

INSPECTION REPORT

ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reading

LEA area: Reading

Unique reference number: 109776

Headteacher: Mrs M Paterson

Reporting inspector: Mr A C Jolly
8750

Dates of inspection: 18-21 November 2002

Inspection number: 246933

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	148 Wokingham Road Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG6 1JR
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Tyndall
Date of previous inspection:	February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Inspector			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8750	Mr A C Jolly	Registered inspector	English English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19491	Mr R Jones	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22489	Mr I Barker	Team inspector	Special educational needs Information and communication technology Design and technology	
16249	Mrs S Barnes	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage	
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Religious education History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21075	Mr S Gould	Team inspector	Science Geography	
28885	Mrs H Paterson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Alfred Sutton Primary School, a larger than average primary school, located in a built up area close to the centre of Reading, provides education for pupils between the ages of four and 11. There are 332 pupils on roll, of whom 25 are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. In addition, 38 children attend half-day sessions in a designated nursery class. There was no reception class in the autumn term at the time of the inspection. Pupils have a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and approximately half of the pupils are not of white United Kingdom heritage, these being mainly Pakistani, black Caribbean, black African and Indian descent. Over one-quarter of the pupils have English as an additional language, which is a high proportion, but only seven pupils are at an early stage of learning the language. The main languages spoken by these pupils in order of frequency are Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Bengali. Just over ten per cent of pupils receive support funded by the Ethnic Minority Grant. The school has above average mobility of pupils, and during the past year over 10 per cent joined the school and a similar number left at a time other than the normal joining or leaving time. Attainment on entry is broadly average. There are slightly more boys than girls in school, although this difference is only marked in Year 1. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is just below average, although the percentage of pupils with statements is currently above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Alfred Sutton Primary School is a good school where pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, and science by the time they leave the school. The headteacher provides good, strong leadership and is well supported by an effective governing body. Teaching is good overall. The school has a positive, forward-looking ethos, which welcomes a diverse range of pupils and responds well to their needs. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in mathematics.
- Standards are good in English and science in Year 6.
- Standards are good in design and technology.
- Leadership is good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school.
- Relationships are very good.

What could be improved

- The marking of pupils' work.
- The standards of pupils' writing in Year 2.
- The facilities for outdoor play for the under fives.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998. All the key issues raised then have been successfully addressed except one. Standards have improved in information and communication technology (IT) and in religious education (RE) where the work now fulfils the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The quality of teaching has improved in the nursery and is always at least satisfactory. School development planning is better than at the time of the last inspection report and the curriculum has improved in quality. All subjects have policies and the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Although there has been some improvement in the use of assessment data to inform future planning, the quality of marking of pupils' work is still inconsistent. Since the last report, standards in Year 6 have improved in English and science but have fallen in music. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection report when almost a fifth of the total was judged unsatisfactory. Now there is only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and the overall quality is good. The school has therefore made a good improvement since the last report. It is well placed to sustain this pattern of improvement.

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	C	C	B	C
mathematics	A	B	A	B
science	D	B	B	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

This table shows that attainment has been consistently good in National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds. In 2002, standards were above the national average in English and science and in line with schools in a similar context. Standards in mathematics were well above the national average in 2002 and above average compared with similar schools. The trend in results, which have been at least average and usually above, has matched the national trend for 11-year-old pupils since 1998.

The trend in results has also been positive for seven year olds from 1998 to 2001 but in 2002 there was a dip in attainment so that, based on the average points score, standards were average in mathematics and reading, but well below the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing. The school has analysed the reasons for this fall and it is, in part, explained by the turnover of staff last year. The standard of reading and mathematics currently in Year 2 is better than the latest test results would indicate but the standard of writing is unsatisfactory.

Most pupils are well placed to attain the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage. The pupils for whom English is an additional language score less well, particularly in the goal of communication, language and literacy. They make good progress however, so that their standards of attainment are similar to other pupils by the time they leave the school. There is no pattern of under-performance by any ethnic group. Pupils with SEN are well supported. Achievement is sound in Key Stage 1 and good by the time the pupils leave the school. Standards have improved in RE and information and communication technology (ICT) and are now satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Standards are good in English, mathematics, science, and design and technology, in Year 6. Standards are average in science at the age of seven. The standard of presentation is unsatisfactory in some classes. The school has set appropriate targets for the future and is well placed to attain them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and committed learners. They are keen to participate in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and act sensibly and with consideration when moving around the school in communal activities.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and socialise well together. They respond positively to opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Levels are broadly in line with national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection. The teaching in mathematics and English is good, particularly so in Year 6. The skills of numeracy and literacy are well taught so that by Year 6, standards are above average. The school effectively meets the needs of pupils with SEN. They are included in lessons with appropriate tasks and those with greater needs are given effective group or individual support. Pupils with English as an additional language, receive good support within lessons and in targeted groups. The teaching provided through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is very good and learning support assistants make an effective contribution. The needs of able, talented and gifted pupils are met satisfactorily.

The planning of work and setting of clear objectives shared with the pupils are clear strengths of the teaching. The questioning of pupils is of a consistently high standard to ensure understanding and develop their learning. Relationships are very good and the pupils are well managed. The least effective feature of the teaching is the marking of pupils' work. The quality of this is variable and in some classes, too few comments are made to help pupils improve.

The quality of learning is good overall. Pupils' interest is stimulated and they sustain their concentration. Pupils with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language are given good opportunities to develop their learning through an ethos, which recognises and caters for pupils' different needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, with a wide range of learning opportunities, enhanced by good provision of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are included in all class activities. Those with learning needs that are more complex receive effective individual support. Individual education plans are well constructed and implemented to develop pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes good provision for pupils with English as an additional language so that they make good progress by the time they leave the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for pupils', moral, social and cultural development. The provision for spiritual development is a satisfactory improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There is appropriate attention to matters of welfare and safety. The school promotes good behaviour. It has a satisfactory relationship with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership, which gives the school a clear educational direction. She is well supported by key staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well organised and purposeful and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It fulfils all statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has evaluated its performance to ensure it sustains the improvement made since the last inspection.
The strategic use of resources	The staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The school applies effectively the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Behaviour is good.• Teaching is good.• Their children make good progress.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information about how their children are getting on.• The closeness of links with parents.• The range of activities offered outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with parents that the teaching and standards of behaviour are both good. The children are happy, mature, and responsible. It is judged that links with parents need to be improved and the school has recognised this as a priority. However, the inspection team considered that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons, including visits and a selection of extra-curricular clubs. The school provides a range of information but could, in reports, give a clearer indication of what children need to do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's performance in the 2002 national tests for 11-year-olds, based on average points score, was above the national average in English and science and well above the national average in mathematics. When compared with schools in a similar context, standards were average in science and English and above average in mathematics. The standards are even more impressive when compared to the pupils' attainment in the national tests when they were seven. When this measure is used, progress was above average in science and English and well above average in mathematics.
2. The results in the national tests for seven-year-olds have been consistently good from 1998 to 2001. However, in 2002 there was a dip in performance so that the standards based on average points score were average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. When compared with schools in a similar context, standards were below average in mathematics and well below average in reading and writing. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 fell markedly in all three aspects in 2002 and no pupil attained Level 3 in writing. The school has analysed the reasons for the dip, identified three relevant factors, including turnover of staff, and devised appropriate strategies for improvement.
3. The trend in results follows the national pattern and there has been no discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls when compared with national averages. Higher attaining pupils perform consistently to their potential in the tests. Pupils for whom English is an additional language attain standards that are similar to other pupils by the time they leave the school. There is no pattern of underachievement by any ethnic groups, although in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, pupils of black African descent performed relatively less well overall in reading and writing. Pupils of Pakistani descent performed relatively less well overall in reading and mathematics.
4. In the Foundation Stage, most pupils make satisfactory progress to attain the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, perform less well in baseline tests, particularly in communication, language and literacy. However, they make good progress so that their attainment is in line with other pupils by the time they leave the school.
5. The standards of literacy and numeracy are both good in Year 6, although opportunities are not fully exploited to develop literacy skills across the curriculum for younger pupils, with the result that the standard of pupils' writing is unsatisfactory in Year 2. It improves significantly in Year 3 and accelerates with the oldest pupils so that by Year 6, standards are good. Standards of speaking and listening are also good throughout the school. Standards of reading are good.
6. The standards in science are the same as in English, average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11 year olds. The standards in mathematics are above average both in Year 2 and Year 6.
7. Standards have improved in ICT and in RE and are average. They now meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are good in design and technology throughout the school. Standards have fallen in Year 6 in music but they remain average. Standards are average in all other subjects, as at time of the last inspection. Standards of presentation are unsatisfactory in some classes, reflecting the findings of the last inspection report.
8. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. They achieve well by the time they leave the school. Pupils with SEN generally make good progress to achieve appropriate standards, completing tasks to the best of their abilities. Although higher attaining, and gifted and talented pupils achieve their potential in tests, they do not always receive sufficiently challenging tasks, particularly in mathematics. The school has set suitable targets for the future and it is well placed to achieve them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The pupils' personal and social development is good in the Foundation Stage and they show increasing independence. Pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons and other school activities. They are enthusiastic and committed learners who are keen to answer questions and explain what they are doing. Parents say that their children like school and this is confirmed in discussions with the pupils themselves. Attendance levels are broadly in line with national averages and pupils arrive punctually at the start of the school day.
10. Behaviour is good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and act sensibly and with consideration when moving around the school or in communal activities such as assemblies and dining. Incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour are very rare and dealt with quickly when they do occur. School property, including a range of new outdoor play equipment, is treated well. Exclusions are infrequent and the correct practices are followed.
11. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils socialise well, eating and talking together in their classrooms or the dining room at lunchtime. Pupils with SEN or from ethnic minority backgrounds are fully integrated and included by others in games and other activities. Pupils also work together well, sharing computer equipment and working in small groups on scientific experiments, such as a Year 3 exercise to determine the properties of rocks. In the same year pupils collaborated to make a poster about the Egyptians, sharing out tasks amongst them. They listen to each other's contributions and talk maturely in personal, social and health education lessons about concepts such as caring, friendship, and support for each other.
12. The school is successful in helping pupils to mature and become responsible which is recognised by parents. Pupils have responded well to the challenge of taking responsibility and contributing to the life of the school. There is an active school council that has been responsible for improvements to the school environment and organises a games rota for breaktimes. Pupil initiatives have led to the provision of extra-curricular activities such as the drama club. They volunteer for jobs such as tidying up the physical education store and organise "harvest boxes" for distribution in the local community.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good overall. Ninety eight per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better and in 13 per cent of lessons, it is very good. Only two per cent of teaching, two lessons, are judged unsatisfactory. In 55 per cent of lessons, the teaching is good or better.
14. In the nursery, the quality of teaching has improved from the last inspection when it was judged mainly unsatisfactory. The teaching has been satisfactory over time and the new teacher is starting to make an impact by having work that is well planned to the children's needs and suitably high expectations. She has a good knowledge and understanding of children in the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching observed in the nursery was always satisfactory and mainly good.
15. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. Teachers build effectively on pupils' previous learning. For example, the ideas explored in the study of the Fire of London were used to help pupils learn art in Year 1. Relationships are consistently very good and the pupils are well managed. The lessons are consistently well planned and a range of teaching methods is used effectively to match the needs of the pupils. Support staff give sound support to pupils in lessons.
16. The quality of teaching is more variable in Key Stage 2 but is mainly good. It is at its best in Year 6 where the high expectations of the teachers enable the pupils to reach above average standards in English, mathematics, and science. The questioning of pupils is of a consistently high standard to develop their understanding. In Year 4 for example, the pupils were asked in a RE lesson how people found out about the birth of Jesus. The teachers have good subject knowledge, notably in English, mathematics, and design and technology. The skills of literacy and numeracy are consistently well taught so that the pupils attain above average standards by the time that they leave the school. The teaching of mathematics and English is good.
17. The two unsatisfactory lessons were in Key Stage 2. When the teaching is unsatisfactory, it is due to lesson introductions being overlong so that the involvement of pupils in the main activity is delayed. On rare

