

INSPECTION REPORT

ELMHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newham, London

LEA area: Newham

Unique reference number: 102719

Acting headteacher: Ms Sukwinder Samra

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham Soar
10153

Dates of inspection: 28 – 31 October 2002

Inspection number: 252124

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Upton Park Road Newham London
Postcode:	E7 8JY
Telephone number:	020 8472 0978
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mohammed Asif
Date of previous inspection:	6 October 1997

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10153	Graham Soar	Registered inspector	Science	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
2705	Pat Holwill	Team inspector	English Information & communication technology	How well are pupils taught?
25470	Jean Morley	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14596	Tony Fiddian-Green	Team inspector	Special educational needs Art Religious education	
14319	Michael Brown	Team inspector	Education inclusion Geography History Physical education	

19292	Anne Stafford	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English as an additional language Music	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Elmhurst Primary is a large, multicultural, inner city school almost four times bigger than the average primary school with nearly a thousand pupils aged three to 11. The cultural mix of both staff and pupils reflects the local area. Most pupils come from Asian backgrounds. Over 20 different languages are spoken and over 95 per cent of pupils have English as an additional language, which is very high. Practically all of them are just starting to learn the English language. Most pupils start school part time in the nursery, but over a quarter of pupils arrive or leave the school midway through their primary education. The attainment of pupils when they start school is very low. The number of pupils who have free school meals is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school has experienced considerable disruption due to staffing changes over the last few years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Elmhurst primary is an improving school where each pupil is supported well and the achievements of all are celebrated. The action taken to raise the standards of all pupils is beginning to have a positive impact. The vast majority of pupils derive as much as they can from what the school provides. Those pupils who are continuously educated at the school achieve well by the end of Year 6. Standards achieved by these pupils are below national averages but they achieve standards in line with those from similar schools in mathematics and science. Good teaching throughout the school and good support for pupils with English as an additional language is enabling all pupils to make good progress both in language and personal development. There are, however, insufficient support staff to meet the needs of all pupils. Financial management is now under control following overspending in 2001. The improvements and openness in school leadership and management, in less than a term, are largely due to the inspiration of the acting headteacher. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school achieves an impressive degree of racial harmony and integration.
- Relationships are very good, supporting a good ethos where learning is valued.
- The clear education steer provided by the acting headteacher.
- The good quality of the extended leadership team ensures good collaborative planning and support for pupils and staff; as a result, teaching throughout the school is good.
- Very good procedures to monitor and support good behaviour. As a result, pupils' behaviour, their enthusiasm for school and the respect and tolerance they show for each other are very good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the good provision made for them.

What could be improved

- Standards overall in English, mathematics, science and ICT but particularly in speaking, reading and writing.
- Investigative research and problem solving skills in mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Communication for parents to provide better information about school achievements and developments and how they can support their children particularly through regular attendance.
- The provision of computers and software and their use in all subjects.
- The budget deficit in order to ensure increased funding to support pupils with English as an additional language.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. Progress since then has been satisfactory. The curriculum has improved significantly with clear schemes of work and good collaborative planning along with improved resources. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 has improved and unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school has been reduced. Standards have risen in line with national trends with improvements in science, design and technology and physical education. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved. Assessment systems enable individual pupils' attainment and progress to be tracked. Performance management procedures are now in place.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	E	E	E	well above average A above average B
mathematics	D	E	E	D	average C below average D
science	E	E	E	D	well below average E

The 2002 national test results at the end of Year 6 show standards in English, mathematics and science well below average, both nationally and when compared with schools with a similar context. This, however, does not give a full or accurate picture because it fails to take account of the significant impact that pupil mobility has on standards. There is a significant difference in the standards attained by pupils who have been in this school since Year 2 compared with those who join at a later stage. Those who have been at the school for a longer time reach standards that are equal to those attained by other pupils in similar schools particularly in mathematics and science, but they are still below average for English. Those pupils who have arrived more recently attain very low standards in all three subjects. The rate of progress the school has made in recent years is broadly in line with national trends but the gap between the school and national performances remains. Nevertheless, the school achieved a national achievement award last year, in recognition of pupils' achievements and progress. Although the school did not achieve the targets set for mathematics and English in 2002, all pupils made good progress. Standards in lessons in the foundation subjects are broadly in line with expectations except in music and information and communication technology, where they are below average.

The results of national tests in the summer of 2002 for those at the end of Year 2 show attainment well below the national average. However, this represents good progress since many of these pupils started with very low attainment when they arrived at the school particularly those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils' attainments in lessons and in their work are generally below average in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and well below in the nursery but all pupils achieve well and make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are eager to learn particularly where they are supported well. They enjoy school, and are keen to please staff.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are aware of the high expectations for good behaviour. At break and lunch times they play well together. Movement around the school is orderly and quiet. You would not know there were nearly a thousand pupils in the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. There are no racial tensions; the school's ethos is founded on respect and tolerance and this is observed. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, such as the school council and taking a lead on discussions within circle time.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Most parents understand the need for good attendance, however, there are some tensions with a few families when it comes to decisions relating to extended trips abroad.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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.

