

INSPECTION REPORT

MUSWELL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Muswell Hill, London

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 131871

Headteacher: Ms J Hughes

Reporting inspector: Kathryn Taylor
22424

Dates of inspection: 10th - 13th March 2003

Inspection number: 248863

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Top of Muswell Hill Muswell Hill London
Postcode	N10 3ST
Telephone number:	(0208) 444 8488
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Stephen Engelhard
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable - designated new school

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22424	K Taylor	Registered inspector	History English as an additional language Educational inclusion	Standards How well are pupils taught?
9163	G Humphreys	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' attitudes and values The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
16761	M Hemmings	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Art and design	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23044	V Singleton	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs English Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
27667	C Renault	Team inspector	The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage of learning Music Religious education	
28200	P Stevens	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Muswell Hill Primary School is a new school that was formed in May 2000 following the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools. The school is oversubscribed. It is bigger than most primary schools and currently has 420 boys and girls aged between 4 and 11, arranged into 14 single-aged classes. The school does not have its own nursery. Children join the Reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. The children have a fairly wide range of attainment when they start school, but inspectors judged that overall attainment is above is that usually found. Thirty per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Pupils' ethnic origins are fairly diverse. The main ethnic minority groups are Turkish, Greek, Albanian, Afro-Caribbean, Black African, Chinese, Indian and Pakistani. Eight pupils are refugees. Seventy-three pupils learn English as an additional language, which is a high proportion. Sixteen pupils are currently at the early stages of learning English. The main first languages spoken are Turkish, Greek, Farsi and Albanian. Twenty-four pupils receive specific additional support through the ethnic minority achievement grant funding. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is in line with the national average. The number of pupils on the special needs register is in line with the national average. Twenty-four pupils are on the higher stages of the special needs register, including nine pupils who have a statement of special educational need. Pupils' special needs relate to learning, behaviour, physical disability and medical needs. The socio-economic circumstances of the majority of pupils attending the school are favourable. Staff and pupil mobility is fairly low.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, where each child is respected and valued as an individual. Standards and pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are good. Racial harmony is very good. The teachers and support staff, parents and governors have a strong sense of shared purpose and a commitment to the school and pupils. Staff morale is high and the staff work well as a team. The teaching is good. The headteacher and seniors managers have worked very hard and successfully to amalgamate the former infant and junior schools so that the school is now well placed to make further improvements. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, art, physical education and music are above national expectations by age seven and 11. Pupils make good progress in these subjects.
- The teaching is good.
- There are strengths in the headteacher's, senior staff and governors' leadership and management of the school. Some subjects are well led and managed.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Relationships are excellent: boys and girls and pupils of different ability and from different ethnic backgrounds relate very well to each other and to adults.
- The school offers a good curriculum, which promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- The provision for pupils with special needs is good.

What could be improved

- The school's management structure: the headteacher and deputy headteachers are carrying too much responsibility for managing subjects rather than developing a strategic overview.
- In some subjects, standards, the curriculum coverage and teaching are not being monitored carefully enough.
- The way that teachers check pupils' progress in some subjects and the quality of teachers'

marking.

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

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools*
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	B	A	A
mathematics	A	B	A	A
science	B	B	A	A

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

* *Similar school refers to schools nationally with a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals.*

The table above shows that in the tests in 2002, at age 11, overall standards in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average and those achieved in similar schools. Nearly all pupils achieved at least the expected Level 4 and about half of all pupils attained the higher Level 5. The targets agreed with local education authority were met. In the tests at age seven in 2002, overall standards in reading were above the national average and those in similar schools. In writing standards were well above those in similar schools and schools nationally. In mathematics, standards were above the national average and well above those in similar schools. Teacher assessments in science indicated that results were similar to those achieved nationally and a good proportion attained the higher Level 3. Standards in the current Year 2 and 6 classes are similar to those achieved in the tests last year. There are no significant differences in the test results of boys and girls. Test results at age 11 have indicated some differences in the attainment levels of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Although the school has taken positive action to raise staff awareness and pupils' self-esteem, as well as to include some of the older pupils in booster classes, the school has yet to precisely determine which pupils are underachieving, why this is the case and therefore what action still needs to be taken.

Inspection evidence shows that children in the Reception classes make satisfactory progress across all areas of learning and attain standards above those usually found by the time they join Year 1. Pupils' attainments in English, mathematics, science, art, physical education and music are above national expectations by age seven and 11, and pupils make good progress in these subjects. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and pupil progress is satisfactory overall. Nevertheless, there is the potential to raise standards in these

subjects further. Pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils with a statement of special educational need, make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils who learn English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in acquiring English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and work hard in lessons. They clearly enjoy school and are very happy. They are confident, polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors. These very positive attitudes make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons, at break and lunch times, and move around the school in an orderly and considerate manner.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent. Pupils develop into mature individuals who care for each other and demonstrate very strong moral values.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average and most pupils arrive on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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.

Throughout the school the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are well organised and prepared for lessons. They provide interesting activities. Pupils enjoy very positive relationships with teachers and the support staff and their personal development is promoted very well. The teaching of English and mathematics is good: the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. Some relevant links are made between subjects. However, in subjects such as history, geography and religious education, pupils are not given enough opportunities to write about what they have learned, especially the pupils in Years 3 to 6. Science, information, and communication technology, music, physical education and art are taught well. No judgements could be made about the teaching of design and technology because there is insufficient evidence. Teachers could make better use of marking, both to check pupils' progress and to inform pupils about how they might improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and includes all subjects. An appropriate amount of time is given to English and mathematics and good attention is given to music, art and drama. The provision of extra-curricular activities, including visits, is very good. Very good use is made of the local

	community, visitors and visits to places of interest.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are supported well in class by teaching assistants and the trained specialist needs assistants. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored. The special needs co-ordinator has a clear idea about how things can still be improved and has taken action to begin to address this. Pupils are also supported very well by the school's very positive ethos.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. Pupils are given extra support in class. However, class teachers and the support staff need further training and guidance on how best to meet pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The school has a very strong moral code and pupils' social development is given a very high priority from the time when they start in Reception. The teaching and the curriculum promote pupils' personal development very well. The rich ethnic diversity found within the school community is reflected in the curriculum.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Staff know the pupils very well and care for their individual needs in a most supportive and sensitive way. Pupils' academic progress in some subjects, however, is not always being checked regularly and rigorously enough.

Parents have very positive views of the school and links with parents are very good. Parental support for their children's education makes a strong contribution to pupils' standards and progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and deputy headteachers lead and manage the school well. There is a strong commitment to high standards. The school provides a very happy and secure environment for all of its pupils. Some subjects are well led and managed, but other subjects have no co-ordinator or someone acting in a temporary capacity, and developments have been limited. This situation also significantly increases the workload on the headteacher and deputy headteachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are very involved and very supportive the school and bring a range of expertise to the task. While governors do carry out formal monitoring of work in some subjects, this could be extended.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school compares its test results with schools locally and nationally. There are secure systems for monitoring standards, teaching and learning in a few subjects. Extending this to other subjects and aspects of the school would help the senior managers to develop a more critical analysis and a longer-term strategy for development, now that the amalgamation has been successfully completed.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Finances are used well to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment, progress and personal development. Special grants are used for their specified purposes and the school successfully bids for additional funding. The school takes appropriate steps to ensure that it obtains best value in its spending. A weakness is that teachers are not given enough responsibility for managing subjects.

Staffing levels are very good. The school is fully staffed and staff turnover is fairly low. The accommodation has been improved very well as part of the process of amalgamation and the headteacher and governors have worked very determinedly to achieve this. Resources are of good quality and are well chosen.

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 and behave well. • The school is well led and managed. • The standard of teaching is good. • Staff are very approachable and listen to any concerns or problems. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • The quality of care and pastoral support provided for their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of information provided, particularly about their children's progress. • Better use of homework to support their children's learning.

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Inspectors also felt that if the school shared more information about expected National Curriculum attainment levels and about

the targets that are set for their children, that parents would be better informed, more able to provide support for their children's learning and have a better understanding of how well their children are achieving. The inspectors judged that the use of homework is generally satisfactory. At the meeting for parents and in the letters accompanying parent questionnaires, a fair proportion of parents felt that the school could stretch higher attaining pupils a bit more. Inspectors noted that there are some effective systems to stretch pupils and boost their attainment in English and mathematics in Years 2, 5 and 6. However, inspectors also judged that pupils could sometimes be stretched a bit further.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter the school, although there is a wide range of prior attainment, overall attainment levels are above those usually found. The children make satisfactory progress during their time in the Reception classes and standards exceed those expected by the time the children join Year 1.
2. In the national tests and assessments for seven-year-olds in 2002, the proportion of pupils who attained at least the expected Level 2 was in line with the national average in mathematics and science, was above the national average in reading and well above it in writing. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was average in reading, above average in mathematics and science and well above average in writing. Standards in the current Year 2 classes are similar to those found last year, although more pupils are likely to attain the higher Level 3 in reading by the end of this year than was the case last year.
3. In the tests at age 11, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics was well above the national average, and in science it was above the national average. Around half of all pupils attained the higher Level 5 in all three subjects, a proportion that is well above the national average. In the current Year 6 classes, standards in English, mathematics and science are similar to those achieved in the tests last year; pupils' overall attainment exceeds national expectations. The school's targets agreed with the Local Education Authority of 91 per cent of pupils to attain Level 4 in English and 94 per cent in mathematics in 2003 are likely to be met. In 2002, pupils' test results exceeded the targets agreed. Test results at age seven and 11 compare favourably with those in similar schools based on free school meals. Test results at age seven have stayed much the same since the amalgamation of the two schools, while those in Year 6 have improved.
4. There are no significant differences in the test results of boys and girls. The local education authority's analysis of test results at age 11, however, has indicated some differences in the attainment levels of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Consequently, one of the school's main priorities over the past eighteen months has been focused on raising the attainment of ethnic minority pupils. Although the school has taken action to raise staff awareness, to raise pupils' self-esteem and has deliberately include some of these pupils in the booster classes for older pupils, more action is still needed to determine which pupils are underachieving, why this is the case and therefore what action still needs to be taken.
5. Pupils' attainment in art, physical education and music exceeds national expectations by age seven and 11. Many pupils achieve well in these subjects. Extra-curricular activities make an important contribution to these high standards; for example, visitors come to school to work with pupils on art projects, and at lunchtimes adults regularly and specifically teach pupils games skills and play games with the pupils. In music a large number of pupils have individual or small group instrumental tuition and there is regular practice for the choir and orchestra. Furthermore, all pupils have access to some specialist music teaching.
6. In information and communication technology, history and geography, pupils attain standards at age seven and 11 that are broadly in line with those expected. In religious education, pupils' attainments broadly meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by age seven and 11. There is insufficient evidence of pupils' past work to make a judgement about standards or progress in design and technology.

7. Pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils with a statement of special need, make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. Pupils are given much support in class so they make good progress overall in their learning. The school has not drawn up a list of gifted and talented pupils. It is clear, however, that the school does have a number of pupils with particular talents in music, and these pupils attain standards well above national expectations.
8. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in acquiring English during their time at the school. Improved identification of pupils' precise needs would enable support to be more focused and pupils to progress at a faster rate.
9. Most pupils achieve well in a number of subjects. There is the potential to continue to raise standards, especially in subjects such as religious education, history, geography and design technology. This can be achieved by implementing better systems to regularly assess pupils' attainment and monitor their progress in these subjects, and by improving the leadership and management of some subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school and towards their work are very good. They listen attentively to their teachers, show high levels of interest and make a positive and often enthusiastic contribution to lessons. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and those who returned questionnaires confirmed that their children are happy at school, behave well and show respect for adults and each other.
11. Children in the Reception classes have settled well into the routine of school life. They have very good listening skills, follow instructions and demonstrate very good independence and self-discipline, for example, holding up a hand to gain the attention of a teacher or to answer a question. They have very good social skills and collaborate well together during structured play, using their imagination, sharing ideas and showing high levels of interest. The children are highly motivated and really enjoy their learning.
12. Many other very good and excellent learning attitudes were observed across the school. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class worked hard on a practical science task when there were asked to evaluate and record how different materials stretched when pulled. They worked in teams, with each pupil taking responsibility for different aspects of the task such as pulling, measuring the amount of stretch and recording the result. In a geography lesson, where Year 3 pupils were mapping and planning a town, learning attitudes were excellent, as they were in a Year 5 drama lesson where pupils were creating and portraying the un-revealed backgrounds to the characters in the poem 'The Highwayman'. Pupils with special needs and those learning English as an additional language have very positive attitudes towards their work. They try hard and take a pride in their own successes. They behave well in class and around the school and are accepted and cared for very well by other pupils and enjoy genuine friendships and very positive relationships.
13. As pupils progress through the school, their interest and enthusiasm for their learning continue to develop. In a Year 5 geography lesson, for example, pupils showed sensitivity and genuine concern when considering how precious water is in some poorer countries, and

in an English lesson, Year 6 pupils demonstrated a remarkable maturity when discussing the issues around fox hunting.

14. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. There has been only one temporary exclusion in the past twelve months. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and towards adults, often standing aside or holding a door open to let others pass, and exchanging a friendly greeting. Staff value pupils and treat them with respect and consideration and this underpins the excellent relationships that are clearly in evidence throughout the school. Boys and girls, pupils of differing ability, including those who find learning difficult or have a physical disability, and those drawn from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds relate extremely well to each other. Parents at the meeting praised highly this aspect of the school. Pupils develop into mature individuals who care for each other and have strong moral values.
15. Pupils have the confidence to take the initiative and willingly accept the responsibilities they are given. Many older pupils in Years 5 and 6 train to become 'playmates' so that they can befriend and care for younger pupils. The elected members of the school council take their role very seriously and are involved in planning for fundraising, improvements to recreational activities and the whole school environment. Classroom monitors regularly help with the preparation and clearing up before and after lessons. Pupils also learn to take the initiative and responsibility for aspects of their own learning. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average and most pupils arrive on time. Pupils are very quick to settle at the start of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Throughout the school the overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching and learning were good or better in four out of every five lessons seen during the inspection, and some of this teaching was very good and occasionally excellent.
17. The teaching seen in Reception classes was good overall. Strengths in teaching include the relationships between adults and children, which ensures that children settle down well, are happy, secure and behave very well. Good, simple routines have been established well, which helps children move from one activity to another in an orderly, safe way. Children can access equipment readily, developing independence and self-confidence. A high level of adult support ensures that children receive a lot of individual attention and encouragement. Many activities enable the children to learn purposefully through investigation and play, both indoors and outdoors. The provision for outdoor play is well planned and supports learning across all areas of the curriculum. The basic skills of reading writing and mathematics are taught well. An area for improvement lies in making better use of records of children's attainments to plan how to extend their learning and move it on at a faster pace.
18. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of most subjects they teach and this has been very well supported by the training opportunities provided in recent years. Some further training is needed in the teaching of religious education. Other strengths of teaching include very good pupil management that is based on positive discipline, encouragement and support for pupils. This results in very positive relationships between teachers and pupils. Very good attention is given to pupils' personal development; the key skills of independent working, paired and group work are established well. Classroom organisation and preparation is good. Teachers plan activities and choose resources that pupils find interesting and this makes learning enjoyable and more meaningful. Teachers frequently make good and relevant links between pupils' learning across a range of subjects. Better use could sometimes be made of pupils' good writing skills to support their learning in subjects such as history, geography, and religious education, especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils do not regularly write about their work in these subjects. The way

that teachers organise pupils' work in these subjects and in science is also not helpful in enabling pupils, teachers or parents to see how children are progressing during the year. The support staff are usually well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning and their personal development. Some are very skilled and experienced.

19. English and mathematics are taught well. Teachers have a good understanding of both subjects and of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and teach the basic skills well. In English, teachers effectively support and guide pupils to develop their independent writing and provide opportunities for pupils to revise and edit their work. They also use drama well and select lively and interesting texts to engage the pupils' interest and develop their ideas. Mathematics lessons are stimulating and usually include a lively mental mathematics sessions and interesting activities such as games. In both English and mathematics lessons, teachers frequently use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and move pupils learning on.
20. Science is taught well. The skills of fair testing and scientific investigation are emphasised and there is some good questioning in lessons. The higher-attaining pupils could, however, sometimes be challenged more effectively by the teaching. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology (ICT), is currently teaching the subject to all classes, with class teachers supporting in lessons. This is helping to move pupils' learning on at a good rate and pupils are catching up quickly. This is because the co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and works well with class teachers to ensure that work is linked to the pupils' classwork. Class teachers now need to extend the use of ICT to support pupils' work in class.
21. Art and physical education are taught well, with good attention given to developing skills and plenty of time given to practising these. Class teachers teach music well. Music taught by specialist teachers is of a very good standard. Although the teaching and learning seen in some history, geography and religious education lessons during the inspection week was good, overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. This is because the key skills are not being taught or developed in a systematic way and there are inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' finished work from one year group to the next. No judgements can be made about the teaching of design and technology because no lessons were taught during the inspection period, pupils' past work had been taken home. It is clear that there is also some confusion about which activities are design and technology and which are art and design.
22. Teachers usually maintain at least a satisfactory overview of pupils' learning during lessons and this is frequently supported by the teachers' good questioning. Pupils are grouped appropriately in lessons, sometimes according to their prior attainment. In the English and mathematics lessons seen, the planned tasks usually matched the needs of different groups of pupils and lower-attaining pupils were given extra adult support. In other subjects however, teachers' planning rarely outlines the expected learning outcomes for pupils of different abilities. Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning.
23. Pupils with special needs receive plenty of support so they can take a full part in lessons and class teachers and special needs support assistants also plan regularly together for these pupils. Pupils with a statement of special needs are effectively supported by well-trained special needs assistants who frequently take responsibility for producing work at an appropriate level matched to the teacher's planning. They also take responsibility for regularly addressing the targets in pupils' individual education plans and for recording pupils' progress. Class teachers sometimes do not give enough time to ensuring that pupils understand, which can affect pupils' rate of progress. Regular access to individual word processors helps pupils who have weak hand control achieve well in written tasks.

24. The teaching of pupils who learn English as an additional language is satisfactory. Pupils receive extra support from teaching assistants or class teachers, which helps them to access the curriculum and learn at a satisfactory pace. There needs, however, to be greater emphasis on providing focused teaching to develop pupils' spoken language and extend their vocabulary and understanding of it. While there are some examples of good practice, in general, teachers could give more attention to emphasising and explaining new vocabulary and developing these pupils' speaking skills.
25. The very good and occasionally excellent teaching was seen in several English, mathematics and music lessons. In addition, the teaching in two geography lessons, a science lesson, a religious education lesson, and a drama lesson and in two lessons in Reception was very good or excellent. What often marked this high quality teaching is the teachers' very good subject knowledge, high expectations and a very good pace to lessons. This frequently resulted in pupils working very hard and attaining good standards.

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

26. The curriculum is good overall, with strengths in the provision for the core subjects, music and art. All pupils have access to a range of interesting and stimulating learning experiences, within a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. All statutory requirements are met, including the requirements to teach religious education in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. There is appropriate provision for sex education, and as part of their work in science, the pupils are helped to develop positive attitudes towards healthy eating and are made aware of the harmful effects of drugs. Swimming lessons are provided for pupils in Year 6 so that by the time that they leave school, nearly all pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres.
27. The curriculum for Reception children is good and this prepares them well for the introduction of the National Curriculum in Year 1. Learning is securely based on the six areas of learning recommended for young children and provides a good range of interesting and relevant activities. Planning to support children's personal, social and emotional development is carefully linked to supporting other aspects of learning. There is good provision for outdoor play and activities, which enhances learning in all areas but particularly the children's language, physical, creative and social skills.
28. In Years 1 to 6, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and adapted as necessary and a number of additional literacy and numeracy programmes have been implemented, including booster classes. All of this contributes well to the high standards in both subjects. Science provision is good, with appropriate emphasis on practical activities and scientific investigations. The recent opening of a computer suite has improved the provision for information and communication technology. This provides opportunities for whole class teaching of basic skills.
29. Since the amalgamation, the staff have gradually been reviewing the curriculum for each subject so as to develop a coherent whole school approach from Reception to Year 6. Work in some subjects, for example, design and technology, geography, religious education and history, has not yet been reviewed. Current arrangements are not secure enough to ensure that pupils develop all of the necessary skills, understanding and knowledge in a progressive way as they move up the school. Different approaches to teaching are

sometimes evident in the lower and upper school. There is good provision for personal, social and health education, with activities being carefully planned to help pupils to learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults and to develop their self-esteem. The provision for extra-curricular activities, including educational visits, residential trips and visitors to school, is very good. Pupils take part in a rich variety of experiences in art, drama and music. There are visits to the many places of educational interest in London such as the National Art Gallery and the National History Museum. Visitors, including artists, musicians and theatre groups, work with the pupils to develop a wide range of skills. Pupils take part in a variety of musical and drama performances. The curriculum comes alive through first-hand experiences, such as celebrations of 'Egyptian Days' and 'Roman Days', when pupils dress up, make and eat food from those eras.

30. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils have access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Extra help is arranged for pupils, mostly within the class. Pupils benefit from the good focus on teaching basic skills of literacy and numeracy, and from activities that involve hands-on experiences. This was evident in drama activities and music lessons, for example. The very positive ethos, inclusive environment and the emphasis on raising pupils' self-esteem offers very good support to pupils with special needs and contributes significantly to their success.
31. The school has a very good written policy for monitoring and promoting race equality. This makes clear the intentions and what the school is working towards. Teachers make effective use of opportunities to incorporate, reflect upon and promote the diverse cultural heritage of pupils attending the school, for example, through the curriculum, celebrations and focused events such as Black History Month and Multicultural Mathematics Week. Recent initiatives to promote pupils' writing in home languages have been successful in raising awareness and in promoting pupils' confidence and self-esteem. All of this supports pupils well because it is clear that all pupils are accepted and valued.
32. The provision for pupils who learn English as an additional language is satisfactory, but with areas needing improvement. The very good levels of support staff mean that pupils are supported to access the curriculum and make sound progress. Greater attention, however, needs to be given to determining pupils' precise linguistic needs and providing focused support to address them.
33. There are strong links with the community that also make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Parental input supports the successful running of the school orchestra and some of the after-school activities are led by groups from the community, such as representatives from the 'Palace Soccer Skills Group' who work with pupils to develop their football skills. Pupils visit the local Baptist Church to sing to members of the congregation. Links with local businesses resulted in members of the community coming into school to help pupils with their reading. The headteacher is keen to strengthen the links with the local secondary school, so as to better prepare pupils in Year 6 for when they transfer there.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' spiritual awareness is promoted through assemblies and the curriculum, especially subjects such as English, science, music, religious education and art. Work in these subjects provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and others' feelings and emotions and to celebrate their own and others' achievements. There are very good

opportunities for pupils to develop their independence and to take some responsibility for their own learning.

35. The school provides very well for pupils' moral development. There is a clear moral code that is promoted consistently. Positive behaviour and values are fostered very well through the supportive and caring relationships that exist between all staff and pupils. In school assemblies, and through many areas of the curriculum, opportunities are taken to demonstrate the differences between right and wrong and the importance of truth, justice and fairness.
36. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Teachers provide many planned opportunities in lessons for pupils to collaborate and work together. As a result, pupils learn to respect others' ideas and contributions. Pupils are also encouraged to develop an appreciation of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. They frequently raise money for a range of national and local charities and pupils themselves initiate some such fundraising events. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities provided for them to exercise leadership, be independent and take responsibility for their actions and learning. The effective organisation and leadership by supervisory staff and site manager of the leisure and sporting activities at break times and lunchtimes make a very good contribution to the development of pupils' social skills. During these times, pupils also learn a variety of social skills, such as working together and caring for others. Pupils are given opportunities, in and out of classrooms, to show initiative and take responsibility, which supports their personal development well. A good example of this is the school council, which allows pupils to express their views about school issues and learn about the democratic process.
37. The school provides very well for pupils' cultural development and the multicultural aspect is very strong. Through subjects such as music, history, literature and art and through visits to places of cultural and historic interest, there are very good opportunities for pupils to explore the values and traditions of the diversity of British society and of customs in other places and in times gone by. Through the religious education syllabus, pupils are able to study and develop an appreciation of other world religions. They learn to understand the benefits of racial harmony, equality of opportunity, and to appreciate their rights and responsibilities in a modern, ethnically diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Pupils are very well cared for. This view is shared by the large number of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and by those who returned questionnaires. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and care for their individual needs in a most supportive and sensitive way. The procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' personal development are very good. Equality of opportunity is positively promoted to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnic origin, ability or learning difficulty, are fully included in all opportunities provided by the school.
39. There is rigorous attention to all matters relating to health and safety. The governors' effective health and safety committee ensures that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken in relation to the use of school premises, particularly when buildings and the site are being refurbished, and for all school trips. There are regular evacuation drills and fire and electrical equipment is routinely tested. There are good arrangements for the provision of first aid. Personal hygiene practice is emphasised, particularly to younger

pupils and Reception children. Children learn, for example, the importance of washing their hands after practical activities, before lunch and after visiting the toilet.

40. The headteacher is the designated person in charge of child protection and established procedures are effective. All members of staff are alert to the needs of vulnerable pupils and aware of the guidelines for dealing with sensitive issues. The school maintains close links with social services and other relevant outside agencies. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The management of behaviour is consistent throughout the school. Good learning attitudes are much encouraged and celebrated and this results in pupils almost always striving to do their best. Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour, or showing a lack of consideration towards others, are dealt with effectively and sensitively. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and this has resulted in an improvement in attendance since the school was first established.
41. Some improvements are needed to the monitoring of pupils' academic progress. The school, in line with all other schools, is preparing to implement new national assessment procedures for children in the Reception classes. Reception teachers maintain good and regular records of children's attainment, but this information is not used well enough to plan for the next steps in learning so as to challenge the children. In Years 1 to 6 there are some good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress in science and in ICT is also being assessed regularly. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment progress in most other subjects are largely informal and are not thorough enough. Furthermore, because the subject co-ordinators are not regularly sampling pupils' work, there are few other systems to determine whether pupils acquire all of the subject-specific skills. Teachers effectively use the information gained from English and mathematics assessments to group pupils according to their ability, to set individual targets for pupils and to identify which pupils will be included in booster classes. There is as yet, however, less evidence of how teachers incorporate pupils' individual targets into their teaching plans. Although there are some examples of good practice, in general teachers' marking does not do enough to inform pupils about how they can improve their work. Teachers rarely direct pupils to correct or repeat aspects of their work and therefore learn from their mistakes in this way.
42. The progress of pupils with special needs is being checked and reviewed effectively and statutory requirements in relation to pupils with a statement of special needs are met. The targets on pupils' individual education plans are very clear, attainable and relevant. The fact that all adults associated with each pupil are present when reviews are made and new targets set helps ensure a cohesive approach, which benefits the pupils, and results in good progress being made. Procedures for identifying pupils' needs, including pupils' mathematical needs, are improving. Teachers have received some training in how to determine the level of English fluency of those pupils who learn English as an additional language. However, individual learning targets that are set for pupils largely refer to developing their reading and writing skills rather than their oral skills. Individual learning targets have also been set for all pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. These targets, and those for pupils learning English, are too broad, as, for example, 'use a wider range of vocabulary', 'begin to describe in more detail' and 'develop an already growing vocabulary'. The targets need to be broken down into more measurable steps so that pupils' progress can be checked more effectively.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires expressed some very positive views about the school. They are pleased that their children like school and behave well, and consider the school to be well led and managed and the standard of teaching to be good. Most find the staff are very approachable and prepared to listen to any concerns or problems and believe that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. They appreciate the quality of care and pastoral support provided for their children. The inspection evidence supports these positive views.
44. Some parents would like to see an improvement in the quality of information provided, particularly about their children's progress. The inspectors judged that if the school were to share with parents more information about expected National Curriculum levels and the targets that are set for pupils, that parents might then have a better understanding. Some parents felt that there could be a better use of homework to support pupils' learning. Inspectors judged that the use of homework is satisfactory.
45. The school is very welcoming towards parents and endeavours to involve them as much as possible in the education of their children and the majority of parents respond very positively to this openness. The home-school agreement clearly defines the expectations of the school, parents and pupils. There is a regular flow of information about what is taught and related topics and about school activities and special events. The school has in the past also organised literacy and numeracy workshops for parents but these have not always been well attended. At the pre-inspection meeting, some parents said they would like more meetings of this kind and requested that these be held in the evenings to accommodate working parents. At a meeting during the inspection, a number of Turkish parents, some of whom have limited use of the English language, also requested that more information be provided in Turkish. The school agreed to explore ways of satisfying these requests. Turkish parents and their children do benefit from the fact that the school now employs a Turkish speaking teaching assistant who translates for them. Parents appreciate how this has helped them to understand what is happening in school.
46. Annual progress reports provide a summary of the curriculum and areas of learning covered by each pupil. In some subjects they could provide more precise information on pupils' actual progress and attainment. The home-school diaries are used well to track pupils' progress in reading. Parents of children who have special needs work closely with the school and are kept well informed so they can help support their child's learning and development
47. There is a very active 'School Parents' Association' that is extremely well supported. The association organises social and fundraising events and is involved in many of the initiatives to improve the school environment and facilities. A significant number of parent volunteers provide support for practical activities during and after the school day and many undergo special training in order to help children learn to read and develop their literacy skills. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good, as is their contribution to their children's learning in school and at home. The close partnership between the school and parents has developed very well since the new school came into existence two years ago.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The headteacher, key staff and governing body overall provide good leadership and management of the school. They have worked very hard and successfully to amalgamate the former infant and junior schools, bring together the staff of the two schools and to considerably improve the accommodation and facilities. The headteacher has a clear commitment to good relationships within the school and equality of opportunity for all pupils. These aims are reflected in the very positive ethos, pupils' self-esteem and respect for all, that are well established. She has built up a secure staff team and there is a shared sense of purpose and commitment, based on high expectations of pupils' standards in numeracy, literacy, science and the creative arts.
49. The senior staff take an active part in management of the school and they offer good support to the headteacher and to the staff. However, because of the limited number of designated subject co-ordinators, the headteacher and deputy headteachers have too many curriculum and other responsibilities at present and this detracts from their ability to develop a long-term strategy for the school.
50. The subject co-ordinators who are in post are carrying out their role effectively and are aware of their responsibility for raising standards and monitoring aspects of their subjects. To date, apart from in English and mathematics, their main focus on monitoring has been to monitor teachers' planning. The monitoring of teaching has largely been carried out by the local education authority staff, the mathematics coordinator, the headteacher and deputy headteachers, with the specific focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Work in science is being co-ordinated well but as yet there are too few opportunities to monitor actual teaching and learning. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology is presently responsible for teaching the subject to all classes. This has resulted in very good progress being made in the work in the subject, and very good opportunities for the training all the staff, which has considerably raised their skills and confidence. The Foundation Stage of learning (provision in the Reception classes) is currently being managed by the headteacher. She regularly monitors teachers' planning and the teaching. There is good provision for training so that all staff have good knowledge of the curriculum, which is well planned and resourced.
51. One of the deputy headteachers is the co-ordinator of the provision for pupils who learn English as an additional language and raising the achievement of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. Since she took on this role about eighteen months ago, she has attended training and has taken action to raise staff awareness and introduce more opportunities to celebrate pupils' cultural and linguistic diversity. She has also ensured that teachers set individual learning targets for pupils and she manages and effectively supports the two teaching assistants who are employed specifically to work with individual pupils. The co-ordinator has not, however, had any opportunities to work alongside teachers and pupils in the classroom, to develop and share good practice in teaching pupils whose first language is not English. Class teachers and the support staff would benefit from further support and training.
52. The newly appointed co-ordinator for special needs is fulfilling her duties well, although she has rightly identified the need to review the use of her time. At present, she is spending too much of her time working with one or two pupils, leaving less time for her to conduct useful diagnostic work to ensure prompt identification of pupils' needs, to help teachers to provide tasks that are more appropriately matched to targets on pupils' individual