occasions, insufficient control is exercised over pupils so their behaviour deteriorates and they make insufficient progress. Homework arrangements are broadly satisfactory but the marking of pupils' work is variable. It is usually very good in Years 3 and 6 but less consistent in other years. When it is unsatisfactory, it is because too few comments are made to suggest how pupils might improve.

18. The quality of learning in the school is good. It was particularly impressive in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were encouraged to evaluate a first draft of writing and develop the important skill of self-review. The children maintain their concentration well in the Foundation Stage and, by Year 6, are developing well the skills needed to be independent learners. The ethos in the school centres on meeting the learning needs of the diverse range of pupils. There is effective support for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. The teaching through media such as dual language books allows pupils to learn English by building on what they know in their own language. This was particularly impressive in a Year 2 lesson taught by a teacher financed through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. The pupils were at an early stage of language acquisition and were encouraged to answer questions clearly and confidently in English. Although the learning needs of able and talented pupils are not consistently met in mathematics and science, they make satisfactory progress overall. The pupils with designated special needs work alongside their peers in a caring and supportive learning environment in which they develop their confidence and make good progress.

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

19. The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum, whilst placing an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The curriculum affords a good preparation for secondary school. The school now meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum, which was not entirely the case at the previous inspection. Religious education conforms to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship or spiritual reflection. Increased resources for music mean that provision for this subject has improved since the previous inspection. About 40 pupils take advantage of opportunities for instrumental music tuition. There is swimming in the summer term for pupils in Year 5. The school benefits from the contribution of a part-time drama specialist. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations for pupils of this age.
20. Planning of the curriculum is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The children in the Foundation Stage are provided with an appropriate range of well planned opportunities to develop their skills in the six areas of their curriculum. Clear policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are well established and are proving effective in raising standards in English and mathematics. Planning in other subjects is based on guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, often adapted to meet the needs and resources of the school, and sometimes on commercial schemes of work. A curriculum 'map' gives a clear picture of the work that the pupils will cover during the year. The teachers plan carefully for the work to be done each term and each week. Teachers in each year group plan carefully together, so that the pupils in the parallel classes cover the same work. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. All pupils are valued and there is good practice for providing equal opportunities.
21. Although some parents feel that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities, this provision is, in fact, good. Year 6 pupils can join the school choir and there are clubs for chess, drama, French and for sports such as football, 'tag' rugby, table tennis and athletics. There are no regular sports fixtures against other schools, but the pupils participate in occasional tournaments. Some pupils have represented Reading in athletics. The teachers enrich learning by organising a satisfactory range of worthwhile school visits and by using the knowledge and expertise of visitors whenever possible.
22. The school makes satisfactory use of the community to enhance learning. Parents have shared their expertise in fields such as pottery and batik. There are close links with Park United Reformed Church and Anderson Baptist Church and efforts are being made to bring the Muslim community into closer contact with the school. Clergy from the Baptist Church helped the teachers in their planning for RE and the pupils visit Park Church as part of their work in RE. The University grounds are used for environmental work and the locality is used to enhance learning in history and geography. Staff from the London Irish rugby club has taken coaching sessions in 'tag' rugby.
23. There is good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. In timetabled PSHE sessions, the pupils have the opportunity to talk about issues such as responsibilities,

differing points of view, community services, friendship, and facing new challenges. There is a clear sex education policy. Aspects of human growth and development are addressed in science and in PSHE. There is formal sex education for pupils in Years 5 and 6. In Year 6, the school nurse helps with this teaching. There is a drugs education policy in draft form. The teachers make the pupils aware of the dangers of drugs misuse.

24. There are satisfactory links with the two secondary schools to which most of the pupils in Year 6 transfer and with Reading School. Some pupils with notable talents in art participated in an 'Arts Day' at one of the secondary schools. Year 5 pupils have swimming lessons at Reading School and students from that school undertake work experience at Alfred Sutton every Friday. Before transfer, Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to spend a day at their chosen secondary school. Close links with the on-site pre-school playgroup help the transfer of these children into the nursery.
25. There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. There is satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual development. This is an improvement from the previous inspection, which found the provision unsatisfactory. Acts of collective worship and 'thought for the day' sessions make a positive contribution to spiritual development on themes such as making the right choices, solving difficult problems, exploitation, telling the truth, respect and politeness. The teachers celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements in a special weekly assembly. They try to create a sense of awe and wonder in learning and to give the pupils time to think about feelings and deeper meanings. In RE, pupils in Year 2 talk about places, which are special to them and pupils in Year 4, write effective modern psalms of thanksgiving. In Year 4 history, the teachers encourage the pupils to think what the Celts actually felt about the Roman invasion of Britain, in addition to knowing the historical facts. In a Year 5 art and design lesson, the teacher succeeded in creating a sense of wonder at the work of Clarice Cliffe. Some pupils have contributed to the making of a very effective school centenary quilt, which depicts aspects of life in Reading.
26. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good and this contributes to good behaviour in the school. There are clear behaviour and anti-bullying policies, which reward good behaviour appropriately through a system of house points and mention in the 'Blue Book'. Rules, rewards and sanctions are clearly displayed in classrooms. The teachers ensure that the pupils are well aware of what is right or wrong. Year 2 pupils, for example, discuss the rules necessary during their visit to the church. At the end of each term, certificates reward good behaviour for the infants and by letters sent to the parents of the juniors. The individual education plans of some pupils with SEN contain appropriate targets for improving behaviour.
27. There is good provision for the pupils' social development. Most parents feel that the school helps their children to mature and to become responsible. The teachers encourage all pupils to help with classroom tasks and they respond well to this. Older pupils carry out extra responsibilities. Some have done good work in tidying up the shed that stores physical education (PE) equipment. Some pupils in each class exercise responsibilities as members of an active school council. They have organised fund raising, such as 'Penny Pour' for Save the Children and for the local drop-in centre for homeless people. Pupils can develop their social skills in extra-curricular activities, during school visits and by participating in school productions. Year 6 pupils can increase their road safety skills by taking part in a cycling proficiency scheme and they can develop social skills further during a residential visit to Hill End. The teachers encourage the pupils to work collaboratively in lessons whenever necessary and they generally respond well to this. In PSHE and geography, the teachers encourage the pupils to show concern for the environment.
28. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The school makes effective use of visiting dance groups, musicians, theatre groups, authors and historical actors. In history, the pupils learn about past cultures here and abroad. The pupils visit Reading Museum and historical sites in London and in the locality. There is an annual Book Week, in which the teachers encourage a love of literature. The pupils learn about the work of some famous artists. The school does much to prepare the pupils for life in a culturally diverse society. In RE, the pupils learn about some of the world's major religions. In assemblies, the pupils celebrate the festivals of different faiths, such as Diwali and Hanukah. In a Key Stage 1 assembly observed during the inspection, Year 1 pupils presented their views of Eid. The school makes effective use of pupils and staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds, in order to develop respect for and tolerance of people of differing beliefs. In Year 6, for example, some Muslim pupils spoke to others about prayer in Islam and the pupils wrote up clear accounts of this and thanked their classmates for their input. In geography, the pupils learn something of the cultures of India and Kenya and in English, they read some of the traditional tales from the Arabian Nights. Planning in PE shows that Year 6 pupils learn an Asian folk dance. There are some bilingual notices around

