

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **AYLWARD FIRST AND MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Stanmore, Middlesex

LEA area: Harrow

Unique reference number: 102225

Headteacher: Mrs. Moira Arnold

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Mary Summers  
25455

Dates of inspection: 27-30 January 2003

Inspection number: 246185

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 12 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pangbourne Drive Stanmore Middlesex
Postcode:	HA7 4RE
Telephone number:	020 8958 9202
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Jane Zane
Date of previous inspection:	10 November 1997

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Team members</b>			<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
25455	Mary Summers	Registered inspector	Science Education inclusion	What sort of school is it?  The school's results and pupils' achievements  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?  What should the school do to improve further?
9007	Rafi Salasnik	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2705	Pat Holwill	Team inspector	English Art Physical education	
1395	Pauline Hoey	Team inspector	Foundation stage English as an additional language Geography Religious education	
19613	Sue Thomas-Pounce	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology History	
1880	Garry Bignell	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Aylward is a large school catering for 414 full-time pupils, 206 boys and 208 girls. In addition 46 pupils attend the nursery part-time. Children start school at levels which are broadly average for their age. More than half the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds including seven per cent who come from refugee families. Just under half the children speak English as an additional language but only eight per cent are in the early stages of learning English. One in five children is entitled to free school meals which is about the same proportion as in most schools across the country. Similarly, the number of children with special educational needs is about average although there are more with statements of special educational need than in most schools. Their difficulties range from physical impairment to speech and communication difficulties. A significant challenge for the school is the high number of pupils who start or leave the school at times other than the normal points of admission or transfer. The school roll has fallen dramatically since 1997. Numbers fell initially because of a poor previous inspection report but there are also now more schools competing for a smaller number of pupils. Since the previous inspection there has been a new headteacher, chair of governors and a significant changeover of teachers.

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

This is an improving school. Purposeful leadership in the past two years has meant that teaching is better and that standards are rising. Teachers cater well for the pupils with special educational needs but they are not as effective as they should be in helping those learning English as an additional language to develop their confidence and fluency. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Children get a very good start to their education in the nursery; the curriculum is well organised and gives children rich experience during their early days at school.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and interested learners; they like coming to school and apply themselves well to their work; they form warm and friendly relationships with adults and their classmates.
- The school supports pupils with special educational needs well; teachers and support assistants work well together to ensure these pupils play a full part in lessons and make good progress.
- The atmosphere in school is warm and supportive; new pupils quickly settle in and make new friends.
- The headteacher provides good direction to the school's work; she has a clear vision of what needs to be developed and takes a hands-on approach to all aspects of the school's work. She is supported well by governors who are well informed and who monitor the school's work effectively.

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

- Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is unsatisfactory; teachers are not planning enough opportunities within lessons for them to extend their vocabulary and improve their use of English; additional support staff are often ineffective.
- Standards in information and communication technology and music are below those expected for pupils in Years 6 and 7; standards in physical education are also below those expected nationally for pupils in Year 6.
- The management structure is not well organised; much of the management work carried out by senior staff is not linked closely enough to improving standards.
- Attendance rates are well below the national average; too many pupils are withdrawn from school to go on extended family holidays and they miss important parts of their education. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection in November 1997 but good improvement over the last two years since the appointment of the new headteacher. The quality of teaching is better which has led to rising standards. The curriculum is now organised much more effectively and new assessment systems are beginning to provide the school with good information to help it identify individuals and groups of pupils who are not making enough progress. Most subject leaders are carrying out their jobs appropriately but the roles of some senior managers are still not focused enough on improving standards. There are also still some gaps in the coverage of information and communication technology.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	B	C	B
mathematics	A	C	C	B
science	A	B	C	B

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

In 2002, Year 6 pupils reached average standards in English, mathematics and science although they were above average when compared with schools with a similar intake. Results fell short of targets which the school had set but these were unrealistic for the particular group of pupils. Pupils this year look likely to achieve the targets set for them although they do represent a reasonable challenge. Standards were high in 2000 because the pupils in Year 6 that year were very bright and there were few with special educational needs. Despite the apparent drop, standards have, overall, risen at a rate similar to the national trend over the last four years. Considering that many of the pupils speak English as an additional language and the high degree of pupil turnover, results represent satisfactory achievement. In the 2002 tests, Year 2 pupils reached standards which were above average in reading, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Science standards, assessed by teachers, were similar to schools nationally.

When children start school, most are at levels which are expected for their age and there are a few who are still learning English. They make good progress and, when they start in Year 1, most exceed expected levels in their personal, social and emotional development; they reach expected levels in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and in all other areas of their learning.

Work seen in lessons confirms that most pupils achieve appropriately considering their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the careful provision made for them and achieve well for their abilities. Year 6 pupils this year are on line to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. They reach expected levels for their age in most other subjects although are below average in information technology, music and physical education. In Year 2, the pupils are working at age appropriate levels in reading, writing and science but are doing well in mathematics and exceeding the levels expected of them. Standards in other subjects are as expected for their age. Overall, Year 7 pupils are working at appropriate levels for their age, except in information and communication technology and music where they are below the levels expected. In English and mathematics lessons more able pupils receive challenging work and make appropriate progress. However, in a few lessons in other subjects, the work is too easy and progress is not so good. Many pupils for whom English is an additional language do not progress

fast enough in Years 1 to 7, particularly in English, because they do not get enough opportunities to widen their vocabulary and develop their fluency and confidence in lessons.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are enthusiastic, interested and want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave responsibly in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play happily together. They are welcoming to visitors and show care and concern for one another.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Too many children are taken from school on holidays during term time. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory

Pupils' positive attitudes to school clearly have a good effect on their learning. However, the high rate of absence affects the progress of a significant number of pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory although it is very good in the nursery and generally good in Reception classes. General strengths are:

- Mathematics, including numeracy is well taught and is helping to raise standards;
- good lesson introductions which help pupils to concentrate on the task in hand;
- warm relationships between teachers and their pupils which encourage the pupils to do their best;
- effective use of books and equipment to interest and motivate pupils;
- careful use of classroom assistants to support pupils who learn more slowly;
- good English teaching, including literacy in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 where teachers present their lessons imaginatively and involve the children well.

The main weaknesses are:

- teaching for pupils for whom English is an additional language in Years 1 to 7; teachers do not provide enough opportunities for these pupils to extend their vocabulary and develop their confidence;
- the lack of challenge in a few lessons, particularly of the most able pupils for whom the work set is too easy;
- teaching in physical education which is unsatisfactory because of some teachers' weak knowledge of the subject.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for the children in nursery and Reception and satisfactory in the rest of the school. The school is following national guidance for most subjects but is not giving enough time to physical education in Years 3 to 6. Some aspects of information and communication technology and music are not covered well enough.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils benefit from effective support from teachers and assistants and take a full part in all lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory. There is a wide range of rich language experiences in nursery and Reception classes but there are not enough opportunities in older classes for pupils to develop vocabulary and confidence.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development through a range of opportunities which allows them to work together and develop responsibility. They have good opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and beliefs and are encouraged to appreciate one another's cultural backgrounds in lessons and in assemblies.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school looks after its pupils well. It is very successful in encouraging good behaviour and positive relationships. Systems to improve attendance and punctuality are not rigorous enough to reduce the high levels of absence. Pupils' progress is monitored appropriately but information is not used well enough to ensure that all pupils get the right opportunities to make the best possible progress.

The school works appropriately with parents to involve them in their children's education. Parents have a high regard for the school's work.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is providing clear and effective leadership and this is helping to drive the school forward. Subject co-ordinators are developing their skills well and some provide strong direction, especially those co-ordinating provision for the youngest children and those pupils with special educational needs. However, there are too many senior staff carrying low level responsibilities which are not linked to improving standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are a strong and supportive team who monitor the school's work well. A programme of visits and good information from the headteacher and staff help them to understand what is being taught and how well the pupils are doing. This helps them take an active role in planning for the future.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher monitors lessons to assess the quality of teaching and how it can be improved. Performance in tests is analysed to see where improvements can be made. The school has introduced new assessment and target setting systems as a result of its evaluations which is a positive step towards improving standards.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are directed appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils and the curriculum. Governors review progress annually against the previous year's plans and evaluate the success of their spending.

The school is well staffed and has enough books and equipment to support teaching and learning appropriately. There are a few gaps in resources to support information and communication

technology. Support staff are used well to help pupils with special educational needs but less effectively to help pupils for whom English is an additional language. Accommodation is spacious and is kept very clean. A well-organised programme of redecoration is resulting in a bright and stimulating learning environment. The school uses the systems of best value well, often asking pupils and parents for their views and considering major items of expenditure carefully before coming to final decisions.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and helps their children to make effective progress.</li> <li>• The school works effectively with parents and they feel comfortable to approach staff with any concerns.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping to ensure that pupils become mature and responsible; pupils' behaviour is good.</li> <li>• The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of homework is inconsistent between classes and is sometimes not marked.</li> <li>• There are not enough extra-curricular activities on offer to pupils.</li> <li>• The school does not spend enough time on physical education lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with all the positive views of parents except that the quality of teaching is satisfactory rather than good. Inspectors agree with parents that provision of homework varies from class to class but the examples of homework sampled showed that it was marked regularly. The findings of the inspection support parents' views that not enough time is spent on physical education but shows that the provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2002 were average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils, standards were above average in all three subjects. Considering the high turnover of pupils in the school and the fact that just under half speak English as an additional language, this represents satisfactory achievement for the vast majority of the pupils.
2. Standards have improved since the last inspection when they were below average in writing, mathematics and science when pupils took the national tests in Year 6. This is mainly because the quality of teaching is better than in 1998. The rate of improvement has been broadly similar to the national trend. In 2000 the standards achieved by the pupils were particularly high because there were very few who had special educational needs and a high number of bright children in the group who took the tests.
3. A reasonable number of pupils exceeded expectations for their age in English in 2002 but there were too many who achieved well below the level required for their age in writing. This is because the school is not catering well enough for the pupils who speak English as an additional language. Their vocabulary is limited and this weakness transfers into their written work. Test results showed average standards in science despite teachers' forecasts being significantly lower. This shows some under expectation of teachers last year. In general, the more able pupils make satisfactory progress and a fair number exceed the levels expected of them in the national tests. This was echoed by lesson observations made during this inspection, particularly in the work provided in English and mathematics. In a few lessons seen during the inspection however, in subjects like French, history and music, teachers gave these pupils work which was too easy and did not challenge them sufficiently.
4. The targets the school set for pupils last year in English and mathematics were unrealistic and were not achieved. Those set for this year's 11-year-olds are far more realistic but still represent a challenge for the school.
5. The results of the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds showed standards in mathematics to be well above average. Reading standards were above average and writing standards were average. When compared with similar schools, standards were very high in mathematics, well above average in reading and above average in writing. The assessments in science made by teachers showed that standards were broadly average. The results represent good improvement in reading and mathematics since the last inspection when standards were said to be broadly average in these subjects. Again, the improvement is due mainly to better teaching.
6. Children begin in the nursery with a wide range of attainment, but in general, they are about average for their age. A few are still in the early stages of learning English. By the end of the Reception year, children reach very high levels in their personal, social and emotional development. The majority of children reach levels expected for their age in communication and language skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative and physical development.
7. Work seen during the inspection confirms that pupils in Years 6 and 7 are working at appropriate levels for their ages in English, mathematics and science. However, in Years 6 and 7, standards in information and communication technology and music are below average. This is because some aspects of the curriculum are not being covered well enough. In physical education, pupils in Year 6 are not reaching expected levels for their age. This is because not enough time is being spent on the subject and, in some cases, teachers' subject knowledge is limited. They are making steady progress in most other subjects and are reaching age appropriate levels.