education plans and to check, evaluate and manage the support available for all pupils. The nominated special needs governor visits the school regularly and evaluates provision, and this makes a very positive contribution to the strategic development of this aspect of the school's work.

53. The governing body offers very good support, works hard on the school's behalf and brings a high level of expertise in specific areas, such as finance and special educational needs. The governors are meeting all of their statutory responsibilities. The governors are active and work effectively in their committees to monitor the work of the school. They are good at receiving information and checking details, but their visits to school do not always have a defined purpose nor include specific monitoring of the provision and the impact of their decisions. Governors have in conjunction with the staff, developed and agreed a sound system for performance management that is clear and purposeful. It has satisfactory links with the school improvement plan and subject action plans. The headteacher and deputy headteachers ensure all teachers' work is regularly reviewed and annual targets for development are agreed.
54. The present school improvement plan takes into consideration the views of staff, governors and parents. However, there is a need for a longer-term strategic plan and overview, especially given possible major changes in funding that are due to come into force. The school uses the detailed analysis of its results in the national tests to identify targets for improvement in English and mathematics, but the lack of other subject co-ordinators and of a designated person to manage and oversee the overall curriculum means that there is not always sufficient information to identify strengths and weaknesses within the whole curriculum in order to agree the most appropriate priorities.
55. The school has effective financial management systems. The procedures underpinning the strategic financial planning are good and help the school to utilise its available resources effectively to meet most of the identified development priorities. Governors' committees meet regularly to monitor, evaluate and support all operational aspects, including health and safety, buildings, staffing, curriculum and strategic financial planning. Specific grants are generally used well for their specified purposes and the school successfully bids for additional funding to help finance certain initiatives. Teachers could sometimes better deploy the teaching assistants specifically employed to support pupils learning English as an additional language in order to maximise their impact on pupils' progress in spoken English. The school satisfactorily applies of the principles of best value. Satisfactory use is made of new technology for school administration and to support teaching and learning.
56. The school has a good mix of experienced teachers and those who are relatively new to teaching. There are sufficient staff to teach the requirements of the National Curriculum. New teachers to the school say they receive good support and so many stay on as a result. Training opportunities are very good and this aspect is very well managed by one of the deputy head teachers. The special needs co-ordinator, the co-ordinator for information and communication technology and one of the deputy headteachers do not have responsibility for a class at present, in order that they can offer support across the school in specific areas. There is an effective team of support staff and levels of support are high. The experienced special needs assistants are well trained and they offer very good support to pupils with a statement of special needs. Other staff provide effective support to groups of pupils in most lessons and the school has a good number of support staff so that all classes benefit from this extra help.
57. The accommodation is good. The headteacher and governors have worked hard to gain funding to develop and improve the building since amalgamation. Building a link between the two schools and creating a staffroom that can accommodate all staff has helped to

ensure that the amalgamation has been effective. Buildings are bright and attractive and these are cleaned and maintained to a high standard. Classrooms are of a good size for the number on roll and are well equipped. The two halls support indoor physical education provision and provide plenty of space for assemblies and dining. There is now an information and communication technology suite, a central library and rooms for individual music tuition. The school is located on a large, secure site. There is a wildlife area and there are some mature trees and shrubs around the perimeter that provide an attractive outlook from most classrooms. Learning resources are good and fully support the delivery of the National Curriculum. The school makes good use of the accommodation and resources.

58. Taking into account pupils' good standards and progress in most subjects, the good teaching, the very good provision for pupils' personal development and the overall good leadership and management, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to build on the school's good work and to raise standards further, the headteacher and governors should:

- (i)** Ensure that there is a designated co-ordinator for all subjects and key areas, and, develop manageable systems to regularly monitor the teaching, curriculum coverage and standards in every subject, so that any weaknesses are identified and addressed.

(Paragraphs 29, 50, 51, 54 and 99,103,108, 109,116,124,133)

- (ii)** Improve the way in which pupils' attainment and progress are assessed and the marking of pupils' work so that:

- pupils and parents have more feedback about the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment and about how pupils can improve;
- teachers have a clearer idea about the needs of individual pupils and groups of pupils, including those pupils who learn English as an additional language, and consistently take account of this information when planning future work; and
- the school is better informed about the progress of ethnic minority pupils, whether some groups are underachieving and, if they are, why this is the case.

(Paragraphs 8, 17, 18, 24, 32, 41, 42, 47, 52, 59, 65, 72, 81, 82, 84, 88, 93, 99, 104, 109, 113, 116, 123, 129, 132)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	18	37	13	1	0	0
Percentage	4	26	51	18	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	420
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	40

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	73

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	28	31	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	26
	Girls	30	30	30
	Total	55	57	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (92)	97 (92)	95 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	26	27
	Girls	31	29	29
	Total	58	55	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (92)	93 (98)	95 (95)
	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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	32	27	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	30
	Girls	25	26	26
	Total	53	53	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (81)	90 (84)	95 (91)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	26
	Girls	24	24	25
	Total	45	47	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (72)	80 (81)	86 (85)
	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	171	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	54	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	12	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	8	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	25	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	1	0
Black or Black British – African	5	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	58	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)	17.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	266

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	1,165,938
Total expenditure	1,125,028
Expenditure per pupil	2,679
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,909
Balance carried forward to next year	6,100

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	420
Number of questionnaires returned	176

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	35	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	47	7	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	41	5	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	44	11	6	2
The teaching is good.	52	38	5	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	49	16	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	30	6	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	41	7	1	6
The school works closely with parents.	38	45	7	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	65	28	0	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	33	3	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	39	10	6	6

Other issues raised by parents

A number of parents at the meeting felt that, although they are generally very happy with the school and pupils' standards, higher-attaining pupils could be challenged further.

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

59. There are strengths in the Foundation Stage provision:

- The high level of staffing ensures that children are well cared for and are given lots of personal attention, helping them feel secure and confident.
- Relationships between staff and children and between children themselves are very positive. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs, ethnic minority children and those who learn English as an additional language are included in all activities and helped to progress appropriately.

In order to improve further there is a need to develop the use of assessment to provide short-term targets for all children and to build these targets into teachers' weekly planning.

60. The majority of children enter the school with higher levels of knowledge, understanding and skills than is usually found. The children's communication, social and physical skills are particularly good. They make satisfactory progress so that by the time they leave the Reception classes almost all children will be achieving the nationally expected early learning goals and about half of the children will already be working to National Curriculum standards. In the Reception classes, there are two pupils with a statement of special educational needs and three children learn English as an additional language.

61. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers work effectively with support staff to provide a good range of interesting activities, matched to the needs of the children. There is a clear commitment to providing a rich and varied curriculum and both classrooms are well organised, with attractive displays which stimulate and celebrate children's learning. Key strengths in teaching include:

- good, simple routines have been established which help children move in an orderly, safe way around the school and classroom and access equipment readily, developing independence and self-confidence.
- a high level of adult support, including the involvement of parent volunteers on a regular basis, ensures that children are given lots of individual attention.
- good provision for outdoor play, with a well-planned timetable and supervision and a good range of equipment, ensures that children develop physical, social and language skills well.

62. Teachers ensure there is a good balance between teacher directed learning and child-initiated activities. Many activities enable the children to learn purposefully through investigation and play, both indoors and outdoors. In the best lessons there is good use of questioning to challenge the children's thinking. A key area for improvement is the development of procedures for analysing the records kept of children's achievements to identify learning objectives, which will ensure that the children make even better progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children have very positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school and form very good relationships with the staff and each other. Well-established routines help children feel secure, and activities such as milk and fruit time encourage increasing independence and awareness of the needs of others. During whole-class teaching the children raise their hands confidently to answer teachers' questions and they listen with interest and respect to the teacher and to each other. This was clearly evident, for example, in a lesson in the computer suite. The children listened well to the teachers and later showed good levels of independence and self-confidence when working more independently to create their own repeating patterns on screen. When asked questions, the majority of children are articulate, using a rich vocabulary and demonstrating good knowledge. They take turns in speaking and share equipment and toys well. Only a few children still prefer solitary play, but the majority show co-operation and maturity. They work hard and try their best with whatever they are asked to do.
64. Teachers and other staff have consistent expectations that children will care for themselves independently and behave well. For example, the children change quickly for physical education, managing dressing and undressing with minimal support from adults who encourage children to 'have a go' at buttons and zips. Children are expected to move in an orderly way to the hall and during lessons in the hall they maintain quiet and walk around the hall, with only minimal reminders of the need for care in order to be safe. They decide for themselves when and where to move to another piece of apparatus, choosing where there is the smallest queue. At the end of outdoor play sessions, children help to tidy up and store the equipment. This enables them to develop independence. A strong emphasis is placed on affirming good behaviour and effort so that all children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are helped to develop very positive self-esteem. Children's contributions or good work are often shared with a wider group. For example, in a music and movement lesson, children who were bouncing well were asked to demonstrate this to the rest of the class. Similarly, in a literacy lesson some children were asked to act out the roles of the main characters.