the school and some dual language reading books in classrooms, though the school recognises the need to increase bilingual resources.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school provides effectively for the care and support of pupils. From their comments on parental questionnaires, many parents share this view. There are good arrangements for child protection. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and has received the appropriate training. When the need arises, established guidelines for liaison with other agencies are followed.
30. Detailed procedures have been introduced which ensure that the school complies with the requirements of health and safety legislation and provides a safe environment for its pupils. There are regular safety inspections and good first aid arrangements. There has been some in-service training for the whole staff and teachers complete the appropriate risk assessments. A recent external audit concluded, "safety standards around the school are excellent".
31. There are satisfactory systems for recording and checking attendance. Registers are completed accurately, monitored regularly and unexplained absences followed up.
32. There are good arrangements for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour and personal development. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging and rewarding good conduct with awards and in assemblies. Records are also kept of incidents causing concern and the headteacher regularly checks these. She is currently working with a group of Year 5 pupils who, through this process, have been identified as needing support. In cases that are more serious, the local education authority's behaviour support unit is involved with helping individual pupils. The formal systems are complemented by a good informal network for the exchange of information between teachers and support staff who know the pupils well and can identify problems at an early stage.
33. Since the previous inspection report, the school has improved the arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic development. There are now satisfactory systems in place for testing and recording pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in English and mathematics. All pupils undertake a variety of assessment tasks and nationally recognised tests throughout the year. A computer program is systematically used to record results and analysed against previous attainment and expectations so that each pupil's progress can be effectively tracked as they go through the school. The monitoring information is reviewed each year by the school's senior management team and resources allocated to support pupils needing additional help. Support teachers, learning support assistants and other senior teaching staff, including the headteacher, are used so that smaller groups or booster classes can be formed as needed. The school has also introduced setting throughout the school in English, mathematics, and science so that the pupils can work at the pace best suited to their requirements. Arrangements for recording progress in other subjects are currently less detailed and the assessment information gained is not always used consistently to inform future planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. The last inspection report noted that the relationship with parents was satisfactory and this remains the case. Parents' views of the school are generally favourable. Parents responding by questionnaire and at their meeting were very positive about key indicators of the school's performance such as the children's behaviour, the teaching, and leadership. However, a significant proportion was critical of the links between school and home and specifically how well informed they are about their children's progress. These elements are currently unsatisfactory.
35. The school is aware of these concerns and has tried to improve communication and consult with parents on their requirements. A weekly newsletter keeps parents informed of activities. Information is sent out at the beginning of term on the topics being studied. Some curriculum evenings, open days and workshops have been held, although these have not always been well supported. Arrangements for parents' meetings have been changed to try to meet parents' wishes. A recent questionnaire on homework elicited a good response and the school is currently considering the points raised. The annual reports do not give a very clear

indication to parents of their children's progress as they focus largely on what has been studied. In many cases, they do not contain enough detail on actual attainment or what a pupil needs to do to improve.

36. Parental involvement in the school is satisfactory. Despite some areas of disagreement, many parents support the school well in a number of practical ways, which extend the range of activities available to pupils. A revitalised parent teacher association is developing plans for a school lending library, staffed by volunteers, and over twenty parents regularly help in school with reading, computers, and clubs. Others help with the wide-ranging programme of educational visits.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Her clear sense of purpose has given the school a firm educational direction that has ensured improved standards of attainment; particularly by the time pupils leave the school. She is well supported by the senior management team and the governing body.
38. The governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and act as a 'critical friend' in both monitoring the educational provision and setting long-term aims. They are an efficient and purposeful body, meeting regularly, with terms of reference for committees, agenda and very full minutes of their meetings. They fulfil all their statutory duties and take a prominent role in shaping the direction of the school.
39. The school improvement plan is better than at the time of the last inspection and now identifies appropriate priorities and targets and takes the necessary steps to achieve them. The school has been led successfully through a period of change, which has involved a relatively large turnover of teaching staff due to a variety of reasons, including promotion and movement to other areas. The headteacher has used the school's performance management strategy effectively to improve the quality of teaching by establishing firm expectations and setting clear targets for teachers. The monitoring of teaching is satisfactory. Induction procedures are good, with newly qualified teachers receiving valuable support and guidance from team leaders. There is also a full professional development programme for all staff. The teachers and support staff are matched satisfactorily to the demands of the curriculum and the budget has been used well to recruit more learning support assistants.
40. The management of a school on a complex site is also good. The systems and routines necessary to run a school are well established and understood. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology. The school secretary and bursar provide efficient support. Resources are generally satisfactory. The accommodation has clear strengths, with two halls, sufficient classrooms and areas where small groups can work effectively. There is adequate provision for the disabled although areas for improvement are recognised. However, the outdoor accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
41. One of the least effective features of the management of the school has been the development of closer links with parents. This is indicated by a high negative response from those returning parental questionnaires.
42. Financial planning and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, bursar and governors follow clear financial procedures. The school has produced a relatively high underspend but has ambitious plans to use this in the near future to develop the accommodation. Only two issues were raised in the latest draft auditors' report and both have already been addressed. The governors are aware of the need to obtain value for money and follow agreed procedures to ensure they get the best deal for the school. For example, they have sought competitive tenders to make the best arrangements for the processing of pay and personnel details. Grants are well documented with monthly records kept for income and expenditure.
43. The headteacher and governors monitor and evaluate the school's performance well to set suitable targets for the future. There is a shared commitment to continually move forward and the school is well placed to improve further.
44. The school receives an average income. The quality of education is good and attainment by the time the pupils leave the school is good. Therefore the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45. In order to improve standards, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- ❑ improve the standard of pupils' writing in Year 2 (paragraphs 4, 5, 7, 61, 65, 67, 73, 74, 90, 117 and 120) by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at greater length in both English lessons and across the curriculum;
 - providing more challenging writing tasks for able children;
 - giving a greater emphasis to the quality of presentation of pupils' writing;
- ❑ develop a more consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work, including regular comments on how they might improve (paragraphs 17, 77, 86, 120 and 142);
- ❑ improve the facilities for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage (paragraphs 41, 51 and 57).

Other less important issues

- ❑ improve links with parents (paragraphs 35, 36 and 42).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	84
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	35	36	2	0	0
Percentage	0	13	42	43	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	332
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	46

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	25	23	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	22
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	40	40	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(93)	83(92)	88(93)
	National	84(84)	86(86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	21
	Girls	21	20	18
	Total	42	43	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88(97)	90(98)	81(90)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	30	29	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	27	27
	Girls	23	23	24
	Total	47	50	51
Percentage of pupils NC level 4 and above	School	80(85)	85(79)	86(89)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	26	23
	Girls	24	21	23
	Total	48	47	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81(83)	80(83)	78(89)
	National	73(72)	74(74)	82(82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	163	3	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	42	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	13	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	53	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7: 1
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	224

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19 : 1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9 : 1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	754,228
Total expenditure	746,329
Expenditure per pupil	1,954
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,680
Balance carried forward to next year	48,579

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	351
Number of questionnaires returned	186

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	43	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	38	51	7	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	57	5	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	49	14	3	2
The teaching is good.	37	53	5	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	49	20	10	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	44	39	9	6	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	45	5	2	6
The school works closely with parents.	22	44	23	7	4
The school is well led and managed.	44	39	4	3	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	53	3	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	37	29	7	14

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were concerned about the high turnover of staff which has been for a variety of reasons including promotion and movement out of the area.