8. Year 2 pupils are doing well in mathematics and are currently exceeding nationally expected levels. They are reaching appropriate levels in English, science and all other subjects.

9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school. Work in class is usually provided at a suitable level, based on prior attainment, which results in pupils making good progress. Individual education plans, written by teachers in consultation with parents and pupils, are of a good quality and clearly identify exactly what a pupil must do to improve. The targets set for pupils are specific and can be accurately measured to inform teachers, support staff, parents and pupils exactly when they have been met.

10. Although pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress developing their English skills in the nursery and Reception classes, their progress in other parts of the school is slower. This is because teachers are not giving pupils enough opportunities to develop their vocabulary and use it appropriately. Consequently, the standards they reach in English are not as high as it should be. Many do not have an adequate grasp of colloquial English and nuances of meaning and this transfers into their spoken and written work which often lacks interest and excitement.

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

11. The attitudes, relationships and personal development of pupils are very good. Behaviour is generally good. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting, as well as those who replied to the questionnaire, were very pleased with the behaviour and attitudes of their own children as well as of other pupils. Attendance is unsatisfactory which marks a decline since the last inspection. This is because although the school's attendance rates have remained similar during these years, national figures have improved during the same period.

12. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are generally enthusiastic and listen well to their teachers. They concentrate for good periods of time and show a clear enjoyment in their work. Pupils generally behave well in classes, around the school and in the playground. They listen to and follow instructions about behaving safely and responsibly with equipment so as not to harm themselves and others. There were few fixed term exclusions in the last academic year; a total of six, with the number of pupils involved even less. It is clear that the school followed recognised procedures appropriately and exclusions were made only in extreme circumstances. Indeed the school has successfully met the needs of some pupils who have been excluded permanently from other schools.

13. Pupils have opportunities to take on responsibilities, which they do with enthusiasm. Year 6 and 7 pupils can become 'buddies' and as such help younger pupils at play times, especially those who are new or lonely. Older pupils assist with other tasks such as preparing the hall for assemblies. There is a school council, chaired by a Year 7 pupil in which minutes are taken and feedback given to staff. In classes pupils are given a wide range of responsibilities such as returning registers to the office, holding doors when the class moves around the school and generally assisting their teachers.

14. Pupils are friendly with each other and with adults. They are polite and helpful to visitors. Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils were observed playing together across different age, ethnic groups and genders, as for example in mixed boys' and girls' football games. No racist or oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, was observed. Mature approaches to bullying were shown by pupils in discussion. A few pupils spoke favourably about meetings in which the responsible and wronged parties are brought together to resolve matters.

15. Pupils generally understand the impact of their actions on others, listening to the suggestions and comments of others with respect and consideration. Pupils are also able to value the beliefs of others as for example the positive attitudes shown during an assembly on the Chinese New Year.

16. Pupils with special educational needs who have identified emotional and behavioural difficulties are well managed in class and during breaks. They receive good support from teachers, learning support assistants and midday supervisors. The school ensures that they are fully included in the life of the school and that their behaviour is not detrimental to their own learning or to that of their classmates.

17. Attendance is well below the national average and has been for some years. Authorised absences are higher than the national average with too many pupils being removed from school to go on extended family holidays. These extended absences mean that the pupils miss vital aspects of school work. Too many pupils turn up late to school in the mornings. Lessons are disrupted by them arriving late in class and valuable time is lost. Further time is wasted when pupils do not start lessons on time after break and lunchtimes or when returning from assembly or physical education lessons.

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

18. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Of the 92 lessons seen during the inspection, one per cent was excellent, 22 per cent were very good, 32 per cent were good and 40 per cent were satisfactory. Only in five per cent of lessons was the quality of teaching less than satisfactory and these lessons were not in any particular year group or subject. These figures show significant improvement since the school's last inspection in November 1997. Although the quality of teaching then was described as satisfactory overall, 18 per cent of lessons were judged as less than satisfactory and only eight per cent were very good. Teaching in mathematics and religious education were unsatisfactory in 1997 but now mathematics is well taught and religious education teaching is sound.

19. About a quarter of the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 during this inspection were very good and almost a third in Year 7 were very good or excellent. This contrasts with only 16 per cent in Years 3 to 6, where most of the very good lessons were in Years 5 and 6.

20. The quality of teaching in the nursery is consistently very good. In the Reception classes, it is never less than satisfactory and mostly good. Significant strengths include:

- teachers' clear understanding of the needs of young children;
- their in-depth knowledge of national guidance for the curriculum for young children;
- their recognition of the importance of providing an appropriate range of activities;
- the care they take to give children many opportunities to talk and develop their language;
- the high expectations teachers have of these young children;
- the good team spirit that underpins all the work as teachers plan, review and evaluate effectively the achievement and progress of individual children.

21. Very good relationships are established between staff and children; these result in a warm and relaxed atmosphere where children feel safe and confident to try out new activities. Planning is very detailed and staff make very good use of assessment to ensure the work meets the needs of all children.

22. The quality of teaching varies considerably across the rest of the school. In mathematics, including numeracy, it is good and has resulted in improved standards since the last inspection. The subject leader's efforts in monitoring her colleagues' work and in supporting their planning have clearly had a marked impact on improving provision for the children. Lessons are planned using the National Numeracy Strategy framework and this ensures consistency between classes and that lessons are well paced and structured. In a very good lesson in Year 6 for instance, the teacher involved the pupils in a bingo session right at the start which excited them and made them concentrate. She followed this up with a clear explanation about how to find percentages of a whole number; her high expectations of their behaviour and effort ensured that all the pupils were on task and responded well. The pupils' independent work was well planned to make sure that they all received the correct levels of challenge and made very effective progress.

23. In physical education, however, a quarter of the lessons seen were unsatisfactory or poor. Little monitoring of teaching has occurred and consequently weaknesses have not been identified or addressed. The weaknesses stem mainly from teachers' poor subject knowledge resulting in a lack of confidence. Pupils quickly recognise this and their behaviour and their attention to safety procedures fall to unacceptable levels.

24. Teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory in other subjects. English teaching, including literacy, is satisfactory with some good features, including good subject knowledge in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 which enables the teachers to present their lessons imaginatively and enthusiastically. This was characterised in a very effective Year 1 lesson in which the pupils made great strides in their understanding of basic punctuation and spelling. The teacher used the story of 'The Magic Key' to attract the children's interest and maintained this very effectively all the way through the lesson with a series of searching questions to direct their attention to aspects of the text. They began to understand how letters could be joined together to make new sounds like 'sm' and 'st' and then how these sounds could be extended to make words like 'small' and 'still'.

25. The main strengths in the teaching and learning are:

- lesson introductions are clear, learning intentions are shared with the children and this helps them focus their mind on the task in hand;
- pupils respond well to the warm relationships which exist between them and their teachers; as a result they usually try hard and concentrate well;
- teachers use books and equipment well to interest and motivate their pupils;
- they deploy their classroom and learning support assistants well to help those children who learn more slowly.

26. The main weaknesses are in:

- the teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language in Year 1 to 7 classes; teachers have not been shown effective methods for extending children's vocabulary in lessons and most do not provide enough opportunities for them to talk aloud and develop their confidence and fluency; this has a direct impact on the quality of their written work;
- the lack of challenge in a few lessons, particularly for the most able pupils who often find the work too easy; this was noted in science, French, geography and history. In English and mathematics, the work is well organised and met the needs of the more able pupils effectively.

27. Some parents were concerned about the provision of homework and the inspection team looked closely into this aspect, examining pupils' homework books and talking to groups of pupils. Inspectors found that teachers generally adhere to the school's policy but that provision in Years 6 and 7 varies between classes in the amount and content of homework given. Generally the homework set in most classes is relevant and helps pupils to practise what they have learned in lessons.

28. Teachers give good support in class to those pupils who have special educational needs. Work is usually set at an appropriate level to enable pupils to make good progress. Learning support assistants are briefed fully about their role in each lesson. They are often asked to focus on a specific pupil or group of pupils to help maintain good discipline during the part of the lesson when the teacher is directly addressing the class. This they do very successfully so that the teacher can focus on the learning intentions and keep the lesson on track. They also record useful information about such things as attitude, response and attainment of their focus pupils to share with the teacher at the end of the lesson to help plan suitable future work. During individual or group work these assistants also give good support and this has a significant impact on the good progress made by the pupils.