Communication, language and literacy

65. When they start school, most children's attainment in language and literacy is above that usually found and is well above it for a minority of children, although about a fifth of pupils begin school with below-average skills, sometimes because they have special needs or learn English as an additional language. Children readily speak to each other and to adults in class and more than half of them demonstrate a rich and varied vocabulary. They listen and take turns in conversation. Good planning ensures that lessons have a focus on language development too, so that in physical education, for example, children learn the concept of words such as "over and under" by moving over and under apparatus in the hall. Children with below-average skills are well supported by staff, providing lots of time and

encouragement to express themselves so that they make good progress in speaking and listening. The opportunity is sometimes taken in small group work to extend children's vocabulary. For example, whilst planting seeds, children in one group were asked if they could say whether a carrot is a vegetable or a fruit. However, apart from the targets for children with special educational needs, there is no systematic identification of such learning objectives for small group work in teachers' planning. This would ensure that the more able pupils are challenged appropriately and make maximum progress in every lesson. Children enjoy listening to stories and sing a good range of appropriate songs, which contributes to their communication and language skills.

66. Children's early reading skills are above those usually found. Children enjoy looking at books and are given plenty of opportunity to do so. They handle books carefully and turn the pages in order. They are familiar with terms such as author and illustrator. They recognise rhymes and repeating patterns, joining in the chorus of 'Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread man' from a Big Book, using good expression. Higher- and average-attaining children are able to read simple texts and recognise a number of frequently used words and can correctly sequence pictures in a story. They are encouraged to recognise initial consonants in words through teacher's using opportunities such as writing names of people on the whiteboard whose name begins with letter "G" or naming fruit and vegetables that start with different letters of the alphabet.
67. Children's writing skills are above those usually found. The majority of children can write their own name and are beginning to write simple sentences with regular sized letters and good attempt at phonetic spelling. The higher-attaining children are beginning to use full stops correctly and to start sentences with capital letters. Only a small minority of children require scribing support and are unlikely to meet the nationally expected level at the end of Reception. Children make satisfactory progress in writing and teachers provide good encouragement for children to try their best at spelling, helping them sound out words. Teachers ensure that children have lots of opportunities to write for a real purpose, such as labelling seeds as they plant them, writing down orders during role play in the café or choosing to sit at the writing table where an attractive range of paper and pencils is available.
68. Teachers assess writing as part of the regular observation of individual children, and these assessments are recorded on a termly writing record for every child. This information could be better used to plan specific learning objectives for individual children or small groups of children of similar ability, to ensure that teaching is more tightly focused on the next step in learning for all children. Such planning is already used effectively for pupils with special educational needs who have an individual education plan.

Mathematical development

69. Children have a wide range of skills when they enter school and overall standards are above those usually found. The majority of children can count from one to at least ten and can identify unseen numbers on a number line. Higher-attaining children count to 20, for example, whilst counting out biscuits, and a few can count back from 30, calculating the number of children present in class. All the children have good knowledge about the properties of the flat shapes of circles, rectangles, triangles and squares and can describe the number of corners and sides on each shape.

70. Teachers use opportunities throughout the day to develop children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. For example, during registration children are invited to count the number of people present in class; they are encouraged to use the clock to see how many minutes left in a lesson. Activities such as cookery offer real opportunities for children to learn the language of weights and measures as they weigh ingredients. Outdoor play in sand and water where words such as "full," "empty" and "half full" are used give them opportunities to develop a concept of capacity. Good use is made of the computer suite and specialist teaching to reinforce mathematics such as learning about repeating patterns. However, the higher-attaining pupils would make more progress in learning if they were provided with appropriate extension activities when they demonstrate achievement of the main learning objective for the whole class.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children's natural curiosity is nurtured by good teaching that gives plenty of opportunities for them to explore. For example, during outdoor play the children are able to construct walls and platforms using large-scale wooden bricks and experiment freely with sand and water. Opportunities are provided to encourage children to share their knowledge with others, for example, a child who had been on holiday in France was asked to say a little bit about her holiday to the rest of the class. Regular routines each morning include identifying the date using a large calendar to teach days of the week and months of the year. The children use computers regularly and can click on the mouse to drag shapes and make patterns.
72. Activities such as planting seeds give children the opportunity to learn about the need for warmth, moisture and darkness for germination and light for plants to grow. The children plant a range of seeds and discussed the relative size and colour of seeds and were encouraged to share and develop their knowledge about vegetables. The children with below-average language skills were well supported with pre-planned vocabulary as a learning outcome. A similar identification of the desired outcome for those children who already have a high level of knowledge about growing seeds would have ensured that all make progress during the lesson. In the best teaching the children were encouraged to use vocabulary such as "compost" and "soil" correctly but the opportunity for the most able pupils to make a distinction between these terms was not taken.

Physical development

73. Fine motor skills are generally well developed when children enter school and good teaching ensures that these continue to develop well. As a result, children learn to hold tools such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes correctly. They play with a range of toys, including small and large construction equipment, which helps the development of physical skills and manipulation. Children show above-average skill in throwing, catching and guiding balls through cones in outdoor play and above-average skills in balancing and jumping. The majority have already achieved the level expected by the time children join Year 1.
74. Good use is made of the hall for music and movement and to extend children's physical skills, providing opportunities for children to develop good spatial awareness, control and balance. The teaching is well planned and organised, with well-chosen apparatus to give children the opportunity to develop a range of skills to complete their movements. Positive

relationships and class management ensure that children are well behaved and move safely around the hall. In the best lessons children are challenged well by the teacher to extend their effort and skill and there is a brisk pace. There is good use of children's performance to demonstrate to others and help them improve what they are doing.

Creative development

75. Children achieve well in their creative development. Opportunities are provided for children to experiment with a range of media and materials and to express their feelings through drawing, model making, painting, collage, imaginative play and singing. Children are confident and generally demonstrate a good level of skill and imagination. They particularly enjoy singing and moving to music. They listen to music with good attention and show enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment when invited to join in singing, or to interpret the music. Children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are encouraged to use their bodies to express different rhythms and interpret the music well. The children know a good range of songs and rhymes, perform actions to accompany the songs and clap repeated patterns. They enjoy painting and their pictures depicting themselves at different stages of their lives show good observation and detail. They listen with rapt attention to adults reading stories and can interpret the fun of a story such as "The Gingerbread Man" through simple role-play. Activities such as cooking biscuits, water and sand play offer good opportunities to explore their senses. They enjoy the sensation of flour, sand and water through their fingers and using materials of different textures. A well-resourced role-play area in each classroom provides opportunities for dressing up and acting out characters such as waitresses in a café serving customers. Small construction apparatus, jigsaws, model vehicles and a range of toys are all of good quality and readily accessible in the classrooms. Children are given regular opportunities to choose their own activity and there are also planned opportunities for outdoor play for every child.

ENGLISH

76. Pupils' attainment in English in the present Year 2 and Year 6 classes exceeds national expectations and a good proportion of pupils attain the higher Levels 3 and 5. This is a similar picture to the last three years' results in the national tests for seven-and eleven-year-olds. Pupils enter school with good literacy skills and they make good progress in all areas over time. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
77. Standards in speaking and listening are good, with most pupils developing into confident and articulate speakers by the end of Year 6. The school promotes pupils' skills well by providing plenty of opportunities for pupils to share their ideas in lessons, through drama and acting out ideas as a character, as well as pupils taking part in regular class assemblies and whole-school productions. For example, in a very well taught drama lesson seen in a Year 5 class, based on the poem 'The Highwayman', pupils of all prior attainment made very good progress and this provided very good opportunities to extend pupils' skills in speaking.
78. Pupils make good gains in reading and, by the time they leave school, nearly all pupils reach the expected level, with a good proportion attaining standards above the national expectation. Pupils can discuss their views of a plot or character whilst supporting their answers well. Pupils read a wide range of books fluently and with good understanding, and know how to locate information from a variety of sources. In a history lesson in Year 4, for

example, most pupils were quickly able to access information about the Aztecs from a range of books. Similarly, groups of pupils in Year 6 demonstrated that they had researched information about Ancient Greece from books and the Internet. Most pupils are offered good help by their parents who hear their children read at home regularly and keep the teachers informed about progress or any difficulties. Teachers use the group reading sessions very effectively to develop a range of skills and introduce pupils to different authors and books for a range of purposes. Pupils visit the new library on an informal basis, but it is not yet used consistently to develop their full range of library skills.