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

46. Children start in the nursery in the term after their fourth birthday. They attend either a morning or an afternoon session. In the autumn term, there are no children in the reception class. This class starts in January when the oldest children from the nursery transfer, along with a similar number of other boys and girls, most of whom have previously attended other local nurseries and playgroups. A second reception class starts after Easter, when the next group of children transfer up from nursery and other, local, early years settings. Those children whose fifth birthday falls between Easter and the end of August start school in the Year 1 class the following September.
47. At the time of inspection neither of the reception classes was running, due to the time of year. An appropriate induction is provided when children first join the school, which includes the opportunities for coming into the nursery class and also for home visits, so that parents and teachers can share information about each child's specific needs. As a result of this good start, children have a generally positive approach to coming to school and to their learning. Attainment on entry to school covers the full range, but is broadly average overall. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
48. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall for children under five, which represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, when it was judged unsatisfactory. The children are provided with an appropriate range of well-planned opportunities to develop their skills in all six areas of the foundation curriculum for young children. As a result, boys and girls from all groups and of all levels of prior attainment are making at least satisfactory and often good progress in their learning and by the end of reception are likely to attain the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum.
49. The nursery teacher is new to the school. She works well with the nursery support assistant. They provide a friendly and effective learning environment for children of all levels of prior attainment and from all groups. Teaching is soundly based on the "Stepping Stones" for development for young children. Relationships within the nursery are good and adults provide good role models to the children in their care. Expectations of the children's work and behaviour are appropriately high, and lead to the children making progress in all areas of their learning which is always at least satisfactory and often good.
50. Assessment procedures are thorough and they are used well to monitor children's attainment in all areas of the curriculum. This is also the case for children with SEN who are identified and supported well from the start of their school career. Work is marked and annotated appropriately so that teachers and support staff have a clear picture of what each child can do. However, not all achievements have been dated in the past, and this limits the potential to evaluate the rate at which children are making progress.
51. Resources are satisfactory overall and children have regular access to a designated outdoor learning area, where they can safely play with large toys. However, the opportunities to climb, balance and swing are limited by the poor state of the provision. Climbing equipment in the nursery playground is not used as the safety surface beneath it is in need of repair. In addition, tree roots have broken up the surface of the circular path, severely limiting the available space. Both of these factors inhibit opportunity for daily, energetic, physical activity. Children have a weekly physical education lesson in the infant hall, where climbing equipment is available, but this equipment tends to be used at the end of a term, when children have got used to the concept of a structured lesson for physical education. The nursery building is old and the design does not make the best use of available space, with a large 'office' section for staff and some relatively small workspaces for children. However, the teacher and nursery support assistant work hard to make it bright and attractive, with colourful displays, including children's work.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. Children in the nursery make good progress in this area, due to the good teaching and good range of opportunities they are given. They separate from their parents and guardians with confidence at the start of sessions, coming into the nursery happily. They feel safe and secure and demonstrate a sense of trust. When playing in the playground they seek out others to share experiences. For example, finding friends to play football with. They show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities, such as choosing and tidying away toys and equipment. They develop confidence in linking up to help others with

their games, or on the computer. They show care and concern for others, joining in to comfort a friend who has fallen. They begin to accept the needs of others, with support, although occasionally, some children have difficulty in sharing toys and equipment. The regular nursery routines are well established and, as a result, children make good progress in learning them. For example, they happily make a 'silent train' to walk to and from the main school building.

Communication, language and literacy

53. Children in the nursery have emerging self-confidence to speak to others about their wants and interests. They invite friends to come and play, for example in the playground on a cold morning, pretending to build a bonfire with a pile of leaves and inviting others to come to warm up "You don't need to worry- its only pretend". They talk activities through, reflecting on and modifying what they are doing, for example when playing with friends in the home corner, "I'm here and this is my medicine." Teaching in the nursery is good and children are given good opportunities to develop their vocabulary and to learn early reading and writing skills. They take part in regular discussion sessions sitting in a circle. At these times, the teacher takes care to ensure that children all have a chance to tell of instances when someone was kind to them, and all others are encouraged to listen patiently. This also has a positive effect on the development of their social skills. The children listen to stories with increasing attention and recall, acting out stories afterwards when playing in the home corner. They build up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences, listing clothes worn at different times of the year, for example. When talking to each other and to adults, they begin to use sentences that are more complex, as when describing a toy they have brought. "It's a little kitten, this is the fur". Higher attaining children hear and say the initial sound in words and know which letters represent some of the sounds. Some children, but not all recognise their name in print and are beginning to recognise some familiar words. They realise that writing can record and communicate information and are starting to ascribe meaning to their mark making.

Mathematical development

54. Teaching of mathematical skills is good in the nursery. For example, children willingly attempt to count the spots on a ladybird picture, with some numbers in the correct order. They recognise groups with one, two or three objects and a large number can count an arrangement of up to 10 objects. Higher attaining children chant numbers up to twenty and recognise the numerals that represent them. Children show confidence with numbers by initiating or requesting number activities, such as singing number rhymes. They say the number after any number up to nine and recognise numerals with personal significance. "That's four... I'm four". The children show an interest in shape and space, playing with shapes or arranging objects, using regular shapes on the magnetic board to build pictures. Some children maintain concentration well when taking part in sustained construction activity or by talking about shapes or arrangements. For example, they use mathematical language such as 'circle' or 'bigger' correctly to describe the shape and size of solids and flat shapes, when building with mathematical construction toys. They use shapes appropriately for tasks, such as building rectangular houses with sloping triangular roofs. They use everyday words to describe a position, such as "I am putting this one on top".

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55. Children in the nursery make satisfactory progress in their developing knowledge and understanding of the world, due to the satisfactory teaching they receive. They show curiosity and interest, observing and manipulating objects, such as when they apply glue and paper to balloons to make model igloos. They describe simple features of objects and events. For example, when washing dolls' clothes in the playground they are fascinated and point out the drips of water that cascade off the items when they are lifted from the tub of water. They investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate, tasting different vegetables in a lesson on the senses. They sort objects, such as clothing, saying which items are appropriate for a hot day and which are worn when it is cold. Children are given good opportunities to talk about what they can see happening, noticing and commenting on patterns. For example, they show an awareness of change in the weather. The children are given good opportunities to begin to try out a range of tools and techniques safely, such as using scissors, paintbrushes, and clothes pegs. They work on the computer, manipulating the mouse to create patterns and tapping on the keyboard to see letters appear on the screen. They remember and talk about significant things that have happened to them in the past, such as when they have helped someone or when someone else has been kind to them. However, not all work comes from within the children's own range of understanding, such as when they made models of igloos or snowflakes in a session on cold things, without being given any preliminary explanation or story. On another

occasion, a highly detailed description of taste buds was preliminary to tasting vegetables. It was far in advance of the children's own knowledge or level of understanding. As a result, on these occasions children make only satisfactory gains in their learning,

Creative development

56. Teaching of this aspect is satisfactory and children in the nursery make satisfactory gains in their learning. When drawing, children use lines to enclose a space, then begin to use these shapes to represent objects, painting portraits with faces and some limbs. When playing with blocks and construction toys, they begin to stack blocks vertically and horizontally and making enclosures and creating spaces, towers and imaginary tents and houses. They sing a few simple, familiar songs, with pleasure, such as when waiting to come into class. When playing together in the home corner or the playground they use one object to represent another, even when the objects have few characteristics in common. For example some children made a 'bus' from a chair and a mat and played happily at driving and riding in it. They use available resources to create props to support role-play, as when playing with dolls and "putting them to bed" in handy baskets.

Physical development

57. Children in the nursery make satisfactory progress in overall physical development. Teaching of most aspects is good and children make good progress in many aspects of physical development. They learn to move spontaneously within available space, in the playground and the school hall. They know to adjust speed or change direction when running with footballs or riding on scooters to avoid obstacles. They develop increasing control over objects, such as footballs, throwing, catching or kicking them and retrieving them when they roll away. They negotiate space successfully when playing racing and chasing games with other children, such as when playing at 'magic powder' in the garden. The children manipulate materials and objects appropriately, such as arranging toys in the sand and threading beads or using scissors. They make good progress in developing skills with activities requiring hand-eye co-ordination, such as playing with dough and pasting paper onto balloons. They show increasing control over clothing and fastenings and most manage to take off and put on shoes for themselves. Most of the children are aware of own needs with regard to taking themselves to the toilet and washing hands afterwards but some occasionally need adult support to meet those needs. However, skills of balancing, climbing and swinging are not developed sufficiently as there are very limited opportunities for children to practise them, due to the lack of suitable facilities. This is a weakness in the provision.