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

29. The school provides a broad and reasonably balanced curriculum. Planning has been improved by the adoption of nationally recommended guidelines. The school uses the framework of the locally Agreed Syllabus successfully to plan the teaching of religious education. Programmes for the delivery of literacy and numeracy closely follow the national strategies and their effective implementation has ensured a positive contribution to raising standards in mathematics. Planning for other subjects is more secure since the previous inspection and an overall curriculum map shows how all subjects are covered within each year group. Despite this there are still some weaknesses in the programme for physical education as not enough time is devoted to the subject. This has led to standards being below those expected for Year 6 pupils. The provision of information technology is restricted by a lack of resources to enable the pupils to cover aspects of control technology and not all aspects of music are covered effectively with pupils in Years 3 to 7.

30. The school has appropriate sex education and drug education policies in place. Personal, social, health and citizenship education are well taught and the school includes French in the Year 4 to 7 curriculum programme. Circle Time makes a positive contribution to personal development and the overall provision helps build positive relationships within and across classes.

31. The school has satisfactory links with local secondary schools and plans to build on the opportunities these provide to enrich the curricular provision for pupils in all years, especially in information communication technology. Links have been made with the local community and the school visits local centres of worship and supports local charities. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and includes sport and music clubs for pupils. These are open to pupils of all abilities and staff and parents demonstrate their commitment to the children by giving up time during lunch breaks and after school to run these activities. A range of educational visits to places of historical and cultural interest throughout the year further enhance the provision. There are a number of school trips directly linked to curriculum topics.

32. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good and, where possible, is linked to the targets in their individual education plans. Such pupils are given full access to the curriculum and receive good quality support from teachers and learning support assistants. Where appropriate, the curriculum is modified to meet the needs of individual pupils. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are encouraged to take a full and active part in the whole curriculum. However, in some cases, not enough care is taken to ensure that the pupils' developing language is fostered effectively.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been strengthened since the last inspection and has had a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to and behaviour in school.

34. Provision for spiritual development is good with many opportunities provided for the development of spiritual awareness within the curriculum and through collective worship. Assemblies are well planned and professionally managed. They are based on themes to promote pupils' personal, spiritual and emotional development. During collective worship pupils are given time to reflect through prayers, stories and themes. During the week of the inspection the theme of friendship was introduced and throughout the week in assemblies and in class pupils thought about how to be a friend and discussed ways they could support each other.

35. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All staff provide good role models for pupils using praise and encouragement well in lessons. They promote good moral values and attitudes and the whole school community is aware of the school rules which are clear and simple. They are displayed in classrooms and along corridors and teachers and staff reinforce good behaviour at all times. There are sound opportunities for pupils to demonstrate initiative and to take responsibility including older pupils helping younger ones. All pupils are expected to behave well and are taught to respect others and to take good care of property and equipment. Pupils are encouraged to distinguish between right and wrong and to respect the feelings of others.

36. Pupils' social development is very good. Older pupils take part in the 'Buddy System' and many pupils have specific duties to perform. The school council provides excellent opportunities for all pupils to be systematically and regularly involved in contributing to the school community. This also provides pupils with a valuable insight into citizenship. Educational visits are made by all classes and residential visits provide pupils with the chance to experience independence. There are many opportunities for them to work collaboratively in such subjects as physical education, music, science and information and communication technology.

37. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There are links with other cultures through the planned curriculum and pupils learn about the way of life and beliefs of other cultures. Visits to places of historic interest contribute to the pupils' cultural development. However more could be done to celebrate the rich cultural diversity of the pupils in the school so that pupils develop a greater awareness of the wide range of cultures and other ethnic minority groups that are represented within the community.

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

38. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. It has good systems to ensure pupils' welfare, health, safety, well-being, support and guidance. These are largely in line with the findings of the last inspection. The weaknesses found in the inspection about parental and staff knowledge over school policies and procedures have been addressed. The school is a safe and secure environment where pupils are well supervised. Systems for monitoring and improving attendance are not yet having a significant impact on improving rates of attendance and punctuality.

39. The school has a detailed health and safety policy laying out the duties and responsibilities of staff and governors as well as outside users of the premises. There are good welfare procedures in place. The school has a welfare room and with three members of staff, there is always someone available there. There are appropriate procedures for dealing with the medical needs of pupils; illnesses and accidents are recorded and reported correctly. Midday supervisors provide good support at lunchtime, some having responsibility for individual pupils on the special needs register.

40. The learning support co-ordinator is the principle child protection officer with the headteacher also being a named officer. This ensures that there is always a named officer present during school time. Full time staff, including new staff, know who to report to when they have any concerns. New staff are trained as part of their induction process and training is also provided termly at the regular staff sessions.

41. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The headteacher takes an active part in this, observing and giving feedback to classes. The behaviour code is good. There are clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and a range of rewards and sanctions are used to reinforce these. The last report expressed concern that the school's behaviour policy was not made sufficiently clear to parents and to new, temporary and non-teaching staff. Since then the school has produced for parents a simple and clear booklet on behaviour and ensured that all staff know and follow the reward and sanction policy. The school tries to use a variety of staged sanctions to avoid exclusions. These include being sent to work in another class, reporting to the headteacher or 'internal exclusions', where the pupil works outside the headteacher's office for a whole day. Pupils with particularly good behaviour are rewarded with visits to the headteacher for praise, gold stars and an entry in the Happy Book which is read out at an assembly every half-term. Good work and behaviour are also recognised at a weekly assembly for each level.

42. Teaching and non-teaching staff know the pupils well. A good example of this was seen when the new Reception class were taken in small groups to familiarise themselves with the building and people. They were welcomed warmly by the administration staff who knew many of the pupils' names and also something about them.

43. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory as they have had limited impact on improving attendance and punctuality. Although records are kept and monitored and there are rewards for pupils who attend regularly, the school is not being proactive enough in working with parents to identify and tackle attendance and punctuality problems. During the inspection, lesson time was also lost by pupils arriving in class late after play, lunch or assemblies. This sets a poor example to other pupils.

44. Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in assessment procedures and these are now satisfactory and are used appropriately. In all classes pupils are given group and individual targets, mainly in English and mathematics. The targets are often displayed on the group's table to act as reminders to pupils. Some older pupils are able to explain what these targets are and what they need to do to achieve them. However, this system is not yet well established in all subjects and similar rigorous systems of assessments in science and some of the foundation subjects are not used thoroughly enough to help pupils review their own progress or to help teachers plan their next targets for pupils' learning.

45. The school uses a range of assessment data to analyse and monitor pupils' overall performance but is not yet monitoring the performance of significant groups of pupils to ensure they are making enough progress. Recently the school has bought a commercial scheme for assessment and is in the process of entering the data to enable the staff to track pupils' progress more effectively as they go through the school.

46. The assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are very good. At the end of the day staff evaluate the effectiveness of the provision, review children's work and plan for future activities. Significant achievements are noted and the activity described to set the context of the work in order to make secure judgements of children's progress over time. Detailed information is collated about children's language development and their knowledge of letter shapes and sounds.

47. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school life and are accurately assessed. They are carefully tracked to monitor their progress and their individual education plans are reviewed regularly. The local authority and the school give good support to the statemented pupils. The school fully meets the statutory requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice.

48. Sound procedures are established for assessing and monitoring the attainment of pupils for whom English is an additional language and the results are recorded in detail. However, these are not used effectively in planning future work and ensuring there is a good match between the provision and pupils' needs.

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

49. Those parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and filled in the questionnaires expressed high levels of support for the school and the education provided to their children. The major area of concern raised by parents was about the implementation of homework, an issue raised by the last inspection. The school provides parents with a useful booklet which explains the homework system. However, it is obvious from pupils' homework books in Years 6 and 7 that expectations of different teachers vary considerably and this is borne out in discussions with pupils themselves.

50. The annual progress reports for parents are satisfactory and describe in some detail what the child can do and their attitudes to learning, especially in English, maths and science. Parents have the opportunity to discuss the report at the end of the summer term and there are further parent meetings in the spring and autumn terms. Parents who do not speak English can get assistance for the meetings from translators from the borough or from members of staff, who, between them, speak a number of different languages.

51. The school runs workshops for parents whose first language is not English, to let them know about what the school is providing for their children. Special information evenings are held for parents if there are new developments in the curriculum.

52. The partnership with parents and carers in the Foundation Stage is very good. The staff's relationship with parents is relaxed, friendly and supportive. When parents deliver and collect their children, they are made very welcome as they exchange information informally with the staff. In the nursery and Reception classes, the induction programme plays a vital part in building an effective communication bridge between home and school.

53. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about their child's progress towards the targets set for them. Parents are always invited to meetings to review the provision for their child and the vast majority attend. Those who are unable to attend meetings are kept informed of the targets set and any other decisions made. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the provision to maximise the progress made by their child. For example, they were invited to a meeting run by the special needs co-ordinator to explain how the new special educational needs code of practice would be implemented and its possible effect on their children. They have also been invited to parents' workshops in numeracy and literacy to help them gain an insight into how best to support their children's learning at home.

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

54. The headteacher provides clear and effective leadership and this is why there has been good improvement in many aspects of the school's work since the last inspection. The leadership and management were criticised severely in the last inspection report but, with the appointment of a new headteacher two years ago, new systems have been implemented to improve pupils' behaviour, to track their progress, extend the roles of subject leaders and to improve the condition of the building. Parents are very appreciative of the work done by the headteacher and say they are pleased with the developments. The reputation of the school in the community has improved substantially over the past two years.

55. The atmosphere of the school is warm and welcoming. The entrance hall for example, is pleasant, comfortable and displays show that children's achievement is valued. The administrative staff present a very positive image of the school in the way they welcome parents and visitors and deal with their enquiries quickly and efficiently. Support staff, including site managers and classroom assistants, show great pride in the school and in their work. The very positive relationships which exist between all staff at the school mean that new children, of whom there are a great many, settle in quickly.

56. The vast majority of the subject leaders carry out a satisfactory role; those leading the Foundation Stage, mathematics, French and religious education provide a strong and effective drive towards improvement. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is co-ordinated well and the good work of classroom assistants means that the needs of these pupils are well met and that they make effective progress. The overall management structure of the school is less well organised however, with too many staff on the senior management team and too many senior staff carrying out low level, administrative duties. They are not as effective as they might be in supporting the headteacher's drive towards improved standards.