79. The school has had a recent focus on improving pupils' writing skills and this has very successfully raised the standards pupils attain. Pupils' attainment exceeds that expected by the time they are seven and 11. The introduction of drama sessions where pupils can actively explore how characters may feel and a how plot could develop has also provided good support for pupils in their imaginative writing. Pupils say they feel more confident about what to write and how to develop an interesting story line. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can write independently for a range of purposes using interesting vocabulary. Higher-attaining pupils write in a well-formed style of joined writing. Recent initiatives are contributing to improving standards in spelling.
80. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils use language effectively in their writing to explore ideas, interest readers, provide explanations and present a balanced argument. They use a wide and varied vocabulary, complex sentences that are grammatically correct and write in neat, joined handwriting. Pupils learn how to draft, edit and proof-read their work in order to improve it still further. Opportunities to write about their work in other subjects are provided, such as composing a prayer, preparing to interview an adult about life in another decade, and researching the rainforest; however, this is an area that can be developed further. Pupils' skills in using information and communication technology are being used appropriately, with several pieces of work being word-processed and illustrated. Also, several classrooms have a listening area where pupils use tape recorders to follow a story.
81. Pupils with special needs are given plenty of help in literacy lessons. The special needs support assistants who work with pupils who have a statement of special needs give them regular practise in developing their basic literacy skills, as well as helping them to take part in the main activity. Some pupils who find it difficult to write use portable word processors, which allows them to concentrate on what they are writing. They progress well as a result and make good gains against their prior attainment. Pupils' individual education plans have clear targets that address which basic skills they need to acquire. At present, it is not always clear from teachers' planning that these are being addressed in a consistent manner, although the new special needs co-ordinator is developing good systems to monitor this.
82. A school priority is to raise the attainment of pupils from ethnic minority groups and these pupils are identified in each class. However, during the inspection, teachers' planning did not show any specific targets for these pupils. Although pupil progress is evident year on year, there is no clear evidence to show whether this group are achieving as well as they are able. Nearly all reach the nationally expected levels, but few attain standards that are above those expected nationally. Pupils who learn English as an additional language receive extra support when they are at the early stages of learning English, but there are not yet effective procedures to measure and monitor the development of spoken language as these pupils progress through the school.

83. The teaching of English is good overall. The evidence from lessons observed and an analysis of pupils' work is that pupils acquire a secure knowledge and understanding of literacy skills and they make good progress over time. Strengths in teaching include teachers' good subject knowledge and the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Basic skills are taught well as a result. The very positive ethos, excellent relationships and very good personal development mean pupils are keen to learn and do their best. This has a significant impact on standards and progress. The well-planned, consistent approach across the school to the development of writing and reading has raised pupils' attainment in these areas. Teachers provide some helpful tools to support independent writing. They give pupils clear guidelines, such as a prescribed outline plan, use of wordbooks and dictionaries, and the opportunity to revise and edit their work. For example, in Year 5 pupils acted out the life of 'The Highwayman,' then used a structured outline plan to create five paragraphs describing his earlier life. They had time to review and edit their work, with the help of a reading partner. They achieved very well as a result. Teachers also select lively and interesting text to engage the pupils' interest. The activities and resources provided also act as a good stimulus. For instance, Year 2 pupils enjoyed working with puppets that represented the Anansi story they had been studying, and this activity gave them a very good opportunity to practise reading with expression and intonation. Pupils are grouped appropriately and those with special needs are fully integrated into the lessons, but are given extra focused support by the special needs support assistants. A weaker aspect of teaching is the checking and marking of pupils' work. Although there are some examples where teachers give a very clear indication of what the pupil has achieved well and where further practise is needed, this is not done well enough in all classes.
84. The two co-ordinators (one of whom is temporarily covering the post) offer good leadership. They use the detailed analysis of national test results to plan future developments in the subject and provide the necessary resources. They monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure agreed procedures are implemented. Some teaching has been monitored, but to date this has mostly been carried out by the headteacher and local authority personnel. Pupils' writing is checked each term and levelled to National Curriculum criteria. Areas for improvement are then identified and clear targets for the following term set as a result. Records are checked each year to ensure progress is being made and pupils needing extra help are identified accordingly. The school subsequently provides a range of formal group activities to raise attainment of these pupils. This helps to keep overall standards high. Similarly, reading skills are checked on a regular basis. The school plans to develop a 'speaking and listening' scheme to ensure all required areas are taught, and to further promote pupils' accuracy in spelling. This should add to the overall provision and provide teachers with better systems for identifying and addressing the precise needs of those pupils who learn English as an additional language.

MATHEMATICS

85. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is above national expectations by age seven and 11, which is a similar picture to the test results in 2002. Pupils achieve well. These good standards and progress result from good teaching and pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. The school's systems for checking teaching and learning are good, and the school carefully assesses pupils' attainments in order to create learning targets and to focus planning to address any

weaknesses. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. The main area for development is to provide even more opportunities for investigations.

86. By the age of seven, most pupils achieve at least the expected Level 2 and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is above the national average. Although evidence of higher attainment was not always apparent during all lessons seen, a scrutiny of work provided a longer-term picture. Most pupils have worked confidently using addition and subtraction of numbers, measures and money to 100 very early on in the school year. They have continued to make good progress using a variety of methods to solve problems. They can measure accurately in standard units and understand how to calculate intervals of time. Pupils know about the properties of two-dimensional shapes and use the correct terminology. Pupils are less confident when using graphs and computers to record and interpret information they have gathered for themselves.
87. By the age of 11, attainment is above national expectations, with the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 being well above average. Pupils make good progress throughout Years 3 to 6 and achieve well. At age 11, scrutiny of work shows most pupils working consistently at a level above the national expectation. Most can multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals to three places, sometimes when calculating with measures and money. They confidently calculate equivalence using fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils are very familiar with the types and values of angles within shapes, and can translate shapes using all four quadrants. They have a sound understanding of probability, and can construct conversion graphs. Again, pupils are less confident when using graphs and computers to record and interpret information they have gathered for themselves.
88. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection week, teaching in eight out of ten lessons seen was good or better. Strengths of teaching include teachers' good subject knowledge and in supporting pupils to learn and use correct vocabulary and terminology. In Year 3, for example, pupils as a result proudly discussed their frequency graphs using words like 'axis', 'vertical' and 'horizontal'. Teachers work efficiently by giving direct instruction where appropriate, such as when helping pupils learn about scales on different weighing machines. Teachers' expectations are high, although in lessons seen, this varied from satisfactory to excellent. In an excellent lesson in Year 1, for example, the class teacher challenged the pupils to think very hard to find the least number of coins to pay different amounts. Pupils enjoyed this challenge and responded well to it. This lesson also served as a very good example of ensuring that everyone is included in answering questions. The teacher met different pupils' needs well. Class lessons are usually interesting, which leads naturally to encouraging pupils' self-discipline and motivation. This interest starts from the very beginning, with lively, challenging mental mathematics work. Furthermore, lessons often end with a game, sometimes on the computer, which consolidates learning. Homework is a useful extension of classroom learning. An area for improvement in the teaching in the satisfactory lessons related to meet the needs of the most and the least able pupils. A general area for improvement lies in encouraging pupils through the marking to learn better from their own mistakes; by, for example, correcting wrong answers or carrying out further examples.
89. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator organises the provision and leads staff in such a way that standards have continued to rise. She regularly monitors teaching and learning. More use could be made of computers to support mathematics work.

Exciting mathematics weeks make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils learned, for example, about how mathematics provided a useful tool in ancient civilisations. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects, such as using graphs to record a survey on preferred foods, paying attention to the beautiful symmetry to be found in art and architecture, and exploring the Vedic mathematics associated with the Hindu religion. Such experiences contribute well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils who learn English as an additional language are given extra adult support in lessons, although there is less evidence of key vocabulary being emphasised or identifying specific learning objectives to meet such pupils' needs.

SCIENCE

90. Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 exceeds national expectations. This is similar to the achievement of pupils in Year 2 and 6 classes last year. The quality of teaching is good and pupils have positive attitudes to their work, and, as a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well. The teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly, have secure subject knowledge and emphasise the importance of learning through practical activities. They give precise explanations in the introductions to lessons so that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and how to set about their activities.
91. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are taught well the basic skills of making careful observations and of recording their findings in a variety of ways. This is evident, for example, in Year 1, where pupils have observed and then recorded the differences between shiny and dull materials. As pupils move into Year 2, they learn how to handle a variety of simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and to explain their ideas and findings. Good examples of this were evident in lessons when pupils shared their ideas about pushes and pulls as forces, and then set up a fair test to find out which material stretched the most. Pupils are taught how to carry out an investigation. As well as showing much curiosity and enjoyment when involved in practical work, pupils are very keen to answer questions. As a result, by the time that they are seven, most pupils show good skills in scientific investigation and in their ability to record their findings in a variety of ways. They know how to construct a simple electrical circuit and can list the items in their home that use electricity. They sort materials according to their different properties and know about the sense organs.
92. In Years 3 to 6 teachers continue to emphasise the basic skills of investigation and to teach different ways of recording results so that by age eleven, most pupils understand the need for a fair test and can devise and plan carry experiments independently of their teacher. Teachers use questioning well to explore and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas. This was evident in a lesson in Year 4 when pupils investigated which materials make good thermal insulators. In this lesson, as in others, the activity built well on previous work, so that pupils could use their prior knowledge to support new learning. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. This was seen in Year 6 when pupils were set the challenge of working in groups of three to design a test to investigate how the length of a shadow changes throughout the day. Pupils showed positive attitudes, co-operating, behaving well and maintaining their interest and concentration throughout the lesson. By the time that they are 11 pupils can for example classify living things against set criteria. They use their knowledge of reversible and irreversible changes to predict whether other changes can be

reversed. They communicate their findings clearly, using correct scientific vocabulary and record their ideas in a variety of formats. Throughout the school, there is some use of information communication technology to enhance pupils' work, but this is an area for further development.

93. Pupils' literacy skills are applied to their investigative report writing and in their labelling of drawings and diagrams. The lack of a whole school approach to where and how pupils record their work means there are different formats, for example, some year groups have a separate science book, others use folders and in some classes a topic book is used for science and work in a number of other subjects. This leads to inconsistencies between teachers' expectations about standards of presentation and confusion amongst pupils, as they encounter different methods as they change classes. It also makes pupils' progress difficult to track and to monitor. In general, teachers do not use marking as a means of showing pupils how they can improve their work, and there are times when the work given to more able pupils is too easy. The co-ordinators have correctly identified the need to improve how it tracks pupils' progress and to set manageable, individual targets for improvement. There are not enough opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to learn how to interpret information and identify trends, or to develop their skills in making conclusions that are evaluative, rather than being a description of what they have done.
94. The curriculum is good and is broad and relevant. The planning procedures are satisfactory and provide teachers with clear information about the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. Opportunities for pupils to collaborate in group work activities make a very positive contribution to their personal and social development. Visits and visitors are used well to extend pupils' learning. Resources are adequate. There is good co-ordination of the subject. This is carried out by two co-ordinators; one for Years 1 and 2 and one for Years 3 to 6. The accommodation is good, with extensive grounds, including a pond, that are used to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things.