ENGLISH

58. Standards are average for pupils at the age of seven and are above average by the time that the pupils leave the school. This is an improvement on the findings of the last report and indicates that the pupils make good progress throughout the school.
59. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, the school's performance based on average point scores was above average when compared nationally and in line with the results of schools in similar contexts. The percentage attaining the expected Level 4 dipped but the percentage attaining the higher Level 5 rose by a similar amount.
60. The trend in results matched the national trend so that the school's performance continued to exceed the national average from 1999-2002. The performance in national tests at the age of seven was just as impressive from 1998-2001. Standards in reading and writing, based on average point scores, have been at least in line with both the national average and the results from similar schools. Although variable from year to year, the school's results have followed the national trend from 1998-2001 in both reading and writing.
61. In 2002, however, the school's results in the Key Stage 1 national tests dipped for both reading and writing. The school has explained how, due to natural turnover, there had to be changes to the staffing arrangements in Year 2, which, they believe, partly contributed to the dip in standards. This was particularly marked in writing as no pupil attained the higher Level 3. The percentage of pupils attaining both the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 fell. The lower performance of higher attaining pupils had a significant impact on the average point scores so that the attainment was well below average.
62. There is no pattern of underachievement by any pupils from any ethnic background in the national tests for Year 6 pupils. However, in the national tests for Year 2 in 2002 a lower percentage of pupils of Pakistani

descent attained the expected level in reading than for other groups and a lower percentage of pupils from black African descent attained the expected level in writing and reading. This pattern of lower achievement was not evident in 2000 and 2001 and is seen by the school as a reflection of one particular cohort of pupils.

63. In Year 2, the standards in reading are currently average and better than the latest test results, suggesting that the dip in performance in the 2002 results is not a permanent trend. In both Year 1 and Year 2, pupils handle books confidently and take them home regularly to practise their reading skills. Average pupils read simple texts accurately and with understanding. They employ a number of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words although some less able pupils do not always do this automatically. The more able read confidently and with good expression.
64. Pupils' interest in, and enthusiasm for, books develops well through Key Stage 2. In Year 6, they read with fluency and accuracy and can evaluate the texts they read with growing confidence. Many can discuss characters in some detail and outline their preferences in reading.
65. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2. Very few pupils are able to produce a sequence of correctly punctuated sentences. The spelling of simple words is often wrong and there are few pieces of writing developed to become stories or description. These weaknesses are evident in the writing of pupils in Year 2 last year and those currently in Year 2.
66. The standard of writing improves in Year 3 and the rate of progress accelerates markedly in Year 6 so that the standards are above average overall. Most of the oldest pupils write with a good command of a wide vocabulary and introduce effective imagery and interesting content. Playscripts are written with a clear understanding of form and structure. A pupil from a Pakistani background wrote interestingly about the different life his granddad had experienced from that of his own, conveying his observations accurately and clearly. Standards of spelling and punctuation are generally satisfactory by the time pupils leave the school.
67. Standards of handwriting are improving with the emphasis on the development of a cursive style in Year 1 and 2. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their handwriting. However, standards of presentation are variable and are currently unsatisfactory overall in Years 1, 2, and 4.
68. The standard of speaking and listening is a strength of the school. At all ages, pupils enjoy reading aloud the shared text in the literacy hour and most do so with confidence and clarity. In a Year 5 class of more able pupils everyone was given a part in acting out 'Bill's New Frock' and, without exception, they all read clearly and expressively, adopting the personality of the character they were given. Year 6 pupils are able to answer questions in a mature, articulate manner and invariably listen politely and attentively to both the teachers and their colleagues.
69. On entry to the school, the Early Learning Goals are achieved by a lower percentage of children for whom English is an additional language, than the other children. This lower performance is more marked in the goal of communication, language and literacy where only 67 per cent achieve the required level against the overall school percentage of 87 per cent.
70. However, the pupils for whom English is an additional language make noticeably good progress throughout the school so that the standard they achieve is similar to other pupils in Year 6. This reflects the good support they receive. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is used efficiently so that teaching support is given throughout the school. In one very well taught Year 2 lesson, the teacher developed very effectively the pupils' confidence to use English, while reinforcing their understanding of Urdu, using a dual language 'big book'. All the pupils, who were at an early stage of language acquisition, were able to listen to questions, and answer clearly in English.
71. The teaching of English is currently good overall throughout the school. The common features in all lessons are effective planning, good classroom organisation and good relationships. The questioning of pupils is invariably both open and challenging so that the pupils are trained to think about the skills they are developing. All teachers are confident to use key words to develop pupils' literacy. This was particularly marked in the teaching of more able Year 6 pupils when reference was made to grammatical terms, such as non-finite verbs and the main clause. Very clear learning objectives are identified at the start of most lessons and reference is made to them in the final part of the lesson.

72. Good emphasis is given to the development of speaking and listening in most classes. Older pupils benefit from a weekly drama lesson very well taught by a specialist teacher, which enhances provision.
73. In Key Stage 2, on the rare occasion that the teaching is unsatisfactory, it is because insufficient control is exercised over pupils, whose behaviour deteriorates. The teaching of pupils' writing in Year 1 and 2 is generally the least successful feature and insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length rather than very briefly.
74. Throughout the school, standards in literacy develop well so that they are good by Year 6. However, the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is variable. In subjects such as history, geography, and RE, the work for younger pupils too often requires brief answers. This leaves little scope for extending the pupils' range of experience in writing and often does not present sufficient challenge, especially for the pupils that are more able in Year 2.
75. There is a good ethos for learning in the school. Teachers take great care to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEN and English as an additional language, are included in whole class discussions. In Year 6, the pupils are encouraged to evaluate a first draft of writing, developing the skills of self-review. The learning objectives are clearly stated for pupils to understand. Although there are few individual targets, which would help to develop pupils' involvement in their own learning, there are group targets.
76. Resources in the subject are sound overall. Some dictionaries and storybooks for older pupils are in poor condition and there are too few thesaurus. The library for older pupils is currently unsatisfactory but the school has identified this as a future priority. Otherwise, accommodation is good, with effective use of the hall for drama.
77. The subject has been well-monitored and sensible targets set for the future. Assessment data is used satisfactorily to measure pupils' progress. The marking of pupils' work is variable. It is exceptionally good in Year 6 where clear, constructive comments are given to pupils on how they might improve. In some other classes, comments are more perfunctory. The school is well placed to both sustain and improve present standards.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards of attainment in lessons and in pupils' work are above the national average in both Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects the findings of the last inspection report. The results of the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2001 show their attainment was well above average when compared nationally and with schools in a similar context. However pupils of Pakistani descent performed less well. The results of the 2002 national tests were not as good as the results of the 2001 tests. In the 2002 national test results higher attaining pupils performed less well in Year 2 which, in part, is explained by the turnover of staff.
79. The results of the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2001 showed their attainment was above average when compared nationally and well above average when compared with schools in a similar context. The results of the national tests for Year 6 pupils in 2002 show an improvement overall and a sustained high standard for higher attaining pupils. One significant influence on this was the smaller than average teaching groups, set by the pupils' attainment levels. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with SEN and those for whom English is a second language make good progress.
80. In Year 1, pupils are beginning to recognise coins of different values, such as 1p, 2p and 5p and are investigating the relationships between simple addition and subtraction sums. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to count accurately forwards and backwards in 10s and are beginning to double and halve numbers up to 20.
81. In Year 3, pupils successfully recognise how many parts, fractions, are needed to make up one whole. They understand the terms numerator and denominator. In Year 4, pupils draw accurately the axis of symmetry of regular polygons and carefully draw reflections of shapes along a mirror line. Pupils recall well the key features of regular shapes, such as, the types of angles and number of sides. They are beginning to use mathematical vocabulary accurately. In Year 5 pupils draw angles accurately using a protractor and can recognise easily acute, obtuse and reflex angles. Higher attaining pupils calculate well the missing angles of triangles using the angle information they have been given. By the end of Year 6 pupils can calculate well

using a wide range of strategies to solve number problems. They can add two decimal numbers successfully. Higher attaining pupils accurately convert units of weight, such as, converting pounds to kilograms. What the pupils do less well across these age ranges is explain their mathematical thinking. They find it hard to verbalise their mathematical reasoning for getting answers to sums and real-life problems.