57. The governing body is strong and effective. Governors have a clear idea of the school's work, supported by their visits and the reports they receive from the headteacher and subject leaders. They play a clear role in prioritising for and supporting school development. They evaluate the success of their plans annually to see how well funds have been spent. Overall, the school plans appropriately for future improvement, although the plans for the development of many subjects are not linked clearly enough to improving standards. Improvement in provision has not been fast enough in some subjects, for example information and communication technology.

58. The headteacher has introduced a clear programme of monitoring teaching and learning, which includes the work done by most classroom assistants. This is helping to identify strengths

and address weaknesses. Some subject leaders do a good job in monitoring teachers' plans; in English, for example, there is evidence of helpful comments being given to teachers to encourage them to think more carefully about their lessons. In other subjects, for example science, very little monitoring is carried out, resulting in inconsistencies in teaching.

59. Performance management systems are firmly in place and are helping teachers to improve their practice. However, discussions with the headteacher show that targets set for staff are often not geared closely enough to improving standards; the new assessment systems currently being implemented will make target setting for pupils and teachers much easier.

60. Financial systems are secure and ensure that funds are used carefully and for the good of the pupils. The school uses the principles of best value well, consulting pupils and parents about developments, comparing its performance with other schools, considering how it could do things more effectively and ensuring that it gets good value for money when buying major items. During the inspection week, for example, the kitchen was being redecorated by the site managers as this was more cost effective than bringing in a firm of decorators.

61. The school's accommodation is spacious and has a beneficial effect on the children's education. The science laboratory, for example, excites and motivates pupils to work hard; the new nursery extension means that the youngest children are all together and that parents can drop off and collect their children easily. A systematic programme of redecoration and refurbishment of classrooms is having an extremely good effect on the overall learning environment and on the morale of pupils and staff.

62. The school has decided to invest a large proportion of its funds on teachers and support staff. Many classes are small and many have additional adults to help pupils who learn at a slower rate. In the main, these additional staff have a good impact on pupils' achievement; the only exception is the staff responsible for pupils learning English as an additional language. This support is not effective in ensuring that teachers are well versed in providing appropriate experiences for the pupils or in ensuring that those in the early stages of learning English are supported appropriately in class.

63. There are enough books and equipment to support teaching and learning in most subjects. However, there are a few gaps in information and communication technology and music resources which have led to pupils not covering all aspects of these subjects. Subject leaders are responsible for their own budgets and for ensuring that equipment is renewed or extended as necessary. The system works effectively.

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

The school should now:

**(1) Improve the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language so they make better progress in developing their spoken and written skills by:**

- Deploying additional support staff more effectively to meet the needs of pupils;
- Monitoring the quality of the support given by these staff more carefully so that weaknesses can be identified and addressed;
- Training teachers to ensure they are aware of the needs of these pupils and giving them the strategies to help them meet their needs effectively;
- Providing more opportunities in all lessons for pupils to learn new vocabulary and use it in discussion and in their written work;
- Using the results of assessments more effectively to ensure that teachers are providing appropriate experiences for these pupils to develop their language skills;
- Sharing the good practice of teachers in the youngest classes with colleagues further up the school.

(Paragraphs 3, 10, 26, 32, 48, 62, 85, 87-89, 91, 94, 114, 132, 139, 168.)

**(2) Raising standards in Years 6 and 7 in information and communication technology and music and in physical education in Year 6 by:**

- Ensuring there are enough resources and equipment to teach all aspects of both subjects;
- Monitoring teachers' plans and lessons to ensure coverage;
- Devoting more time to physical education in Years 3 to 6.

(Paragraphs 7, 23, 29, 63, 140-144, 151-157, 159-162.)

**(3) Reviewing the management structure of the school to ensure that senior staff are being used effectively and that they have a more direct responsibility to improve standards.**

(Paragraphs 56 and 62)

**(4) Work more closely with parents to improve rates of attendance and punctuality.**

(Paragraphs 11, 17, 43)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	19	30	39	4	1	0
Percentage	1	20	32	41	4	1	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	437
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	94

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	197

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	64
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	95

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	22	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	19	22
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	38	36	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	88 (84)	98 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	17	17	18
	Total	36	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	90 (95)	93 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	42	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	25	35
	Girls	30	26	31
	Total	58	51	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (75)	67 (70)	87 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	29	28
	Girls	29	26	30
	Total	53	55	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (n/a)	72 (n/a)	76 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

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

<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
153	5	1
11	0	0
39	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
7	0	0
25	0	0
62	0	0
12	0	0
5	0	0
10	0	0
14	1	1
32	0	0
15	0	0
6	0	0
16	0	0
2	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	23
Total aggregate hours worked per week	539.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	23

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	1,295,078
Total expenditure	1,241,135
Expenditure per pupil	2,528
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,518
Balance carried forward to next year	53,943



### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13.6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	183
Number of questionnaires returned	153

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	44	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	49	3	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	48	18	1	4
The teaching is good.	54	43	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	46	8	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	25	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	56	39	3	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	41	0	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	37	8	5	12

### Other issues raised by parents

Many parents who attended the meeting praised the work which the school does for children with special educational needs. Some were less satisfied with the provision made for physical education; they said that the school did not devote enough time to teaching the subject.

**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**

64. Children are admitted to the nursery class on a part time basis when they are three and transfer to the two Reception classes twice a year when they are almost five years old. Although there is a wide spread of ability, the great majority of children start with skills that are average for their age. This is confirmed by the initial assessments carried out by staff. A small number of children speak little or no English. Good home links are initiated through home visits and visits to the nursery and Reception classes before children join the school.

65. By the time children start in Year 1, their personal, social and emotional development is above average for their age. They reach expected levels for their age in all other areas of their learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with lessons in the nursery always being very good. Teachers in the nursery and Reception classes understand young children well and work well together to plan an appropriate range of activities to meet their needs. They take great care to give children many opportunities to express themselves and develop their language. They track children's progress carefully to ensure that all are receiving the correct provision to enable them to make effective progress.

66. At the time of the last inspection, children were said to be reaching levels which were higher than those expected for their age by the time they moved into Year 1. Since 1997, there are more children whose first language is not English and who transfer into Reception classes without having been in the nursery. This is why standards are not as high as found previously.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

67. The programme for children's personal, social and emotional development is a major strength of the provision and underpins all aspects of teaching and learning in the three classes. The children are very happy to start school because of the well-planned induction scheme. It is impressive the way nursery children settle speedily into its routines and practices. The importance of care is made explicit through the good examples set by adults in their relationships with each other and their attitudes to children. High standards of behaviour, based on mutual respect and an awareness of the needs and rights of others, are expected and children make good progress in achieving these aims. Relationships are very good and children show a high degree of independence and self-control. They can make considered choices about the resources to select in a variety of situations. In the Reception classes, the children continue to make very good progress in this area of their development. They develop a positive self-image and recognise that each person has something special to offer. Children are able to express a range of feelings through both planned and spontaneous activities. The quality of teaching is very good in this area of learning, resulting in children making very good progress and reaching higher levels than expected for their age.

**Communication, language and literacy**

68. Very good emphasis is given to the development of children's speaking and listening skills. Staff spend considerable time talking with and listening to children talking. Experiences are well planned and boys and girls and children of different backgrounds make good progress because of the attention given to this aspect of learning. Teachers help children to learn new words and express their thoughts clearly when they talk about their experiences with families and friends. Staff plan the small group work well to teach the special terms used in the different areas of learning. Appropriate and meaningful language-rich environments are planned to support and extend the learning of those children who speak English as an additional language. Teachers create lively and genuine contexts for children to enjoy and participate in conversation, asking questions and listening. All children benefit from the staff's sensitive questioning techniques and thoughtful

responses that encourage them to be confident. As a result, children from an early age are confident speakers.

69. Role-play is given a high priority in the nursery and designed to encourage the development of children's speech effectively. In the Reception classes, the role-play areas are less successful because the chosen themes provide fewer opportunities for speaking and listening skills to be extended fully. The role of adults in imaginative play is less clearly defined than in the nursery.

70. The variety and use of books encourage children to browse purposefully and to appreciate their importance. Children make a sound start to reading as they learn about the structure of books and listen with interest to stories and poems. They know that print and pictures convey meaning. The self-registration system encourages children to recognise their first name from an early age.

71. In the Reception classes children recognise a range of familiar words. A systematic approach to teaching letter sounds is introduced and Reception children become excited when they name objects beginning with the sound of the day. They can write their first names using both upper and lower case letters. Writing materials are freely available throughout the sessions and children enjoy experimenting with letters, signs and symbols.

### **Mathematical development**

72. In the nursery, early mathematical experience is developed well through the wide range of carefully planned, well-taught, appropriate activities. In the Reception classes, the more mature children count to 10 and match one object with another or to a numeral. They gain useful mathematical language and skills as they sort and order equipment through the use of puzzles and games. Children are familiar with simple two-dimensional shapes and the more mature recognise and name them. Children sing number songs and rhymes enthusiastically. They can distinguish between big, middle sized and small objects as they investigate displays and equipment. Teaching is good and on occasions very good. Opportunities to extend mathematical vocabulary and understanding are fully exploited and regular practice and consolidation of skills are ensured.

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

73. The nursery provides a stimulating range of exciting activities to develop children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm. This enables them to make good progress. There are opportunities for children to develop their skills of prediction and scientific enquiry as they experiment with sand and water. They gain an understanding of the past when they celebrate birthdays and special events in their lives.

74. The Reception children demonstrate good skills as they build with a variety of construction kits and talk about their observations. They cut, join and glue confidently. Children enjoy using the computer and control the mouse well to operate programs and to move objects on the screen. In one class, children were very interested in a display of Chinese objects and spent time examining their shape and texture. They spoke with interest about the use and design of chopsticks and admired the bright colour and style of a paper lantern. Through the exploration of a variety of materials, the tasting of different foods and the celebration of the special festivals of a number of faiths, children become aware of simple differences and develop a growing awareness of the beliefs and traditions of other people. The high standard of enriching and varied experiences and good teaching enable children to make good progress and achieve well.