Overall, the quality of teaching across the school is good. Good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning, their attitudes to school and on the good progress they make from a very low starting point. In all years there is some very good teaching. Good joint planning within each year group ensures all classes are prepared and organised well. Support and guidance from the school's Ethnic Minority Achievement and Special Educational Needs teams ensure effective development of language skills and the full involvement of pupils in lessons. Use of key words and clear objectives are characteristics of teaching across the school. Where a few activities are tightly structured, this sometimes restricts opportunities for pupils to take the initiative; in a few cases the pace of learning is slowed because of this. Expectations are mostly good, particularly where teachers have good subject knowledge to probe pupils' understanding. Many teachers question pupils in a variety of ways, checking that they understand and also to widen their knowledge and use of English. The quality of teaching in English is never less than satisfactory and in three-quarters of English lessons teaching is good. Pupils read each day and there are very good opportunities for extended writing particularly for pupils who are gifted and talented. In mathematics over half of teaching is good or very good. The effective use of ongoing assessments ensures staff and pupils regularly review their targets. Opportunities for pupils to speak and discuss their ideas are insufficient and often teachers ask pupils to write or draw where they would be better talking about their ideas to start with.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory across each key stage. There is good guidance and support from year heads and subject leaders. Extra-curricular activities are mostly for older pupils but there is an appropriate range, effectively extending the taught curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The newly appointed co-ordinator has established an ambitious programme for identifying and monitoring pupils' needs and managing support for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There is good joint planning in consultation with the special educational needs team. Effective support ensures that all pupils make good progress. The good induction process, led by the learning mentors, is an important link between the school and the community.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The rich variety of different cultures and faiths in the school are effectively celebrated and respected. Assemblies are important social occasions as well as opportunities for collective worship. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good whilst the wider aspects of pupils' spiritual development are good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The support pupils receive for their personal development is very good, as are the procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Monitoring pupils' achievements and progress is satisfactory. School developments, targets and support provision are evaluated using the data now available.

A significant number of staff are able to support families in their home language. 'Home language clubs' enable pupils and staff to learn together to read and write in their respective home languages. Relationships with the community are good and many helpers give time to extend pupils' experiences in sport, music and/or dance activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The vision and leadership shown by the acting headteacher is very good. She has created a strong leadership team with a shared commitment to move the school forward, supporting each other and the pupils very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body now has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but the governors have only recently had the information to hold the school to account and to fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are clear procedures and guidance for curriculum monitoring as well as evaluation of school and pupil performances. The school now has the assessment information to guide developments and track progress over time.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Lack of clear financial information resulted in a large overspend. Planned repayments are now in place and financial management focuses clearly on school development priorities. Resources are just adequate to meet the diverse needs of pupils.

The school has had a chequered history in the recent past with a downward trend in standards being unchallenged, a large budget deficit and a high staff turnover. At present the school faces a number of staffing problems, overcome by a significant number of newly qualified or temporary

teachers. It is a credit to the senior management team that the systems in place have enabled the school to support staff whilst at the same time continuing to strive for progress and high achievement. There is now greater trust and confidence to succeed amongst both staff and governors. The governors are beginning to compare school performances, consult more widely and they now have the data in order to challenge school achievements. There is a large building programme planned that should address the current accommodation problems of six temporary huts and only two small assembly halls.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with any problems. • Pupils are making good progress and they are expected to work hard. • Behaviour is very good. • The new diary system for older pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater consistency in setting homework. • Increased shade in the playgrounds. • Information about the curriculum and the ways in which parents can support their children. • More comparative information about school performance. • Earlier identification and support for pupils with special educational needs. • Standards achieved are not high enough at present.

The inspection team agrees fully with the positive points raised by parents and shares their concerns about the amount of information available to them and the consistency in setting homework. Improvements have been made for special educational needs provision and many of the parents' concerns are being addressed very effectively. The school has recognised the need to improve shelter and shade in the playgrounds. The school is addressing underachievement to enable pupils to make good progress.