82. Progress in lessons and over time is good throughout the school. Pupils are grouped by prior attainment for mathematics lessons from Year 1 onwards. By the end of Year 2 pupils make good progress in basic number skills. By the end of Year 6 pupils make good progress in investigating number problems. Very good progress is seen where pupils are able to recognise patterns and link their work to previous learning. Pupils whose first language is other than English make good progress through support that is targeted well to their needs.
83. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. It is mainly good from Years 3 to 6, ranging from unsatisfactory to very good. In the most effective lessons the teacher moves the learning on at a brisk pace and has clear expectations for the pupils' learning, particularly in group work. In these lessons the work in the lesson is linked to previous learning and the lessons are well prepared and resourced. Good links are made between different aspects of mathematics, such as, measuring and fractions in Year 6. Teachers ask very good questions encouraging the pupils to explain their mathematical thinking for the answers they have got. In these lessons pupils are very actively involved in mathematical activities throughout the lesson. In less effective lessons, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the work set for them and the noise level within the classroom is too high for pupils to be able to concentrate well. The introductory part of the lesson is too long and there is little time for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in small group work.
84. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is good; this is evident by the good teaching methods employed and the way basic skills are taught. Teachers are very secure in the implementation of the daily mathematics lessons, through the well-established three-part lesson structure, which they use well. Teachers use a good range of questions when encouraging the pupils to explain their mathematical thinking but in some lessons there are limited opportunities for them to do so out aloud when doing mental calculations or when solving problems. This is limiting the opportunities to extend the pupils' learning. Detailed teachers' planning itemises a range of different learning activities to suit pupils of differing abilities and this ensures a good consistency of mathematical work across the year groups and sets. This good planning focuses clearly on the expected outcomes for pupils by the end of the lesson. The planning draws upon the National Numeracy Strategy for its learning objectives and these daily objectives are shared with the pupils at the start of each lesson and displayed in the classrooms for pupils to see. Insufficient use is made of computers to help pupils with their learning in mathematics. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and the pupils are keen to learn in their mathematics lessons.
85. The quality of learning is consistently good. Sometimes pupils are over-exuberant and this limits the progress of the lesson. In small group work, the pupils collaborate and co-operate very well in a lively way with each other when completing their mathematical tasks. The use of informative displays in Year 2 showing shapes and lines of symmetry and in Year 5 showing rotational symmetry, angles and probability, reinforces the pupils' learning and their acquisition of mathematical language.
86. The subject is well co-ordinated by two co-ordinators. Planning of work is thoroughly undertaken. The National Curriculum is fully met and a new, well-resourced, comprehensive scheme of work ensures good continuity and progression. The use of ICT is insufficiently integrated into the lessons. Pupils' work is marked but there are insufficient regular comments to move pupils' learning forward. As yet the subject co-ordinators have not monitored the quality of teaching and learning sufficiently to make sure, for example, that all teachers are giving the same level of emphasis to improving pupils' reasoning and explaining skills.

SCIENCE

87. Standards in science by the time pupils are seven are average but by Year 6, they are well above average. For Year 2, this represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection. The headteacher is aware of this and the new science co-ordinator and staff are committed to raising standards in Key Stage 1.
88. Teacher assessment of Year 2 pupils' attainment in 2001, at the expected National Curriculum level or above, was below average. However, at the higher Level 3, attainment was assessed as well above average. This pattern was repeated in 2002 when the percentage attaining the expected level was well below average, but the percentage attaining the higher level was well above average. A specific weakness for pupils was their understanding of materials and their properties.
89. In the 2001 tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' attainment was below average when compared with schools nationally and those in similar contexts at Level 4 and above. However, when compared nationally and with similar schools, attainment is well above average for pupils at the higher Level 5. In 2002, this pattern was repeated although the comparisons were less favourable. Currently there is no evidence of a difference in attainment by gender or ethnic origin. Pupils with SEN are making good progress. The progress made by Year 6 pupils, based on prior attainment, compared with all schools and those in similar contexts, was above average in 2001 and 2002.
90. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work. They enjoy their learning, co-operate well in small groups and are keen to undertake practical work. A Year 2 pupil said she enjoyed science because 'she liked finding things out'. Most pupils take care to present their work neatly, particularly when recording results. However, in all years there is room for improvement in the way some pupils present their work.
91. By Year 2 pupils can organise themselves to undertake a practical investigation. For example, in one lesson they were investigating the effect of 'location' on the melting of ice. They had an understanding of what was meant by a 'fair test', chose suitable locations with reasons, for the placement of their ice cubes, and made sensible predictions as to what the outcomes might be. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were discovering how a solid could be made to dissolve more quickly. They were using appropriate vocabulary, such as soluble, separate, filter and solution and were quick to realise that too many variables undermined the fairness of their test. In another lesson, Year 5 pupils were trying to establish which of three soil samples would be the most suitable habitat for worms to live in. The teacher used questioning well to recall events of the previous lesson, where the pupils had added water to sponge, oasis and compost, to find which of the three contained most air spaces. They used this knowledge as a basis for setting up their new experiment. From their recorded results, they realised that they would need to repeat the experiment several times to come to a firm conclusion.
92. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. Lessons are well structured with the intended outcomes stressed at the onset. In each case, pupils had an opportunity to find out information for themselves. Questioning is particularly good at the start of lessons, ranging from the open questions to generate ideas, to the more specific and thought-provoking, such as "how do we know when something has dissolved".
93. The subject is well led and its co-ordination has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator assists teachers with their planning and time is made available to monitor their classroom teaching. His knowledge and experience in the field of ICT, has enabled teachers to make greater use of computers in science lessons. A recent example being in a Year 4 class, where the computer traces of temperatures was introduced. Pupils use ICT to collect, store and retrieve temperatures and read other traces from the previous day, analysing the graphs. The policy and scheme meets the requirement of the National Curriculum. There are good links with personal, social and health education in topics such as, 'bacteria spreads bugs' and 'my body as a machine' and good procedures in place to assess and record pupil progress. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
94. Science displays feature prominently in classrooms. In a Year 1 class, pupils have been looking at different materials and have contributed key words to describe these. While in a Year 6 class a particularly good display records the results of dropping a sheet of A4 paper in seven different forms as part of a topic on gravity. A solar system display in a Year 5 class is particularly impressive as it contains views of the earth from space and the use of ICT to explain the phases of the moon.

95. There is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. These are well organised and easily accessible to teachers. There is a wide range of science books to support the work. These are underused in classroom displays. A recent visit by a theatre group performing 'The Amazing Mr Winchester', a play about forces, helped to raise the profile of science in school. The subject is making a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development, for example, through encouraging collaborative work in investigations and the local environment.

ART AND DESIGN

96. By the age of seven and 11-years-old, pupils attain standards, which are in line with national expectations. This reflects the findings of the last inspection report. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make good progress and develop their artistic skills well.
97. By the age of seven, pupils use paint and oil pastels satisfactorily to create self-portraits in the style of Picasso. They plan images satisfactorily, based on their dramatic interpretation of the Great Fire of London using photographs of their drama work and their printing investigations as starting points. By the age of 11, pupils have created images with a camera then created new backgrounds for their images using paint and pen. They have used a photographic program on the computer successfully to distort their original images, having been inspired by the work of Magritte and Miro. They draw detailed sketches of parts of local Victorian buildings and experiment well with the use of tone and shade using pencil.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. In the most effective lessons the teaching builds upon the previous learning and uses ideas that the pupils have already explored as in Year 2 pupils' Fire of London image plans. Good questioning by the teacher encourages the pupils to explain carefully their use of techniques. The teacher has good subject knowledge and uses and encourages pupils to use appropriate artistic vocabulary, such as, perspective and foreground. Where the teaching is less effective the teacher's subject knowledge is limited and the introductory part of the lesson is overlong, causing pupils to become restless.
99. Pupils are keen to do art activities and enjoy being creative. They listen very carefully to the teacher's explanations and respond to questions enthusiastically. During their lessons, the pupils work with enjoyment and concentration. They share tools when necessary, wait for their turn and readily help each other. Pupils try hard and are keen to try to explain the techniques they are using. By Year 6 pupils use appropriate vocabulary such as tone and contrast, to describe their work.
100. The provision for art and design is sound throughout the school. Pupils experience a wide range of artistic experiences and they are satisfactorily taught a range of techniques. During their time in school they are introduced to the works of a variety of artists, for example, Van Gogh; Picasso; Matisse; Gainsborough and Henry Moore. Few links are made to help pupils use their ICT skills to good effect in developing artwork. Satisfactory links are made with other subjects as, for example, younger pupils look for mathematical shapes in the Picasso's portrait paintings and in history pupils create pictures to represent the Great Fire of London.
101. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The resources available for teaching art are good. Procedures for monitoring and assessing art and design are satisfactory. Much of the pupils' work is attractively and creatively displayed around the school. Satisfactory links are made with the local secondary school. Recently a group of Year 6 pupils attended an arts day at the secondary school with an Aboriginal storyteller resulting in good quality paintings of patterns inspired by the stories.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Design and Technology is a strength of the school and by the age of seven and 11, pupils attain standards which are higher than average. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those, for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection when they were judged good.

103. At the end of Year 6, most pupils are able to follow design and making processes as well as evaluating their products. This is particularly evident in their current topic on healthy eating and in particular, sandwiches, when most pupils can explain what they are doing, using the appropriate technical vocabulary with confidence.
104. A broad range of design and technology experiences is offered to pupils. In Year 6, pupils make pencil cases and moving vehicles and in Year 5 they make biscuits in food technology. In Year 5 they also make moving toys and musical instruments. The design, making, and evaluation of products are a strength in the subject, particularly in Years 3 and 6. In Years 1 and 2 a well-designed scheme of work links skill development to the design, make and evaluation process. For example, in Year 2, pupils make marble runs that are linked to the skill of knowing how and being able to use a saw.
105. Teaching and learning is never less than satisfactory but is at its best in Years 1 and 6. Design and technology is keenly promoted by the co-ordinator and there are high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the subject and an enthusiasm for it. They plan their lesson activities carefully, with the help of the co-ordinator, enabling the pupils to use resources effectively in the practical work. As a result, the pupils have a good attitude to the subject and achieve well overall. They generally work purposefully and show a pride in their finished work. They are ready to help each other, sharing equipment sensibly and looking after it in a responsible way. The standard of marking has an impact on the quality of work achieved. It is particularly good in Year 3 where the teacher gives comments to help the pupils improve. However, there are instances of poor marking when inaccuracies in diagrams are not corrected and there is no indication of how the pupils could improve further.
106. The teachers have a pleasant relationship with their pupils and manage them well so lessons move forward at a steady pace. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils co-operated well in designing their own sandwich based on issues discussed and explored in previous lessons. Pupils know exactly what they have to do and concentrate hard but also help each other in the process. Although lower attainer pupils work more slowly, they do not lack confidence as they are given encouragement and practical help from fellow pupils and teachers.
107. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has kept up standards in this subject. The already thorough scheme of work is undergoing further refinement and the system of record keeping is in place but requires consistent use across the school. Evidence from teacher planning suggests that this subject has been thoroughly researched and planned. Health and safety issues are key aspects of the scheme of work. Resources are focused satisfactorily and are adequate to meet the school requirements. However, the use of ICT in the design process is currently underdeveloped.