### **Creative development**

75. Through art, music, stories and role-play children develop the ability to use their imagination and creativity effectively. They are given many opportunities to explore colour, texture and shape in two and three dimensions. Teachers give children scope to select materials for themselves, time for them to experiment and only intervene at appropriate times to teach specific skills. Children's drawings in the Reception classes are lively and reflect their observations of the

world. They explore colour effectively through a range of appropriate resources and sensory experiences.

76. The development of the outdoor play provision in the nursery is excellent. The three-year-olds suggested the theme of "traffic", staff arranged the equipment according to their instructions and the result is an exciting learning environment where children can explore its features and initiate new developments. They continue to develop in confidence as they try out new ideas, with adults working alongside them, talking to them about their work and introducing appropriate vocabulary. Unfortunately, the Reception class does not have its own secure outdoor play area to develop this type of child-initiated play and development here is slower.

### **Physical development**

77. Children are making steady progress in developing mobility and an awareness of space. They are developing positive attitudes to safety as they use resources around the classrooms. The imaginative nursery outdoor play area is a major factor in enabling children to improve their physical skills. They use wheeled toys confidently, steer accurately and run and climb well. Reception children show increasing control and dexterity in drawing, writing and modelling. Staff challenge children in such a way that they develop skills and improve hand-eye co-ordination, whilst using their initiative and extending their imagination.

### **ENGLISH**

78. Results in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 showed attainment in reading to be above average and average in writing when compared with the national picture. The findings of this inspection are that pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are average and similar to those at the time of the last inspection.

79. The 2002 results for pupils at the end of Year 6 show that standards in English were average when compared with schools nationally. This is not as good as in the last inspection when standards were slightly above average at the end of Year 6. These changes are due to the growing number of pupils who join the school in Years 5 and 6 who have not experienced the school's continuous provision. In addition, the pupils for whom English is an additional language are not receiving well-focused support to ensure they develop their language skills appropriately. Despite these factors, when compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils, standards were above average.

80. The national initiative in literacy has been implemented effectively and provides helpful guidelines to teachers about planning, structure and content of lessons. Improvements in test results have been in line with the national trend over recent years but the school failed to reach its targets in 2002 as they were unrealistic for the particular cohort of pupils. Targets set for this year look more realistic and are likely to be achieved. Girls and boys achieve similar results and this has been the pattern over recent years. It was clear during the inspection that boys were as motivated by literature and as interested in their reading and writing work as girls were. In Year 7, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and their work is average for their age.

81. When pupils enter Year 1, their overall attainment is average. By the end of Year 2 pupils reach standards which are above average for their ages in reading, and their writing skills are average. The school has already identified the need to improve standards in writing throughout the school. Pupils identified with special educational needs receive good support from the learning support assistants in the classrooms and make good progress. However, the provision and support given in the classrooms to those pupils with English as an additional language is not as effective. As a result they make unsatisfactory progress.

82. Speaking and listening skills are average overall and most pupils reach the expected standard by the end of Year 6. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. In one lesson, groups of Year 6 pupils discussed the arguments for and against homework in a mature way and were keen to share their ideas with the whole class. Pupils learn to explain their ideas and

opinions, and the majority speak confidently when answering in class and talking to visitors. Higher attaining pupils speak with assurance and develop ideas competently. However, young pupils with English as an additional language sometimes have difficulty in formulating answers to questions in English and expressing themselves confidently and clearly. Older pupils too sometimes have difficulty in following instructions, especially if this requires, for example, skills such as inference, and this affects their response to tasks which are set.

83. Standards in reading are above average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2. They use their knowledge of letter sounds to tackle unfamiliar words, and read simple texts with good understanding. Most pupils are confident readers by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6 or Year 7. Throughout the school pupils show great enthusiasm for reading. This is due mainly to the comprehensive systems in place to help pupils practise their reading in all the classes. During the inspection, it was evident that the support given by learning support assistants in the classrooms was having a significant impact on pupils' progress. The support given by parents at home also helps to ensure that pupils make effective progress in their reading. By the time they reach the end of Year 6 most pupils read with a sound understanding of the main points. They refer confidently to the text to answer straightforward questions about their reading, but some pupils find it harder to read 'between the lines' or to predict the outcome of a story, especially those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Discussions with pupils about their reading preferences show that they develop a keen interest in many aspects of literature and talk eagerly about their preferences for different authors. Most older pupils have a book "on the go" and read every day. They said they enjoyed "Harry Potter", and were able to describe the characters and plots of the stories.

84. Pupils acquire a sound understanding of features of non-fiction books. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of alphabetical order. They learn to locate information by using the index and contents pages of reference books. By Year 6 many pupils understand how to glance quickly through passages of text to locate key words quickly. Year 7 pupils describe how they use the school library to research information to help them in their history, geography and religious education work. They understand how the library is organised and can quickly find books on a given topic, using the contents and index pages to help them find specific information.

85. At the end of Year 6, standards in writing are below average, and written work often does not reflect pupils' understanding of the curriculum. Year 6 pupils' writing is often constrained by the lack of opportunities to write complex sentences expressing imaginative ideas and using a wide and rich vocabulary. By the end of Year 2 most pupils can sequence their ideas when they write. They produce short passages and use some basic punctuation in their writing, although their vocabulary choices are often quite limited. A few higher-attaining seven-year-olds write lively short stories, employ a variety of punctuation, use paragraphs and begin to vary their sentence structures. By the time they reach Year 6 the higher attaining pupils have an accurate grasp of verb tense, adverbs and pronouns and in their best work the average attainers show a satisfactory grasp of grammar and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language have a limited understanding of punctuation, and make frequent spelling errors.

86. Writing at length and poetry are beginning to have a higher profile throughout the school and this is helping pupils to develop better use of language in their written work. In Year 6 very sensitively written poems show pupils' good spiritual development as well as effective use of rhyme. For example, one child wrote a poem about love which showed a good understanding of this literary form. Pupils practise handwriting in all classes, and many pupils develop neat well-formed writing. However, the overall standard of presentation of written work varies from class to class. It is weak in some classes, but other teachers expect and achieve good standards.

87. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in half of the lessons, and in the other half, teaching was good, including one lesson in Year 1 which was very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 where teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they have a real enthusiasm for language. In the good lessons observed, teachers use praise very effectively to encourage pupils and to give them

confidence. Relationships during lessons are consistently good. Teachers always tell the pupils the purpose of the lesson at the outset and this means that the pupils are clear about what is expected of them and are able to gauge their own progress. Pupils know that their ideas and efforts will be valued and are willing to try. Teachers are particularly good at explaining work and presentations of lessons are often interesting. Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils and they provide many opportunities for pupils to discuss various topics in pairs, small groups or within class discussions. Pupils who are less confident then have the models to help them and they gain good experience of talking in front of a larger audience. All pupils have targets in reading and writing, and they know what these are, referring to them as they work. Effective sessions at the end of lessons recap on the outcomes and pupils know how well they have done.

88. In the otherwise satisfactory lessons there was less emphasis on the use of appropriate, new vocabulary and terms linked to the learning objectives. In all classes learning support staff are effective in working with groups which include pupils with special educational needs and give good support so that they make progress similar to that of their peers. However, pupils with English as an additional language are less well supported with help too often limited to correcting spelling mistakes, rather than helping pupils to extend the range of their existing language and vocabulary skills.

89. The management of English is satisfactory. The information gathered from monitoring of teaching and learning, and from an analysis of tests and assessments, is being used effectively to identify areas for improvement. Teachers' marking also provides very good comments to pupils that give them a good indication of their success and the things they must do to make their work better.

90. The school has begun to focus closely on improving standards in writing throughout the school, but as yet teachers' lesson plans do not indicate specific vocabulary to be taught during lessons or ensure that the pupils have plenty of opportunities to use these new words. There is a lack of clarity about what pupils still need to achieve in order to move through one level and on to the next. There is scope here too for a review of the 'ten minute writing time' to ensure that older pupils are provided with a more challenging and focused structure in the content and range of work they undertake during this time. Good use is made of information technology during literacy periods, and this is an aspect which has been carefully developed across the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

91. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards above the national average in numeracy and other areas of mathematics. The national test results in 2002 showed that attainment was well above the national average with nearly half the pupils reaching the higher than expected level. Inspection evidence suggests that pupils currently in Year 2 will also reach standards above those found both nationally and in similar schools. Test results since 2000 have shown standards to be consistently above those expected nationally as the school has successfully kept ahead of the upward national trend. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the predominantly good teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 are having a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils of all abilities.

92. Standards attained by Year 6 pupils in the 2002 tests were similar to those found nationally despite a higher than average number of pupils reaching the level above that expected for their age. However, nearly a third of pupils failed to reach the expected level and this pulled down standards overall. From the evidence of the work seen during the inspection in Year 6 pupils' books and in lessons, it is clear that standards this year continue to be at least satisfactory with a higher percentage of pupils than last year likely to achieve the level expected of them and a third likely to exceed it. The setting of pupils in three ability groups in Year 6, the successful implementation of the numeracy strategy and the good teaching seen during the inspection are proving to be instrumental in raising standards for pupils of all abilities.

93. Pupils in Year 7 are also taught well in ability groups and are making steady progress. By the time they leave the school they are in line to meet the standards expected for their age.

94. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them as they move through the school. This is due to the good support they receive in class from their teachers and learning support assistants and the careful planning which takes the needs of all pupils into account. Those pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress, as there is a consistent emphasis on teaching the correct mathematical vocabulary in lessons. However, this good practice is not often found in other subjects.
95. At the end of Year 2, pupils understand the language of number, have a good knowledge of place value to at least a hundred and can quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to twenty. More able pupils are confident in handling numbers to a thousand and are able to put a set of numbers in the correct order. Pupils know the names, and some of the properties, such as the number of sides and corners, of two and three-dimensional shapes. They solve shopping problems to a pound and tell the time in hours and half and quarter hours. They recognise fractions such a half and a quarter in practical situations.
96. By the end of Year 6, pupils have progressed to having a good understanding of place value, including numbers with two or more decimal places and more able pupils are confidently working with numbers to over a million. Pupils accurately add, subtract, multiply and divide two and three digit numbers with the majority able to work to two decimal places. They find the perimeter of simple and composite shapes and then the area using the correct formula. Graphs are accurately drawn and pupils are able to interpret them, giving clear reasons for the conclusions they draw. Higher ability pupils use all four quadrants when plotting coordinates and have a good understanding of data handling, using terms such as mean, median and range correctly.
97. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7 they have improved their knowledge and understanding of mathematics even further and work to a greater degree of accuracy. For example, in work on shape they draw angles to the nearest degree and have a good understanding of how to construct triangles given minimal information. Although pupils reinforce their work by using suitable programs on the class based computers they rarely use the computer suite to learn new skills in planned lessons. This is an area recognised by the school for further development.
98. The quality of teaching is good overall with some teaching being very good and no teaching being unsatisfactory. Good quality teaching is having a positive effect on the pupils' learning. Planning is good throughout the school and is firmly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers plan lessons with due regard to the prior attainment of their pupils and the content is carefully designed to meet their specific needs. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson the pupils were learning to calculate percentages of given amounts. The teacher used their previous knowledge of fractions and decimals to help them understand exactly what a percentage is. This lesson then moved them on seamlessly to the next level of understanding.
99. Lesson objectives are always shared with pupils at the start of each lesson to help them focus on what they are expected to learn and know when this has been achieved. Most lessons start at a brisk pace with pupils involved in oral and mental work. The use of individual number fans or whiteboards during this part of the lesson is very effective as it enables teachers to assess the level of understanding of all the pupils and adjust the difficulty of the work accordingly. Teachers have good class management skills and create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate and learn effectively. Pupils respond well to this and behaviour in lessons is usually good with pupils eager to learn and enthusiastic about the work provided for them. This was clearly seen in a good Year 1 lesson about three-dimensional shapes. The teacher's enthusiasm was infectious and the pupils worked extremely hard to complete the tasks successfully. Good relationships are a strong feature with pupils being attentive to their teachers and able to work well together. Suitable homework is set regularly and is completed successfully by the vast majority of pupils.
100. The management of the subject is good and has a positive impact on learning. The co-ordinator monitors the teaching, planning and standards carefully and gives colleagues good support and guidance to make them even more effective in their work. Analyses of national tests

are used well to identify areas of mathematics that require further input to raise standards. For example, properties of shapes and problem solving were highlighted as aspects the pupils were finding difficult and the school has worked hard to help pupils tackle these more successfully. The monitoring of individual pupils and specific groups of pupils to ensure their progress is at least satisfactory is less well developed.

101. There has been a very good improvement in the provision since the last inspection. In particular, the quality of teaching has been improved considerably. At the last inspection half the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory or poor and now all teaching is at least satisfactory with nearly two-thirds good or better. Planning has improved and also the development of pupils' skills in using and applying their knowledge. Pupils' skills in oral and mental calculations are much better as a result of teachers following the lesson structure of the numeracy strategy. The school, however, is not complacent and has identified this aspect of learning as one for even more improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

102. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, they are at expected levels for their age. Similarly, when pupils are in Years 2 and 6, their science work is in line with what is expected for their age. This confirms the standards achieved last year by pupils in Year 6 in the national tests and also those in Year 2 who were assessed by teachers. Teachers had underestimated the potential of some Year 6 pupils before the tests, assessing them as not having met the nationally expected level. However, a good number of pupils in both year groups exceeded levels expected for their age.

103. The standards achieved at the end of Year 2 have remained steady in science since the last inspection but pupils in Year 6 now reach higher standards than before. Pupils in Year 7 are also working at higher levels than those seen at the last inspection. At the last inspection, standards in Years 6 and 7 were said to be below average. The rise in standards is due to better quality teaching in these particular year groups.

104. Pupils throughout the school have keen and enquiring minds and have well-developed skills in investigation and experimental science. Pupils are taught from an early age to ask questions and find things out for themselves. This is obvious in many lessons where teachers involve pupils practically in investigations. For example, in Year 1, pupils begin to understand the power of their senses when they identify recordings of one another's voices; they realise the importance of their sight when they carry out the same activity blindfolded. In Year 2 the pupils grow different types of seed and observe the roots, stems and leaves. Some pupils are able to say what the roots are for and can describe the different conditions necessary to grow a healthy plant. Many can place different fruits and vegetables into different categories, saying for example that celery is a stalk and a carrot is a root. They are learning how to record their findings in a variety of different ways, by drawing, making diagrams or by simple written descriptions.

105. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are well versed in carrying out experiments, recording their results and drawing conclusions. They use their knowledge and understanding of electricity well to construct a buzzer for a game show or a clown's spinning bow tie. They know that they have to include a mechanism which will complete the circuit. Pupils approach their work eagerly because of the interest and excitement generated by their teachers but they are always very well-behaved and show mature and sensible attitudes to their work. They choose their materials carefully and work together successfully, showing very good relationships and respect for one another's ideas.

106. Pupils in Year 7 work enthusiastically in the laboratory, testing a range of indigestion remedies to see which is more likely to be effective. They use indicator papers successfully and understand why an alkali needs to be used to combat an excess of stomach acid.

107. Work in pupils' books throughout the school shows that they cover the full range of topics required by the National Curriculum and that their work is recorded carefully and with due regard for scientific method. In a few lower junior classes however, much of the work is copied and shows all pupils doing the same; this restricts pupils' opportunities to write their own responses, practise their

literacy skills and make the learning firm in their minds. In a few classes too many worksheets are used which has the same effect.

108. The vast majority of the teaching is at least satisfactory and some is good. Most teachers clearly enjoy the subject and their knowledge is secure. This helps them present their lessons and explain different points very clearly to the pupils. They use the good range of equipment well to interest and motivate the pupils and help the pupils understand the lessons more easily. The science laboratory is used by Year 6 and 7 pupils who respond well to a more formal environment. Teachers manage their pupils very well, even when the subject excites them. They teach the children the value of working together and of listening to one another. There are opportunities missed however, to focus on developing pupils' language skills, for example by identifying key vocabulary and displaying it prominently so that pupils can use the new words in their discussions and written work. This hinders the progress of those pupils with English as an additional language. In a few cases the pace of lessons is slow and the more able pupils are held back by the teacher insisting that all work at the same speed.

109. Assessment systems are in place and enable pupils' progress to be tracked systematically. However, the results of these are not used well enough to plan suitable work for the most able pupils so that they can make faster progress. Teachers' plans and pupils' work is not monitored regularly or systematically enough to identify and address any weaknesses. The results of annual tests are not analysed to see where the teaching could improve pupils' achievements. Action planning is not linked closely enough to improving standards. Consequently standards are dependent upon the quality of teaching received by individual classes and not on a systematic drive towards further improvement.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

110. The attainment of pupils by the end of Year 2 and 6 is similar to those expected for pupils nationally. Pupils in Year 7 are likely to meet expectations at the end of Key Stage 3. This is similar to the last inspection's findings although there have been significant improvements in the pupils' understanding and ability to work with different media and explore ideas such as line, texture and form. Lesson observations, evidence from pupils' work in displays and scrutiny of the teachers' planning, demonstrate that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are making satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

111. Pupils' work shows increasing confidence in handling equipment and in using different media. They generate some interesting ideas and think carefully about what could be included in products they make. Pupils show satisfactory skills in drawing, painting and colouring. They show a growing awareness of colour, texture, shape and size. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson talked enthusiastically about the work of William Morris. They identified the type of patterns favoured by the artist and described proudly how they had first practised sketching on small sheets of paper and then used magnifiers to examine details before enlarging their small sketch onto a larger sheet of paper.

112. Much of the pupils' work is attractive and is used to help them illustrate work in other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils used ink drawings in the style of the Japanese artist, Hokusai, to learn about the influence of Japanese art on the Victorians. Year 5 pupils have used a range of techniques and media, including pastels, collage and paint to create some impressive Tudor portraits to link their art work with their studies in history. Many of the children show growing confidence when choosing the tools, materials and techniques to use. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils studied various types of chairs, sketching them from different angles and then worked in groups to design and make some very imaginative chairs, using a wide variety of ideas and materials. In this task they demonstrated satisfactory sketching, designing, cutting and joining skills, although some of their work lacked precision. Emphasis is rightly given to being aware of the purpose for which a product is made and many pupils are beginning to think about the results of their work in terms of how improvements could be made. However, pupils' efforts to record the way they have designed and made products and their evaluation of the outcomes are not yet fully developed.

113. Art work in the school shows that pupils are being given a clear understanding of art skills and an appreciation of the work of famous artists. Pupils have no difficulty in describing the various techniques they use in appropriate detail, for example, how to use different collage materials to produce a desired effect, and how they apply painting techniques they have learned in their own work. A very positive development is that from the earliest years, pupils are being encouraged to draw or paint something they are looking at rather than from memory. Close observational drawing work is now developing well, especially in younger classes.

114. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons, tasks build effectively on pupils' previous experiences and this helps to challenge their creative thinking successfully. There are clear explanations of what is to be done and resources are organised well. These enable pupils to feel confident and have a positive impact on their progress. Appropriate opportunities are provided for them to make their own choices about materials and equipment to use and this helps build their sense of responsibility. They are sometimes rather noisy, but they have good attitudes towards their work and behave well when working individually and in pairs or groups. They concentrate hard and try to do their best.

115. Teachers usually set out the learning objectives at the start of the lesson and ensure that pupils understand their task. Suggestions and support are given individually so that more hesitant pupils feel reassured that their efforts are valued. Teachers give positive feedback to all pupils during the lesson. Their supportive and encouraging remarks are a strength of the teaching in all classes observed. As a result, pupils return to their work eager to improve on it, and then are keen to talk about it to their friends and visitors.