Parents' views of the school are very positive but more could be done to involve them in their children's learning by providing more information about the curriculum, and other opportunities that are on offer, as well as more detail on the progress their children make.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Over 95 per cent of pupils in the school have English as an additional language: many of these are at a very early stage of English language acquisition. Over 28 per cent of pupils arrive or leave the school midway through their primary education. Those who start at the school either in the nursery or in other years have very low standards of attainment and many have a limited command of English. Three main factors affect the school's ability to accurately compare standards with other schools: firstly, until recently, the absence of a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and limited assessment information available resulted in fewer than expected pupils being identified as having special educational needs. Since the appointment of a co-ordinator last term and an improvement in the assessment data available there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils identified as needing support. A very effective support programme has been set up to meet their needs. These pupils have made good progress against their targets this term. Secondly, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than expected. Many families, although entitled to additional financial support, fail to register because of the social stigma attached to benefits perceived within the community. This means the school is currently comparing itself with a more favourable group of schools giving a slightly distorted view of the school's attainments. Thirdly, the national performance data does not take into account the turbulence of pupils moving in and out of the school or their differing abilities. In the case of the Year 6 tests in 2002, only 75 per cent of pupils were in the school in 1998 for the end of Year 2 national tests.

2. The school sets realistic targets but in 2002 these were not reached; the school narrowly missed the English target of 58 percent of pupils achieving the Level 4 or above. Mathematics targets are particularly challenging. Target setting is made difficult when there are significant changes to the pupil population between the time when the targets are set and the point of testing. However, evidence from the work seen in lessons, in pupils' books, as well as from the records of pupils' achievements, suggests that progress towards the 2003 targets is satisfactory in English. The comparative grades showing the school's performance against both the national averages and against schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals shows attainment well below average in English, mathematics and science. Also there is limited progress compared to prior attainment. This does not accurately reflect the true picture of achievements in the school. The achievements made by those Year 6 pupils in 2002 who had been continuously educated at the school show significant gains from the end of Year 2 test scores to the end of Year 6. Attainment in English for these pupils was below average, those for mathematics and science was in line with similar schools. These results represent very good progress from Year 2 when pupils had attainments well below average. Other pupils who join the school midway through their primary education attain very low standards in English, mathematics and science but more so in English as most of them are at a very early stage in acquiring skills in English. Overall, the progress made by the vast majority of pupils throughout the school is good.

3. Attainment on entry in the nursery for the vast majority of children is very low, particularly in communication, language and literacy as well as in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Almost a third of children fail to record achievements on the lowest steps of the Foundation Stage and the vast majority of others are only at the first steps of achieving the early learning goals. Most are at very early stages of English language acquisition. The fact that many of these achieve the early learning goals at the end of Reception year, just before they start the national curriculum in Year 1, is a credit to the good quality of teaching and support. The programme on offer and the support these children get enables them to make good progress even though their attainment is well below the national average.

4. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2002 is similar to 2001 in reading, writing and mathematics with standards well below average when compared to all schools nationally and with

similar schools. In reading there has been a steady improvement in attainment largely because of the major focus the school has given to teaching and supporting reading but improvements have been at a slower rate than the national trend. Girls' reading has improved at a greater rate than that of the boys over the same period. In writing and mathematics whilst there is no longer a downward trend, there is still much to do in order to improve pupils' attainment in these areas. This is particularly so for boys' reading and writing. Attainment scores and comparisons against national figures again misrepresent the school's achievements because they do not recognise the changing ability profile of pupils entering the school over the same period. The school performs well below the national average, but pupils achieve well for their abilities.

5. The school now has sufficient assessment information on all pupils in order to identify their needs and to match planned activities to pupils' different abilities. This has had a positive impact in mathematics where pupils are grouped by ability in Years 4, 5, and 6. Pupils who are gifted and talented have been identified and given extension work either in the extended writing sessions in school, or they are sent to the local secondary school for work in science. In 2002 these Year 6 pupils all achieved Level 5, (above the national average). In general terms the most able pupils in the school are performing in line with national expectations. Those of average ability are working below national average whereas the lower ability pupils and those at an early stage of English language acquisition are at very low levels of attainment.

6. The impact of low levels of English and the lack of confidence many pupils have in using language to explain their ideas, either through talking or writing about various subjects, are major factors in holding back standards in most subjects. However, in those subjects that focus on creative skills such as art, and design and technology, pupils make good progress in both key stages and are working in line with national expectations, with evidence of some very good work from the more talented pupils. Standards in history, geography and PE are now in line with expectations. However, few pupils reach the higher levels because of the difficulties many experience in applying English to explain their ideas or link cause and effect, particularly in history and geography. Standards in music and information and communication technology are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 but remain below average by the end of Year 6.