GEOGRAPHY

108. From the observations of lessons, scrutiny of work, discussions with pupils and geography displays around the school, it can be judged that standards in Years 2 and 6 are average, reflecting the findings of the last report. All pupils are fully included in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory, and often good progress.
109. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is rarely less than satisfactory and usually good. They listen quietly to instructions and end of lesson summaries, and are keen to offer their comments. Very occasionally, one or two of the younger pupils become restless, fidget, and call out their answers without waiting to be asked. Pupils co-operate well in small group work, when they are given the opportunity.
110. By the age of seven, pupils are beginning to gain an understanding of the location of their school in the local environment. They have drawn sketches of their homes and school and simple plans of local features, such as the supermarket. In one lesson they were focusing on the 'nice' and 'nasty' features of their environment, from the point of view of a visitor to the area. Year 2 pupils working in small groups on their seaside project were recording, on a master sheet, where the class had been on holiday. This data was in turn represented on a three-dimensional graph and put onto the class computer.
111. Year 6 pupils have a sound grasp of the concepts of physical geography. In their autumn topic on rivers, they have been comparing the Thames with the Rhone. Their recent work has involved them learning about how the Rhone generates electricity by driving turbines, and its erosive effect when flowing over permeable rocks.

Younger pupils, in Year 3 have been measuring elements of the weather, such as rainfall, temperature and wind speed, recording their results in graphs. They have also learnt key words such as evaporation and condensation. In contrast, Year 4 pupils have been comparing life in Reading with the Indian village of Chembakolli.

112. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory, but with good features. Lessons are planned in detail, with learning objectives stressed at the start of the lesson. Some use of ICT is made, and although tasks are not always matched closely enough to ability, classroom assistants give pupils with SEN good support. Opportunities for Year 6 pupils to discuss their work in small groups, or for the more able to extend their knowledge, are not developed. Additionally, in some cases, work is poorly presented. Agreed procedures for the setting out of work are not being followed.
113. A clear subject policy takes account of the diverse background of the pupils, recognising the importance of equal opportunities. A useful scheme of work covers the relevant aspects of geography for all year groups. Satisfactory procedures are in place to assess pupils at the end of each work unit. For example, Year 1 pupils are asked to identify and record a variety of features from the local area and Year 2 pupils have to decide how the seaside environment differs from their own locality. The resources are satisfactory.
114. The subject is well led and its co-ordination has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has time to monitor planning and advise on the suitability of geography activities. However, as yet, she has not been allocated time to observe her colleagues teach, or for them to observe her.
115. Geography displays are a prominent feature of the school. In the junior hall, a good display develops the theme, 'Water', with pictures drawn by pupils showing how we use and abuse water. In Year 6, maps showing the development of Reading over four centuries, make a very effective link to the history of the region. The comparisons made between Reading and other communities of the world, and the 'One World Week', organised annually by the co-ordinator, contribute significantly to the pupils' personal development, by making them more aware of environmental concerns and the cultures of other countries.

HISTORY

116. In both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Boys and girls attain equally. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are given good support and are making good progress. The pupils enjoy history. They behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to work
117. By the end of Year 2, the pupils are beginning to understand how things change over time. They know that these changes can be shown by means of simple time lines. They know that toys have changed since Victorian times and that holidays a hundred years ago were very different from those we have today. However, many pupils find it difficult to record what they know in writing and standards of presentation are often unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the pupils make sound use of their computer skills by using a program that enables them to insert text in speech bubbles, to illustrate what characters such as Queen Victoria, Samuel Pepys and Guy Fawkes might have said. The pupils are able to look carefully at historical artefacts, in order to find clues about the past.
118. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of some aspects of local history, such as the important part played by Huntley and Palmers in Reading's industrial growth. They make effective use of their literacy skills to write clear accounts of this. In work linked to geography, the pupils can compare local maps of the sixteenth century with later maps, in order to learn how Reading's urban area has spread and how the former nursery garden areas are now rows of terraced housing. The pupils observe features that give clues about Reading's past, such as the abbey ruins and Old Mill Bridge. They look for clues in the old cemetery and, in work linked to literacy; they write effective poems about feelings evoked by this visit. Younger junior pupils know about aspects of life in Tudor England and in Ancient Egypt. They know why the Romans invaded Britain and the part played by Boudicca in opposing them.
119. During the inspection, teaching was generally good throughout the school. The teachers plan their lessons very well and they ensure that there are plenty of resources and other visual stimuli to aid learning. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher had copies of the original 1871 census for Reading, together with a modern transcription. This impacted well on the pupils' understanding of how lifestyles and employment

change over the years. It helped them to understand the importance of first-hand evidence in finding out about the past and it helped in developing the pupils' research skills. In a Year 4 lesson on sources of information about Boudicca's rebellion against the Romans, the teacher made useful comparisons with modern sources of information, such as the Internet, Yellow Pages and newspapers. The need for first-hand evidence was also shown in a Year 2 lesson on the Great Fire of London, where the teacher helped the pupils to understand that an eyewitness account, as recorded in Samuel Pepys' diary, is often an excellent clue to the past. The teachers use questioning well, in order to make the pupils think carefully and to become historical 'detectives'. 'What clues will you use to see if this is an old or a new toy?' asked a teacher in Year 1. This helped the pupils to observe closely the design, materials and methods of movement of a variety of dolls, teddy bears and cars and to decide on their age. The pupils learn that some old toys in fact look new, because they have not been played with a lot, whilst some modern toys are worn out through constant use. The teachers make good use of drama to enrich learning. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were given the opportunity to act out the role of Samuel Pepys and his servant as fire swept across London and the pupils responded very well to this. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils acted out the roles of sailors on 'The Golden Hind' and this helped in their understanding of what life was like on board ships in the time of Sir Francis Drake.

120. The teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in learning. Sometimes, however, the pupils spend rather too long on the carpet in whole class sessions, without being involved in active learning. Some teachers' match work well to pupils' differing needs, but this is inconsistent. Expectations for presentation of work are sometimes too low. The quality of marking of the pupils' work is variable and too often, the teachers do not suggest ways in which the pupils might improve.
121. A clear policy meets the requirement of the National Curriculum. Planning for the work that the pupils will do is good. The co-ordinator has assumed responsibility for the subject only since the start of this term and, as a consequence, she has not yet had the opportunity to check the subject's performance or the quality of teaching. At the end of each unit of work, the pupils' progress is noted, but this information is not yet being used sufficiently to plan work to meet the needs of pupils who are having difficulties. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning. The curriculum is enriched by visits to Reading Museum and other local sites and to places such as Hampton Court and Silchester. The teachers make effective use of visitors whenever possible. In this way, the subject is making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122. Standards are average for pupils at the ages of seven and 11. This is an improvement from the last inspection when they were found unsatisfactory. The school has made good improvement in the provision of ICT by purchasing new computer hardware, training the teaching staff and providing a policy and scheme of work to ensure progress to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Although the school has started to assess and record pupil achievement in the subject, this is still inconsistently used throughout the school. Pupils now have regular timetabled lessons and their knowledge, understanding and skills are much better than at the previous inspection.
123. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 it is evident from work scrutiny that pupils' progress in their understanding and ability to use a computer is satisfactory overall but they are at their best in Years 5 and 6. For example, pupils in a Year 6 class explored the effects of changing data in a spreadsheet based on multiplication tables. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learned to retrieve stored text, graphics, and photographs to select, merge, and make multi-media presentations. The school is beginning to make effective links with other subjects; for example, in a science lesson in Year 4, a class monitored the effects of temperature changes on a spreadsheet. The pupils' technical language is well developed and reinforced through the teaching and classroom ICT displays. The use of the Internet is not a strong feature of cross-curricular work.
124. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and is good when lesson preparation is thorough, accompanied by sound teacher knowledge. When it is good, teachers carefully question pupils to involve them and to check their knowledge. Pupils enjoy their work on the computers; they work well in pairs helping each other and concentrate on the task in hand. Their behaviour is very good. The establishment of a computer suite helps to promote their enthusiasm. There is a computer available in each classroom but little use was made of them during the inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers have

received training initiated by the co-ordinator as well as the New Opportunities Fund training from government sources. This has helped them to become more confident in using computers. This is reflected in the planning and recording documents. The teachers are ensuring that pupils attain the necessary skills and lessons are well explained.