116. The school now has a good programme for art that is interesting and ensures pupils from year to year have a broad range of experiences to develop better skills. Close links are made with design and technology. Computers are used effectively to generate creative designs based on the style of Klint and the designs of William Morris are used effectively to stimulate symmetrical pattern making in Year 5. In addition, high quality work is displayed around the school to support work in many other subjects as in the delicate painting of a water lily and a turtle shell, representing patterns in nature.

117. The co-ordinators are very keen to develop the subject further. They have started to put together examples of the different art activities pupils will do within the programme, so that teachers know what should be expected from pupils in art lessons. They are aware of the need to give practical advice to staff when they plan each art activity to ensure they understand the techniques involved and therefore can help pupils learn new, and improve previously acquired, skills. Assessment of art is at an early stage of development. At present it is carried out by class teachers and then summarised for the end of year reports to parents. This is a good start, which can be built on to help raise standards of achievement in the subject even further.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

118. Standards in design and technology are as expected for pupils at the end of Years 2, 6 and 7. From the four lessons seen and by looking at teachers' planning, examples of finished work, pupils' design sheets and photographic evidence it is clear that the subject is taught regularly to an acceptable standard. Pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in the provision as all pupils are now using a similar design sheet, suitably modified for the different age groups, to plan and evaluate their work. This has resulted in the older pupils in Years 6 and 7 having much improved design skills and a deeper understanding of the whole design process.

119. Pupils follow the correct procedures of designing, making, refining and evaluating in every piece of work they undertake. As pupils move through the school they improve their skills in designing and making by following a useful scheme of work. For example, pupils in Year 2 learn basic cutting and joining skills when using cloth to make hand puppets, then in Year 4 they improve their skills further by using a greater range of materials to make money containers. In Year 6 more

detailed and thoughtful designs and more advanced techniques in making are evident in the slippers they produce.

120. Food technology in the well-equipped food technology room is a strength of the provision. In Year 3 pupils make sandwiches for a specific occasion such as a picnic or a party after carefully considering the type of bread and the filling. Pupils in Year 5 progress to making bread to a standard recipe and then design and bake bread with ingredients of their own choice. This is further developed in Year 7 where pupils design and make snacks and pizzas for a party. Year 7 pupils also confidently use a range of materials to make a board game in a box. They work with more resilient materials and cut and join them using tools successfully. Pupils throughout the school look at and evaluate commercial products before designing and making their own. They also evaluate, often quite critically, their own finished products and suggest possible improvements they could make. The use of construction kits and control technology to operate models is an area the school has appropriately identified as in need of further development.

121. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory with some teaching good or better. Teachers have good class management skills and this is an important factor in ensuring that pupils work safely in lessons. Lessons are planned according to the scheme of work and teachers often make the lessons more interesting by providing a good range of resources to fire the pupils' imaginations. This was clearly seen in a very good Year 1 lesson about moving pictures. The pupils were making levers from card to operate a flying dolphin or a boat and the teacher had made available all sorts of attractive paper for the pupils to choose from when making the sea for their pictures. The finished products were professional and the pupils were very proud of their efforts. Very few assessments are made of pupils' work to record their levels of attainment. The good quality design sheets used throughout the school are not always kept to show the progress of individual pupils and to monitor standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

122. Standards in geography are as expected for pupils in Years 2, 6 and 7. Good progress has been made in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection. A new scheme of work that makes use of national guidance ensures that all pupils are now taught the full programme of study.

123. In Year 1, pupils are becoming increasingly aware of their locality. They have used their experience of a walk around the school locality to record their findings on a simple map and to record the position of street signs. They can identify and describe accurately physical and human features of the immediate vicinity. Geographical skills are being developed within an appropriate context of enquiry. In Year 2, pupils' previous fieldwork investigations are extended effectively when they study a Scottish island. Pupils ask relevant geographical questions concerning life on the island and modes of travel. They attain satisfactory standards in mapping skills and acquire appropriate geographical vocabulary.

124. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are developing a good understanding that different places may contain different or similar characteristics. In Year 4, they recognise the difference that climatic conditions have on the agriculture and people's life styles as they compare two locations; a village in India and their home in London. Year 7, pupils are well versed in using different techniques to collect information and statistical data when studying a particular location or geographical theme. Elements of enquiry and analysis of information are features of all their work. The bi-annual Year 6 and 7 visit to France enhances pupils' understanding of a country's physical features, resources and heritage. Many pupils build successfully on this first hand experience for the work they address in Year 7.

125. Pupils listen attentively during discussion times and show an interest in their work. They co-operate well in groups as they share ideas and resources responsibly. They follow instructions carefully and often concentrate for long periods of time.

126. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. Some teachers motivate pupils well, make good use of interesting resources, and emphasise the use of correct geographical terms. Teachers' expectations are reasonably high but are not always reflected in the tasks they set pupils, which seldom challenge the most able or provide opportunities for pupils to talk about their work. This often restricts those children learning English as an additional language to extend their vocabulary and develop confidence and fluency.

127. The national guidance supporting the school policy ensures progression within each year group and continuity across the key stages. The quality of the scheme impacts positively on teachers' planning, ensuring a satisfactory standard of attainment for all pupils. The geography curriculum at present is not enriched by many visits to relevant places of interest to illustrate what they are learning in school. The scheme helps to identify assessment opportunities although these are not implemented yet.

## **HISTORY**

128. Standards in history are as expected at the end of Years 2, 6 and 7. They are similar to those found in the majority of schools nationally. This is a similar judgement to that made in the last inspection in 1997.

129. The use of a variety of sources of evidence in pupils' research, both primary and secondary, is an aspect of history that has significantly improved since the last inspection. Research skills are systematically developed as pupils move through the school and by the time they leave at the end of Year 7 they are well equipped to find out information, collate their findings and present their work independently. Some good quality displays of pupils' work and well-planned visits help to raise the profile of the subject.

130. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a growing understanding of events in the past such as the Great Fire of London in 1666 and famous people like Florence Nightingale who made changes to the lives of others in Victorian times. They understand that Samuel Pepys wrote a diary in code that included an account of the Great Fire and know that the diary can be used as evidence to find out about the event.

131. In Year 3 pupils know about various invaders of Britain and how they lived. They understand that place names are good evidence to show where these invaders settled and to map the extent of their influence. Year 4 pupils know about the Ancient Egyptian civilisation and produce their own interesting fact files from their independent research using books, artefacts and the Internet for their research. Literacy skills are fostered by pupils writing newspaper stories in journalistic styles about the death of the boy king Tutankhamun. Pupils in Year 5 study the Tudors in depth and are able to identify differences in the lives of rich and poor people in areas such as their education, occupations and their clothes. They have a good knowledge of the life and times of Henry VIII, including some insight into the reasons for his many marriages. By the end of Year 6 pupils have completed a detailed study of the Victorian era. As well as the life of the Queen and her family, pupils research the lives of less fortunate people and know about the terrible conditions found in slums and the workhouses. They also study the lives of famous Victorians such as Darwin, Brunel, Barnardo and Dickens to assess the impact they had on society.

132. Mediaeval realms, including the feudal system, life in towns, crime and punishment, the Black Death and other main events of the period are the focus in Year 7. Pupils learn about these effectively through reading texts from the period, visiting France to see the Bayeux Tapestry and studying Chaucer's Canterbury Tales in literacy lessons. They compare life in those times with the present day and understand how attitudes to life and death change over time.

133. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory with some good and very good teaching seen. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and with an emphasis on the pupils' learning to be historians rather than just soaking up facts. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson the pupils were working in groups on an archaeological 'dig' in a tray of sand to uncover the parts of a drawing of an artefact from Tudor times. The concentration was intense as they found the various

parts and with mounting excitement fitted them together to make the completed picture (a herbal room fumigator). As each piece of the jigsaw was carefully removed they plotted where it had been found and made an educated guess as to what it might be. This approach serves to make the work more interesting as well as challenging for the pupils. They respond well to this approach and work hard in lessons to produce good quality work. Occasionally lessons lack interest or challenge and pupils are given tasks that do little to improve either their knowledge or their skills. For instance, lessons that involve colouring in pictures or copying text do not make pupils enthusiastic about the subject or encourage them to be independent learners. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are well supported in class by their teachers and learning support assistants. However, those pupils for whom English is an additional language are often hindered in their development and use of language because of the lack of opportunities for group discussion.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

134. The previous inspection indicated that standards and pupil attainment in information and communication technology were below those expected nationally. Since the last inspection standards at the end of Year 2 have improved and are now in line with those found nationally. For the older pupils in the school, standards are not yet in line with those found nationally. There has been some improvement in facilities and the amount of time devoted to the subject but these have not been in place long enough to make sure the pupils are reaching appropriate levels for their ages.

135. Pupils demonstrate a wide range of skills which they are beginning to apply in other subjects. For example, Year 7 have used skills to research items for projects and have successfully downloaded information from the Internet and incorporated graphics and images into project work. In Year 6 pupils enter data and use information well to produce charts and graphs. They can download information to support their work in history and geography and can manipulate the turtle to draw shapes.

136. By the end of Year 2 pupils have developed word processing skills to include cutting, pasting and saving in their personal folder as well as correcting and editing using the spell check. Most pupils can change font styles, colours and sizes for appropriate effect and pupils of all ages can access the Internet. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are confident and accurate about the use of databases and in Year 7 are confident in the use of multimedia programs. Limited opportunities exist for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and in Year 7 to use control technology and this is an area for development.

137. The overall quality of teaching was mostly satisfactory and sometimes good. In the best lessons teachers support their pupils well by moving around, asking searching questions which help the pupils to move on in their learning. However, in a few lessons, teachers leave the pupils to work alone for long periods of time, without any direct intervention to help them move forward. Pupils throughout the school work well together; they co-operate when making decisions and really enjoy their lessons. Equipment is treated well and routines to log on, save and retrieve work are carried out smoothly and efficiently.

138. Since the previous inspection the installation of the new computer suite and the connection to the Internet have been beneficial. These improved resources together with specific skills lessons are beginning to impact on standards of attainment. Procedures for assessment are at an early stage of development. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are successfully included in lessons and they make satisfactory progress.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

139. Pupils are taught French from Years 4 to 7. During the inspection, lessons were observed in Years 6 and 7 and pupils' work in other years was sampled. Based on this evidence, the standards achieved by the oldest pupils in the school are in line with those expected nationally for their age. Pupils are learning how to greet each other in French and to ask simple questions. They

know the French words for colours, classroom objects, parts of the body and some countries in Europe. They can also count and use days of the week and months to talk about birthdays, their age and the weather.

