages can be better met, increasing their interest and concentration. Teaching in these sessions emphasises hymns for the next week's assemblies and a wide repertoire of other songs. Pupils therefore learn to phrase vocal parts correctly, project their voices to meet the needs of an audience, vary their voices according to the mood of what they sing, and to maintain rhythm and pitch accurately. For example, Years 5 and 6 sang Anne Lovelace's *Cold Tomb* with considerable enjoyment of the music. Furthermore, they were able to explain and demonstrate understanding of the high quality of their own performance. They maintained the gentler tune of "the tomb is empty", against the dramatic, angular rhythms of "are you crazy?" with panache and power.
142. Younger pupils, up to the age of seven, also sing well. They are confident in projecting their voices. The specialist music teacher is an excellent pianist, who accompanies young voices sympathetically. As a result, they are encouraged to respond with their best efforts. For example, they sang *I love my mum* in preparation for Mothering Sunday, keeping together well and demonstrating good awareness of pulse and rhythm. Very good teaching involved the challenge of producing their own words for extra verses. Pupils' suggestions reflected the rhythm and style of the song closely with suggestions, such as "My mum hugs me, and I hug her back..."
143. All classes are taught at least one lesson each week by the co-ordinator. Class teachers attend these lessons, which helps to spread good practice. However, owing to a large turnover of staff, it does not always mean that teachers' confidence in the subject is built up sufficiently to follow up the lessons in classrooms. Nevertheless, standards in other aspects of the subject are often above national expectations, and pupils' learning is secure throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 were able to offer feasible, although incorrect, suggestions as to which instruments they could hear in a version of *Greensleeves*. Older pupils in Year 4 recognised violins and a flute. They also improvised, practised and revised compositions, using xylophones, bongos, drums and similar instruments. In groups of about five, they developed strong rhythmic ideas into pieces with clear musical structures, including the whole ensemble and duets.
144. The overall quality of teaching is very good. The co-ordinator carries out nearly all of it. He is a very knowledgeable specialist, whose expectations are high. At the same time, teaching of the basics is skilful. What is taught in lessons therefore challenges pupils, but never leaves them floundering. As a result, pupils try very hard and learn very effectively.
145. The co-ordination and organisation of the subject has developed over several years and works well. For example, it supports the link with the church, as much of the repertoire can be used in services, religious festivals and on special occasions. Activity outside lessons includes a choir and recorders. Music students visit the school with their instruments and play short concerts.

However, no instrumental teaching is provided, other than that at a local Saturday morning music centre, which is held at the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. At the time of the last inspection, the level of attainment and progress in physical education was “*satisfactory*” through the school. Pupils played a variety of indoor and outdoor games, performed gymnastics, athletics and dance. Swimming was also provided and met requirements. Generally, these findings remain the same now. However, the co-ordinator has identified weaknesses in dance, and evidence from a lesson in Year 6 suggests that most pupils perform at only basic levels in this element of the subject, with very few demonstrating higher level skills of expressive and interpretative movement to music.
147. Owing to effects of the timetable and inclement weather, direct observation of lessons was restricted to one dance lesson and several lessons in gymnastics. Based on these lessons, the attainment of seven-year-olds is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils co-ordinate simple gymnastic actions well, connecting movements and demonstrating awareness of their own and others’ safety. The attainment of 11-year-olds is also close to expectations. They connect movement with simple steps to create flowing exercises. They understand the good effects of these activities on their bodies through strong links with science and health education. Records show that swimming lessons in Year 4 ensure that nearly all pupils meet the government’s minimum safety requirement of completing 25 metres, and many exceed it easily. Pupils with special educational needs are catered for well. In Year 3, for example, a classroom assistant ensured that a pupil worked on balances and jumps to his limit, and made good progress. This lesson built on the previously acquired skills of all pupils well, addressing their learning needs.
148. The majority of pupils who were asked stated that they enjoy physical education lessons, and attitudes to the subject were good in the inspected lessons. As a result, pupils’ pace of working and physical efforts were usually good enough to ensure that secure learning occurred. Behaviour in lessons was also good. Planned opportunities for pupils to work together in groups or with partners had a good impact on personal development. They shared ideas, took turns fairly, and co-operated with each other.
149. As only lessons in dance and gymnastics (and not games or swimming) were observed, it is not possible to make an overall judgement of teaching. However, in the dance and gymnastics lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. Planning adequately ensured that teachers and pupils were clear about what to do to learn and make progress. Management of pupils was good, so that time was used well. Teachers demonstrated good levels of care, explaining safety requirements and checking that pupils understood instructions.
150. Co-ordination of physical education is good. Although the co-ordinator was trained under a different system, she is a specialist, and has spent considerable time familiarising herself with the National Curriculum. She has begun observing teaching and learning in the school, and offering advice about what she has seen. She has produced a sensible action plan for the subject and has already re-drafted the policy in readiness for approval by the governors. She has identified the need for a list of skills in order of difficulty that can be used to plan across athletics, games, gymnastics, adventurous activity and dance.