125. The subject has received increased emphasis in recent years. There was evidence of a developing range of ICT applications in the school such as the use of digital cameras, data analysis through the use of spreadsheets and graphs and the beginnings of multi media presentations. The aspects of modelling and the planning of instructions for programmable devices are not yet developed sufficiently. The subject is well managed and co-ordinated. The ratio of computers to pupils is satisfactory but will need to be improved further to meet future targets. Teachers still need help in making ICT a stronger feature in other lessons. However, in art a computer software program helped pupils create new images via digital camera work. In addition, word text was used in a piece of imaginative writing on postcards from Bethlehem in RE studies.
126. Although there is some monitoring of the teaching of the subject, this is limited. The assessment information obtained has not yet been used sufficiently to plan pupils' future learning.

MUSIC

127. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age. This reflects the standards reported in the last inspection report for the younger pupils in Year 2 and a decrease in standards for the oldest pupils. This decline reflects the fact that in Years 5 and 6 less time is spent teaching music in the autumn and spring terms and teachers have limited subject knowledge. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make good progress, participate well in activities and make good gains in their knowledge and skills.
128. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing simple songs from memory with great enthusiasm and expression. Pupils in the school choir sing in a melodic and tuneful way whilst they rehearse for a forthcoming concert at a local theatre. All pupils have the opportunity to experience the music of different composers from a range of cultures and historical periods when entering and leaving the hall for collective worship.
129. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen carefully to musical extracts and identify the key instruments playing. They repeat simple clapping rhythms well. Pupils in Years 3 listen carefully to selections of music and can explain to each other, with reference to the tempo and pitch of the notes, the animal picture created by the music in their minds. In Year 4 pupils sing songs enthusiastically in preparation for the forthcoming Christmas production. In small groups, pupils put a lot of effort into refining their compositions that use a pentatonic scale. In Year 6 pupils work hard to create their own 30-second jingles using familiar tunes to promote products such as hair shampoo and hair gel. The pupils have limited composing and appraising skills and lack the appropriate vocabulary with which to discuss their musical work successfully.
130. Pupils are very enthusiastic about music lessons. Sometimes pupils are over exuberant and this limits the progress of the lesson. During music lessons, pupils work collaboratively, sharing ideas and respecting each other's views when they take part in class and group discussions. The oldest pupils find it hardest to explain their opinions using appropriate musical vocabulary.
131. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. In the most effective lessons the pupils are given plenty of opportunities to share their responses to the music with their peers and their teacher. The teacher's subject knowledge is good and good use is made of musical vocabulary, such as, pitch, tone and tempo. Where teaching is less effective the pupils are not able to participate actively enough due to the teacher spending too much time on explanation. The teacher's subject knowledge is limited and the pupils are not encouraged to discuss their work using appropriate musical vocabulary.
132. Music is managed satisfactorily by enthusiastic co-ordinators. As yet they have not had sufficient opportunity to develop all the teachers subject knowledge and confidence satisfactorily. Procedures for monitoring and assessing music have not yet been fully implemented in all the classes. Resources are sound with a satisfactorily equipped music room for individual instrumental teaching and some good quality percussion instruments for both infants and juniors pupils to use. There is a wide range of instrumental tuition, and a school choir.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. In both Year 2 and Year 6 standards are average which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. There is evidence that standards in swimming are average. All pupils are fully included in learning. Those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are making satisfactory progress. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. The pupils enjoy PE and they participate enthusiastically. They change into appropriate PE kit and listen carefully, responding quickly to instructions.
134. In Year 2, the pupils warm up for lessons by moving around the hall in different directions and at different speeds. They devise different methods of crossing mats. In Year 6, the pupils devise satisfactory sequences of movements in conjunction with a partner, incorporating symmetrical and asymmetrical rolls. About a quarter of the pupils attain high standards in this skill.
135. Teaching overall is satisfactory, although there are elements of good teaching in many lessons. The teachers plan their lessons well and they manage changing sessions efficiently. Class control is good. Lessons move along at a brisk pace, with no time wasted. The teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they ensure that the pupils are adequately warmed up before beginning the main activity. The teachers pay due attention to safety and they ensure that all jewellery is removed before lessons. There is some good teaching of specific PE skills. In a lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher gave clear explanations and demonstrations of the correct position to adopt at the start of a sprint race and this helped the pupils to understand how their race times might be improved. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher gave a good demonstration herself and this helped the pupils to improve the quality of their forward and backward rolls. She emphasised the importance of good control and posture and smoothness in the gymnastic sequence. This helped the pupils to develop good starting and finishing positions to their sequence. The teachers ensure that good routines are established in PE, such as the correct and safe handling of apparatus and equipment. Usually, they provide opportunities for the pupils to observe and evaluate the performance of others, so that ideas are developed and performance is improved. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher encouraged the pupils to suggest ways in which the gymnastic sequences of others might be improved.
136. The teachers motivate the pupils through praise but this is sometimes given too freely, with the result that the pupils see satisfactory performance as being very good. At times, opportunities to use pupils to demonstrate good practice are missed.
137. A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning of work is good and is based on a commercial scheme of work. There are good checks on pupils' progress in swimming, but not in other areas of PE. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to check the subject's performance throughout the school, nor the quality of teaching. There is good accommodation for PE and there is an adequate range of apparatus and equipment to support learning. The curriculum is enriched by a number of after-school and lunchtime sports clubs and by outdoor and adventurous activities, such as orienteering, for Year 6 pupils, during a residential visit to Hill End. In this way and in encouraging the pupils to work collaboratively, the subject makes a positive contribution to their personal development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. In both Year 2 and Year 6 standards are satisfactory, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. All pupils are fully included in learning. Those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Boys and girls attain equally. The pupils behave well in lessons and they are keen to learn.
139. By Year 2, the pupils know about the Nativity story. They have a satisfactory understanding of why a church is special to Christians. They visit Park Church and learn about the purpose of features such as the altar and the font. They understand the importance of baptism. The pupils observe Christian artefacts, such as the crucifix, and they write simple sentences to describe them. Standards of writing and presentation, however, are weak.

140. By Year 6, the pupils are familiar with some aspects of the life of Jesus. They know that the Bible is special to Christians, but they do not have a satisfactory understanding of terms such as 'ascension', 'Lent' or 'Advent'. The pupils have a satisfactory understanding of some aspects of Islam, such as the Five Pillars, the Qu'ran, Ramadan and the Mosque. They know that Hindus believe in one God, but with many faces. They are familiar with the story of Rama and Sita and they know how Hindus worship in their homes. They understand the significance of Divali in Hinduism. The pupils know something about the role played by music and art in different religions, such as stained glass windows, prayer mats, sculpture and gospel music. Younger pupils in the juniors make effective use of their literacy skills by writing imaginative postcards from Bethlehem, describing their feelings about being in the place of Jesus' birth.
141. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school, although there are examples of good teaching. The teachers make effective use of the personal experiences of staff and of pupils whenever possible. For example, some Muslim pupils in Year 6 have spoken to the others about prayer in Islam and this gives the pupils a first-hand account of practice. The teachers try to foster a sense of spirituality in lessons. This was illustrated well in a Year 4 lesson, where the teacher played some quiet classical music as the pupils settled down on the carpet. The teacher made effective use of drama to enrich learning about the Nativity story. Selected pupils played the role of the shepherds, whilst other pupils asked them about their reactions to the appearance of the angels. Lessons are well planned and the teachers ensure that there are plenty of visual material to aid learning. In lessons for pupils in Year 6, for example, the teachers had prepared useful displays of illustrations and a vicar's robe and this helped the pupils understand how colours, shapes and symbols are used to convey feelings and ideas in different religions. They know why Christians often use the image of a fish and how the colours of a Vicar's vestments change over the course of the year. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to talk about the feelings of characters in the Nativity and this gave them a clearer picture of the events that happened in the story.
142. Work is not always matched sufficiently to pupils' differing needs and at times, the pace of learning drops. The teachers do not always make the most efficient use of learning support assistants during whole class sessions. At times, the pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet and they are not involved in active learning. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively, but they do not often suggest ways in which work might be improved.
143. A clear policy meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. There is good planning of work, based on national guidelines. The co-ordinator, who is a theology graduate, has made a good start in managing the subject. He has increased resources for teaching and learning and these are now adequate. He has not yet had the opportunity to check the subject's performance throughout the school, nor the quality of teaching. However, he offers help and advice to colleagues as necessary and this is helping them to gain confidence in teaching the subject, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. He has taught a model lesson to help one colleague. Pupils' progress is checked at the end of each unit of work, but information from this is not yet being used to match work more closely to the needs of those pupils who are having difficulties. The co-ordinator is trying to establish closer links with the Muslim community, for example through visiting local mosques. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.