140. Overall, pupils are better at speaking French than reading and writing the language. Few opportunities are provided in class for pupils to read aloud. In writing, many inaccuracies were noted when copying and there were few examples of pupils making up their own sentences using known vocabulary and structures. In general, the strengths and weaknesses of the subject are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection.

141. Those pupils who have experienced continuous teaching of French since Year 4 are making steady progress in the language. A new course has recently been introduced for Years 6 and 7 which is preparing pupils well for continued language study in secondary school. When the new programme connects with that already established on Years 4 and 5, the rate of pupils' progress should be more substantial. In all classes seen, pupils clearly enjoy learning French and are willing to participate well in the lessons. Behaviour is good.

142. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features. Where teachers display confidence in using the language themselves and have good pronunciation, pupils learn effectively by repeating words and phrases after the teacher and each other. This reinforces good speaking habits and enables everyone to say something in French each lesson. The best lessons also involve a good range of interesting activities, such as games, which allow the language to be practised in different ways. These help the pupils to enjoy the lessons even more.

143. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to hear a greater variety of language in the classroom, for example, when giving instructions to pupils, listening to native speakers on tape or watching French television. There are also too many lessons where opportunities are missed to let pupils make use of the language themselves, for example, by making up their own questions or calling out the winning numbers in a bingo game. Having only one hour lesson a week means that some pupils find it difficult to remember what they have learned before and pick up from where they left off.

144. The subject is led with enthusiasm and vigour. Some good efforts are made to link French teaching with other subjects such as geography and history through the content of lessons and trips to France for older pupils. Whilst suitable records of pupils' attainment are passed on to high schools at the end of Year 7, teaching and learning are not monitored carefully enough to check that the programme is being covered and that pupils capable of high attainment are sufficiently challenged.

## **MUSIC**

145. Pupils enjoy music and singing and by the end of Year 2 they achieve the standards expected for their age. Standards in this part of the school are the same as at the last inspection. For the oldest pupils and those aged 11, on the evidence provided, standards are just below the national average. Standards in Year 2 remain the same as at the previous inspection but standards in Year 6 have fallen. This is because pupils do not explore in sufficient depth aspects of composition or make use of music technology.

146. Older pupils sing tunefully and some are able to sing in two parts. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to appreciate music both in lessons and in assembly. Music has been incorporated into the life of the school and is making a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, so that it actively supports the promotion of self esteem and agreed school values.

147. By the end of Year 2 pupils sing confidently, in tune and with enthusiasm, they are able to add accompaniments to simple songs using a variety of simple percussion instruments. Pupils have positive attitudes to music; they work well in groups, performing with confidence and enthusiasm.

148. By the end of Year 6 and including those in Year 7, pupils sing well both in lessons and in assemblies. Planning ensures activities are varied and pupils are given opportunities to use their musical knowledge and understanding of rhythm and pitch in whole-school productions. The music curriculum is planned to ensure coverage of National Curriculum expectations but the lack of technology resources has hindered development in composition. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are successfully included in music activities and they reach standards similar to their classmates.

149. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In all lessons teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and teachers work hard to make activities interesting and fun. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. A new scheme has been recently introduced but is not yet being used consistently across the school, with teachers' planning not yet providing effective challenges for higher attaining pupils. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinators are capable musicians with a clear understanding of the issues which must be addressed to further raise attainment. They are keen to develop the profile of music, and they have improved resources and are providing effective support for the subject.

150. The music curriculum is enriched by a number of extra-curricular activities including choir and recorder club. The school benefits from the work of qualified musicians who teach instrumental lessons and assist in assemblies. Pupils perform in concerts and this contributes well to their social development. Pupils have the opportunity to learn musical instruments, taking small-group lessons on string, woodwind, brass, recorder and guitar. Procedures for assessment are at an early stage of development. Recent initiatives and good management have not yet had time to impact on standards.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

151. Only gymnastics and games lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence gathered indicates that standards for pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 7 are broadly in line with national expectations. However, by the end of Year 6, standards are below national expectations, although the majority of Year 6 pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres. This reflects similar standards to those in the last inspection where they were described as 'variable'. This variation in standards is due partly to staffing changes and also to the number of pupils who join the school during Years 3 to 7. A number of pupils from Year 5 onwards benefit greatly from a range of learning opportunities outside lessons. These provide good opportunities to develop their games skills through group coaching and in competition with other schools.

152. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand the need for a correct warm-up at the start of each lesson. They know that exercise is beneficial to their health and that it raises the heart rate and breathing. In gymnastics they use space sensibly to avoid collisions and are able to hold their balance before travelling on the apparatus to a new position and balancing again. In games they learn to throw and catch the ball, working well with a partner as they develop their skills. Pupils in Year 7 are able to throw and catch the ball swiftly and accurately when practising netball skills. They learn about the importance of good teamwork and make rapid gains in their skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make the same steady progress as their classmates as they move through the school.

153. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and, in most classes, their attitude to learning is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are appropriately dressed and work well in pairs or in groups. They evaluate their own and each other's work with good judgement, focusing on the skills being practised and on the learning objectives. In these lessons children use the teachers' feedback well and improve their performance with sustained effort and practice. They show sound progress, with most children at least able to perform the actions correctly, if not with fluency. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' attitudes to the subject vary considerably. In the unsatisfactory lessons seen in Years 3 and 5, the pupils' poor behaviour and lack of concentration meant that they had insufficient time to develop and improve their skills and so they made very little progress. In contrast, however, in a Year 6 lesson, the pupils' behaviour was very good and they made very good progress in developing their hockey skills.

154. The quality of teaching varies greatly across the school owing to some teachers' limited subject knowledge and the lack of a school policy which sets out expectations of behaviour and standards of attainment as pupils move through the school. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory, but with some unsatisfactory teaching in Years 3 and 5. A significant factor, which depresses standards in Years 3 to 6, is the lack of sufficient time allocated to the subject. This means that pupils are provided with too few regular lessons in which to improve and develop their physical education skills to their full potential.

155. On the very few occasions when teaching is good, this is because lessons are carefully planned and learning aims are shared with the pupils. Teachers take particular care to ensure pupils are warmed up before exercise, and can recognise the changes that this does to their bodies. In two classes, effective moving routines were used for this, to be followed by a series of stretches. In these lessons, there is strong emphasis on correct techniques and on safety when handling equipment such as benches and mats. There is a good pace of work and very good use of praise to reinforce learning and safety. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and put a great deal of effort into their work. They make very good progress in these lessons owing to the high quality of teaching. In the unsatisfactory lessons the reverse is the case. Not all teachers fully address all health and safety aspects.

156. In the most effective lessons, teachers show a good knowledge of how to coach pupils and develop their skills progressively. This was seen in a lesson in Year 1 where the teacher's good knowledge of the subject enabled her to demonstrate the required skill so that pupils could copy her. Not all teachers are secure in their understanding of different aspects of the subject, however, and this inhibits their direct teaching of skills and their expectations of what the pupils can achieve.

157. The new curriculum leader is enthusiastic and has recently carried out an audit of the school's resources for the subject, to ensure that there is enough equipment to teach the various aspects. She is attending a nationally sponsored sports scheme in order to review the present practice in the school and provide better opportunities for pupils in games, gymnastics and dance. Assessment of pupils' ongoing skills is underdeveloped, although there are plans to develop a simple record of pupils' progress as they move through the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

158. As at the last inspection, pupils throughout the school reach standards in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus with instances of higher attainment in some classes. Pupils make steady progress in the subject as they move through the school. They remember previous lessons well, making good links between religious education and other subjects.

159. By the time they are seven, pupils have started to develop a basic understanding of Christianity and Judaism. They compare festivals of light in different faiths and think carefully about what they mean to different people. By the time they are 11, pupils understand the meaning of worship and its significance in Christianity. They study the importance of the Qur'an to followers of the Islamic faith and the practices associated with its use. Their ability to reflect upon their own experiences and those of others is developing well.

160. By Year 7, pupils discuss in a mature fashion the values and beliefs of different faith communities. They demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose behind learning about religious education. These pupils have a growing insight into their own learning. When discussing the concept of justice they show considerable empathy as they consider the experiences of victims of injustice at different times in history. This work is particularly poignant because of the experiences of the local community during the Holocaust.

161. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are consistently good or very good. They enjoy their work, show an enthusiastic interest in the subject, and sustain concentration well. Pupils listen well to teachers and to each other. They recognise that different points of view should be

listened to and they respect the beliefs of others. The consideration of moral and social issues always plays an important part in religious education lessons.

162. The quality of teaching is generally good and on occasions very good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and make good use of their diverse religious knowledge and experience. They value pupils' contributions, acknowledging the limitations of their own knowledge about other faiths. Lessons for older pupils take advantage of work covered in earlier years, especially Bible stories. Teachers' lesson plans are clear with objectives drawn directly from the schemes used. The structure of the majority of the lessons and the challenge and appropriateness of the resources ensure that all work hard and are keen to take part in the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are well planned for; they receive appropriate support and make sound progress. However, the planning for pupils for whom English is an additional language is more limited and they do not always have enough opportunities to develop and use new vocabulary.

163. Religious education plays a valuable part in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The teaching in a non-confessional way gives pupils good opportunities to increase their knowledge of beliefs and other cultures and to reflect on right and wrong behaviour. The themes of the assemblies support the religious education curriculum well.

164. The management and subject leadership are good. The revised scheme of work incorporating national guidance and the locally Agreed Syllabus provides comprehensive guidance for teachers. Teachers are planning a good balance between giving pupils factual knowledge and seeking to develop their understanding and response to such concepts as loyalty and kindness. As a consequence, pupils are knowledgeable about world faiths and older pupils can consider how faith is demonstrated in different ways in people's lives. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of teaching and learning and offers appropriate support and advice.