ART AND DESIGN

95. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils attain standards that exceed national expectations. This is a result of the rich and stimulating experiences to which they are exposed and the good quality teaching that they receive throughout the school. The pupils are presented with a wide range of activities in all areas of the subject and develop good skills in the use of different media. There is emphasis on developing art as a visual language and in using it to promote the pupils' own creativity.
96. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 experiment with line, texture and colour and show good ability to use these skills in their drawings and paintings. In Year 1, for example, pupils learn how to mix primary colours to create a variety of secondary colours to be used in their good paintings of sea-scapes. In Year 2, the teacher successfully challenged pupils to record from imagination and experience and to explore ideas. The activity involved pupils in being given part of an image from a magazine and having to draw what they thought might be outside of the image. Pupils responded positively, showing a great deal of interest and enjoyment when completing the task. In lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, teachers showed good subject knowledge and successfully taught pupils new techniques.
97. In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their skills through opportunities to work with a wider range of materials. In a lesson in Year 3, for example, the teacher carefully demonstrated how to mix watercolours. Pupils then experimented effectively, using watercolours to represent different tones. Art is well linked to pupils' work in other subjects. A good example by the work of pupils in Year 5 using literacy as a starting point. After reading 'The Mousehole Cat' pupils discussed the passage describing the storm at sea and then used pastels to create their own pictures of a storm.

Techniques are well taught, as is evident in the way the pupils in Year 5 have successfully drawn portraits, by using a grid to help them keep the eyes, nose and mouth in proportion to the rest of the face. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils can study artists' models and draw them to scale and in proportion. They show good skills in shading the drawings to show light and shadow.

98. Pupils throughout the school have opportunities to study the work of famous artists and to work in their style. Some good examples include work the Aboriginal style in the lower school and paintings of 'Monet's Garden' in his style in the upper school. The curriculum is significantly enhanced by opportunities for pupils to work with visiting artists. There are regular visits to the National Gallery to help develop pupils' knowledge and an appreciation of the works of famous artists. The planning procedures are satisfactory, being based on national guidelines.
99. Leadership the subject, by a 'stand-in' co-ordinator, is secure, but the monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped. There are no formal procedures for checking or recording pupils' progress as they pass through the school. The use of art to develop an understanding of other cultures is very well developed. This is seen in work from across the school such as the whole school display of artwork based on textiles from across the world. Similarly, in Year 4, pupils examined textiles from Iran before designing and creating an Islamic prayer mat as part of their work in religious education. Pupils' artwork is attractively displayed throughout the school, and clearly celebrates and values the pupils' efforts. The resources and accommodation are good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. As no lessons were seen and very little other evidence was available, it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the standards that pupils attain or the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. However, it is evident by talking to staff that few recent developments have taken place in design and technology. Consequently, the subject does not have a high profile within the school and lacks suitable checking procedures to give teachers specific information about pupils' achievement.
101. In Year 6, pupils talk enthusiastically about the design and making activities in which they have been involved, and in so doing, show a suitable awareness of the health and safety factors involved in working with tools and handling food. They are particularly proud of their input into designing and making part of the very impressive quilt compiled by the whole school to mark the amalgamation of the two schools.
102. In terms of curriculum provision, there is some confusion as to what activities are art and design and what are design and technology. For example, a lesson for pupils in Year 4 on weaving materials in the style of the Aztecs was designated on the timetable as an art task but was put forward by senior staff as being a design and technology activity. The planning arrangements are not focused enough on the design, make and evaluate process and this restricts the pupils' ability to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge progressively. The school does recognise the need to give pupils more guidance on how to evaluate the quality of the products that they make.
103. There is currently no designated co-ordinator for the subject. Under the circumstances, a member of the senior management team has recently taken responsibility to oversee work until a co-ordinator can be appointed. During science and mathematics focus weeks, some design and technology activities are incorporated. The resources are adequate.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Geography lessons were seen in Years 2, 3 and 5 only. Additional evidence was drawn from discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of a limited amount of finished work that was

available. On the basis of this evidence, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations at the ages of seven and 11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. However, with further developments to work in geography and improved monitoring of the provision, pupils' standards and rate of progress could be better. The main strengths of the subject lie in some aspects of teaching and the pupils' interest and enjoyment. Points for improvement lie in the attention given to developing map skills, in the use made of literacy, numeracy and ICT to support pupils' learning and the use made of assessment of pupils' progress to establish priorities and act upon them.

105. By the age of seven, pupils can identify the natural and man-made features of their local environment, and know something about the effects of flooding or traffic noise. They are beginning to express opinions about their town, and contrast it with at least one other that they have visited. From their work on water, they know about landscape features beyond their locality, and how man has to make constructions to create transport systems.
106. By the age of 11, pupils' knowledge and understanding have improved satisfactorily. In discussions pupils showed a good awareness of the features of the local environment and the effects human activity has had upon it. However, they were less secure about how environments affect people's lifestyles. They could not, for example, describe the advantages and disadvantages of living near rivers and hills. Similarly, pupils can compare life in cities and villages, but have not developed in-depth knowledge that would enable them to provide opinions about the advantages and disadvantages.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen in some year groups during inspection, teaching and pupils' learning was good or better. However, discussions with pupils and the quality and depth of pupils' past work do not indicate that the general level teaching and learning are always of this same high quality. In an excellent lesson seen in Year 5, the teacher's subject knowledge and delivery engaged pupils' interest very well. Excellent three-dimensional resources made by pupils established the important features of rivers. Skilful probing and questioning in a lesson in Year 3 also ensured that the higher-attaining pupils were challenged. The teacher encouraged the pupils enthusiastically to volunteer ideas for key symbols for different types of shop on their maps before creating their own town in three dimensions. Group and paired work in geography contribute to pupils' social development, as for example when pupils in Year 2 worked in groups to discuss the contrasting environments of Venice and Muswell Hill.
108. The curriculum is based on national guidance. However, there are no secure systems to check that all aspects are taught progressively or in sufficient depth. Good use is sometimes made of relevant links between geography and pupils' work in other subjects, but the school misses opportunities to develop and apply pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills to their work in geography. Furthermore, pupils' finished work in books is not well organised enough to enable pupils to learn what geography is or to enable senior managers to check standards. Geography makes some positive contribution to pupils' understanding of citizenship. For example, when pupils in Year 5 considered the factors that have to be borne in mind when establishing reliable water resources for communities around the world, pupils demonstrated excellent maturity. The curriculum is enriched by the residential journey to the Isle of Wight. Here pupils have first-hand experience of geology, and carry out purposeful map-work.

109. Since the two schools amalgamated, teaching has not been monitored in order that any weaknesses might be identified and addressed. The school also does not place enough emphasis on checking standards and pupils' progress. Neither marking of work in the short term, nor assessment of what pupils have learnt in the longer term is sufficiently rigorous to be helpful in planning to meet the needs of this school's pupils and raise standards. All of these points relate to the lack of a subject leader with sole responsibility for leading and managing the subject.

HISTORY

110. Pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations by age seven and 11. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in history over time. However, indications from work samples and talking to pupils indicate that pupil progress is not consistent as pupils move up through the school from one class to the next. Discussions with pupils also show that pupils know more than the amount and quality of some of their written work would suggest. This is especially the case in Years 3 to 6 where there is less evidence of recorded work than is usually found, particularly when taking account of pupils' abilities and their good writing skills.
111. By age seven pupils have developed a secure understanding about how things change over time through work on topics such as their own personal history, the life and times of Captain Cooke and the history of the North American Indians. Pupils understand the importance and significance of famous people from the past. They understand, for example, what made Mary Seacole famous and describe in detail the events of Captain Cooke's life and journeys. Higher-attaining pupils have a very good understanding of past events and give sensible suggestions as to why pupils in the past behaved as they did. For example, a group of pupils in Year 1 explained that they knew that sailors got scurvy because of the lack of fresh food, and that some of the animals carried on ships were for eating later and others were taken as a means of protection.
112. By the age of 11 pupils have a secure knowledge of the key features of the historical periods studied such as the Roman, Tudor, Ancient Greek and Egyptian eras. Discussions with pupils indicate they have secure recall of key events and of people's lifestyles and can identify differences between rich and poor people's lives. They suggest why people in the past acted as they did. Pupils are very keen to discuss those aspects that were of particular interest to them, such as sacrificial rituals of the Aztecs, the fact-finding visits to museums and the special history days where pupils re-enact key historical events. Pupils demonstrate good skills in using primary and secondary sources of evidence. They make some connections between life and events in the different periods studied. Pupils understand which events were a long time ago and which were more recent, but their understanding of the exact chronology of events is an aspect that is weaker by age 11. There is also little evidence of time lines being used and displayed to support this aspect of pupils' learning.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of resources, including visits and visitors to school and specific events such as history focus days. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 make very good use of the relevant links between history and a number of other subjects, which helps to make pupils' learning more meaningful. Pupils in Year 1, for example, are developing a good understanding of the life of Captain Cooke because this work is well linked to subjects such as art, geography and music and pupils' learning is therefore being constantly reinforced. A weakness in teaching across the school is teachers' use of marking. Although much of the past work clearly has been checked by the teachers, comments do little to assess pupils' learning of key historical skills, nor

provide feedback to pupils about how they can improve. On occasions, teachers' encouraging comments praise work that is not of a high enough standard.

114. Direct teaching and learning were seen in three lessons during the inspection. Teaching was satisfactory in two lessons and good in one lesson. In the satisfactory lessons seen, although there were some strengths, particularly in terms of using pictures and artefacts well to engage and motivate pupils, pupils also sat for too long and listened to the teacher, rather than getting on with their own work. When pupils were later set tasks to do, their interest levels and rate of progress improved quickly. In a lesson in Year 6 where teaching was good, there was good teacher input which got pupils thinking and asking questions. As a result, pupils were prepared well for a visit to the British Museum and the research tasks they were about to undertake there.
115. Pupils have at least good attitudes to their work in history. This is evident in lessons and from discussions with pupils. Older pupils work very well when set group tasks and research activities to perform. Pupils' good skills in reading and writing support them very well in this regard. However, pupils' good writing skills are not generally reflected in the quality and presentation of some of their written work.
116. The history co-ordinator is absent from school and the headteacher is temporarily assuming responsibility for overseeing work in the subject. Since the two schools amalgamated the standard of pupils' work, pupil progress, the curriculum coverage and teaching have not been monitored in order that any weaknesses might be identified and addressed. This is unsatisfactory. There are no systems in place to determine pupils' progress in the acquisition of key skills as they move up through the school. The way that pupils record their work does not make it easy for teachers, parents or pupils to track progress because history work in exercise books and folders is frequently interspersed with examples of work from other subjects. Resources, including books, are well chosen and of good quality. There is some evidence of pupils using ICT for gathering and recording information.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special needs and those who learn English as an additional language, are currently making good progress, which has helped to raise standards. Pupils have benefited significantly from the recent provision of a well-equipped computer suite to which they have regular access.
118. Pupils acquire a range of skills. They record text, adding headings in different fonts, colours and sizes, and insert pictures and labels. They create and complete tables and then use the results to answer questions and explore what happens if values are changed. For example, in Year 5 pupils entered the amount of water used for different purposes into a spreadsheet, then used a formula to find the total amount of water used. They subsequently investigated what would happen if certain amounts of water were reduced. Pupils use the technology creatively. For instance, Year 2 pupils took pictures of each other using the digital camera and then used a 'paint' program to add a disguise. Mathematical skills are promoted by pupils inserting a formula using degrees and length to create a range of regular shapes and then rotating them to create patterns. The Internet is being used

effectively for research purposes, as when pupils in Year 6 investigated rivers and those in Year 4 found out about the Aztecs. Pupils are beginning to exchange information using the e-mail facility. Most of the current emphasis is on pupils' acquisition of technical skills and understanding, and less at present on reviewing and modifying their work. However, this was evident in some instances, as when Year 6 pupils were designing a poster to promote drugs' awareness.

119. The teaching of ICT is consistently good, as the experienced and committed co-ordinator leads all the lessons at present. He has very good subject knowledge and works well with class teachers to plan lessons that promote pupils' learning in subjects they are studying in class. Each lesson is planned to teach pupils specific techniques and skills and to have a finished product that can be used afterwards. Work in ICT supports pupils' learning in other subjects. The co-ordinator works hard to prepare resources in advance, such as creating a bank of relevant pictures. This means lessons can move at a fast pace, as pupils can easily insert a picture of their choice and work independently. The co-ordinator insists on high standards. Pupils are taught to use two hands on the keyboard, they learn to share and discuss their work with a partner, and are expected to listen well and behave responsibly. They respond well and make very good progress as a result. When difficulties occur with the programs or equipment, he uses the situation effectively to show the pupils how to overcome problems and to realise that alternative methods are sometimes necessary. Overall, the subject promotes pupils' personal development very well.
120. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to raise the confidence, and increase the skills and knowledge, of the whole staff. Class teachers work alongside him in lessons, so they are being trained in a wide range of techniques. Support assistants have been set up with their own site for shared resources and have received training in all programs that the pupils with whom they are working will be using. Thus they can offer good quality individual support when necessary. The co-ordinator is recording pupils' individual achievement and attainment as each area is being taught, so he will have the necessary information in the future to check individual pupils' progress and identify areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum. He is also building up a portfolio of pupils' work, which has been matched to National Curriculum levels. This will be very helpful to teachers when they start taking full responsibility for teaching the subject to their class next year. The main weakness is the under-use of classroom computers to reinforce pupils' learning during the week and to support learning across a range of subjects. Given the short time the computer suite has been open, very good progress has been made in promoting the subject and raising standards.

MUSIC

121. Standards in music are above national expectations by age seven and 11. Pupils enjoy listening to music and appreciate different types of music from an early age. As they progress through the school the majority become actively involved in creating music and perform music for a variety of audiences. By the time the pupils reach Year 2 they can recognise pitch and tempo, describing a piece of music as high or low, fast or slow and can clap or tap a rhythm. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils are familiar with terms such as scale, octave, chord and coda and enjoy singing in unison, developing good awareness of the quality of their performance. A good number of pupils receive extra-curricular instrumental lessons in school and approximately ten per cent of pupils play in the school orchestra. The school choir is also an extra-curricular activity that enhances the musical

skills and knowledge of approximately 20 per cent of pupils. These pupils have a very high level of skill, reading music well and attaining standards well above national expectations.

122. Music is well taught throughout the school by specialist teachers who have strong subject knowledge and expertise. Lessons have a brisk pace and activities and songs appropriately chosen to match the age and interest of the pupils. In a lesson in Year 1 pupils had an opportunity to move around the hall interpreting different rhythms with their bodies, whilst in Year 6 pupils learned and performed a complex round in four parts with a lively tune and words which appealed to this age group. Strengths of teaching include the teachers' high expectations and good open-ended questions that stimulate pupils' thinking and creativity. Pupils have opportunities to use instruments to accompany singing or to compose music. For example, in a lesson in Year 3 a good range of instruments was available and all the pupils were eager to compose a piece of music based on animal movements. The class teacher and teaching assistant gave good support where necessary so that all pupils, irrespective of prior attainment, were able to use their imagination and skills to compose a sequence.
123. The school is currently introducing a new scheme of work for music and this should provide for continuity in the teaching of all aspects of the National Curriculum music requirements and further develop the teaching of composition. There is a need to develop a method of recording pupils' attainment in order to plan the next step in learning for all pupils, in particular to ensure that those pupils who receive extra-curricular instrumental tuition and are above national standards in their skills and knowledge are appropriately challenged during class lessons.
124. The leadership and management of music are satisfactory, with good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. There have been few opportunities to monitor class teaching, but the high level of performance by the school choir and orchestra during assemblies and in special productions and festivals enables the co ordinator to evaluate the overall quality. The school is justly proud of its achievements and reputation for its standards in music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Standards exceed national expectations by age seven and 11. The quality of teaching seen was good, which led to good learning, attitudes and behaviour. The curriculum is good, as is provision for pupils with special needs. Teachers ensure all pupils are included in lessons. The subject is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator has had some opportunities to check teaching and learning in lessons and regularly monitors teachers' plans.
126. In a lesson seen in Year 2, pupils attained very good standards. Pupils demonstrated very good poise on and off the apparatus. They had a wide repertoire of movements, which they used to create phrases and sequences. This was also an example of the subject making a good contribution to pupils' personal development, with good opportunities for self-expression. Pupils' sequences of movements were aesthetically pleasing, and they learned to work both on their own and in groups. Pupils improvised freely but with control.
127. In an unsatisfactory lesson seen in the upper half of the school, the pupils' immature behaviour on that occasion depressed their attainment and the teacher did not manage pupils well enough. Standards achieved by pupils in this lessons are not representative of

the work seen elsewhere in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' attainment in lessons in Years 3 and 4, for example, was above the level expected for the pupils' age.

128. The quality of teaching seen ranged from unsatisfactory to excellent and was good overall across Years 1 to 6. This enabled most pupils to achieve good standards. In the best lessons seen, there was a very good balance between input from the teacher, discussion and activity, which raised the level of pupils' attainment because pupils listened well to instructions and performed sequences of movement on and off apparatus well. This was the case with all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English was an additional language. Teachers sometimes do not give enough attention to raising pupils' pulse rate during lessons.
129. The co-ordinator has correctly identified a number of priorities to raise the subject profile and enable good practice to be shared. She recognises that, whilst the curriculum is covered, there is room for development in dance. She has also arranged recent training in teaching gymnastics. Subject development is not yet accompanied by more formal assessment of groups of pupils so that teachers can plan to meet the needs of all pupils. Indoor accommodation and the resources are good. but the outdoor playground is in need of refurbishment. The school has been successful in its' bid for additional sports funding to improve the outdoor facilities and work is due to be undertaken during this academic year.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Attainment in religious education at age seven and 11 is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Analysis of the work displayed and in pupils' books and conversations with pupils as well as lesson observations indicate that some pupils have generally good knowledge of a range of religious beliefs. This is well supported by the religious diversity of the pupil intake. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of religious concepts, their application to the everyday lives of believers and sound ability to form thoughtful views on religious issues. Discussions with pupils and their response in lessons show that pupils know more than their written work would suggest. Work samples show there is a minimal amount of recorded work in some year groups, which also raises questions about the frequency of teaching.
131. Teaching was seen in some but not all year groups during inspection. Teaching was good or better in a number of lessons seen during the inspection. In these lessons teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge, lessons had good pace and included a variety of activities and resources. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 3 the teacher used well-chosen pictures and artefacts to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding of the customs and traditions of the Jewish faith. Her questioning was skilled and increasingly challenging, enabling pupils of all abilities to make very good progress during the lesson. A parent-volunteer in a lesson in Year 4 demonstrated the Muslim prayer ritual and good intervention from the class teacher helped clarify the vocabulary used in order to ensure pupils' understood. The outcome of the lesson was that pupils gained both in their knowledge of and respect for the practices and beliefs of Islam. In a good lesson in Year 5 the teacher managed the class effectively and used drama well to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the events of Palm Sunday. There are some good links made between religious education and pupils' work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 have made clay models of Ganesha, a Hindu God, and painted symmetrical

Hindu patterns using traditional materials. They have created their own hand-painting patterns using a template.

132. The marking and assessment of pupils' work are unsatisfactory. There are no systems to check pupil progress and standards and therefore identify future learning objectives for different groups of pupils. Given the wide range of pupils' prior knowledge because of their diverse faith backgrounds, this would help to ensure appropriate progress is made by all pupils. The further encouragement of pupils to share their knowledge about their own faith practices would build on the good respect the pupils show for the diversity of faith and cultures within the school and enable them to learn from one another.
133. In the absence of the subject leader the headteacher is currently acting as a "caretaker". There is a need to monitor more closely the teaching of religious education to ensure that it complies with the school's planned timetable. The coverage of the curriculum is inconsistent because the Agreed Syllabus has not yet been fully integrated with the school's existing scheme of work and teachers still require more training on the implementation of the Agreed Syllabus. The teaching of religious education has not been monitored in recent years.