7. Literacy and numeracy developments across the school are effectively co-ordinated; standards seen in lessons and in pupils' work, although below the national average, nevertheless represent good and in some cases very good progress, particularly when pupils are in the school throughout their primary education. In this case pupils' good skills in literacy and numeracy help them make good progress in other subjects. However, standards are not as high as they should be in both literacy and numeracy despite the good progress being made. This is largely because of the difficulties the school is facing in terms of permanent staffing and in the amount of support available for ethnic minority pupils and in particular for those pupils with English as an additional language. The school has given priority to developing reading and extended writing but these skills could be extended further in foundation subjects. Further development on speaking and listening is needed to support discussions to enable pupils to justify their ideas as well as to talk about any research and referencing work they do. Precision measurement work in science as well as data analysis and use of number to solve problems or to analyse quantitative data is a weakness in mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are as good as they were at the last inspection and the school remains an orderly community. Pupils are very enthusiastic and eager to come to school. They have good working habits, which result from effective support, good teaching and very good relationships. All of these ensure that good learning takes place. Throughout the school, pupils are eager to be involved in activities. In lessons they are attentive and apply themselves to tasks well. They have good levels of concentration, remaining focused and actively engaged for long periods. Pupils work well independently, when they are given the opportunity, and their work-rate is good when working with others in small groups.

9. Teachers and support staff provide good role models for pupils, enhancing their moral development through the personal social health education programme as well as by insisting on high levels of good behaviour. Pupils respond positively and consequently behave very well; there have been no permanent exclusions as a result. In the few instances where teaching is less than satisfactory, pupils' behaviour remains good because they are very clear of the high standards expected of them. Registration periods at the start of morning and afternoon sessions are orderly and are effective social occasions where pupils welcome each other politely. All pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They mix well and play well together. Their movement around the school is quiet and orderly. They open doors for staff, visitors and each other. The very good relationships throughout the school enhance the positive atmosphere.

10. From an early age pupils learn about empathy and feelings as well as learning to appreciate the natural world and respect for property. As a result they have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. There is a high degree of harmony throughout the school resulting in the absence of any sexism or racism. Any poor behaviour or minor incidents of bullying are dealt with very quickly and effectively.

11. Significant improvements in the arrangements that promote and support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have been made since the last inspection. The wide range of contexts and activities supports pupils' personal development very well, fostering very good relationships and behaviour. As a result pupils are keen to take advantage of opportunities made available to them and to take on responsibilities at different levels appropriate to their ages and abilities.

12. Pupils' attendance at the school is well below the national average. Attendance is not as good as it was at the last inspection. However, punctuality has improved. The school continues to raise awareness about unauthorised absences resulting from extended family holidays. Parents are reminded of the importance of good attendance for their children's education but a significant number still take their children out of school during term-time for extended trips abroad. The school works closely with the education welfare service to try and discourage this practice and has recently taken steps to reduce the amount of time pupils can be out of school for family holidays before their names come off the school roll.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. In 43 per cent of lessons observed teaching was good, with a further 13 per cent of lessons being very good. Satisfactory teaching was seen in 39 per cent of lessons and only five per cent were unsatisfactory. The percentage of very good or better teaching is similar to that seen in the last inspection. However, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of unsatisfactory teaching, from 14 per cent to only five per cent in this inspection. In lessons, examples of good and very good teaching were observed in the Foundation Stage, mathematics, English and religious education, whilst very good teaching was seen in art and design and design and technology in Key Stage 2. Teaching is best in Year 2 and Year 5 where there are high proportions of good and very good teaching. However, good and very good teaching is evident in all years. This overall good quality of teaching makes a substantial contribution towards promoting pupils' enthusiasm for learning and helping them make good progress.

14. Teaching in English and mathematics is good overall with some teaching being very good and no unsatisfactory teaching. Consistently good quality teaching in these subjects is having a very positive effect on the pupils' learning and ensures that standards continue to rise. The good quality of teaching is a strength of the school's provision for English and mathematics. Planning is good throughout the school and is firmly based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. At present, too little use is being made of information and communication technology during literacy and numeracy lessons.

15. In the good and very good lessons, teachers have a good command of the subjects being taught and their management of pupils is very good resulting in pupils' positive attitudes to learning. A notable strength in teaching is the use of partnership lessons where support teachers from the ethnic minority achievement team work alongside teachers; this approach is often very good. Drama is used effectively to illustrate concepts, and there are opportunities for speaking and listening. In lessons where teaching is very good, teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what is to be covered, along with recognition of what they have learned in the lesson. Teachers' good questioning skills ensure that all pupils are included and encouraged to give extended answers. Teachers imaginatively and systematically cover the same question in a variety of ways and encourage all pupils to respond. This helps all pupils to consolidate their understanding and is especially effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. In the satisfactory or unsatisfactory teaching, these points are not emphasised sufficiently well and this has a negative effect on the progress made by these pupils. A further weakness lies in the way that discussions at the end of lessons fail to set clear targets for the next steps of learning.

16. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language are taught well. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported very well and all staff give pupils confidence, especially when they first arrive at the school with very little understanding of English. Class teachers and specialist language staff generally plan together. They take turns to lead different parts of a lesson and this gives pupils the confidence to take a full part in lessons. Teachers place a clear focus on developing subject vocabulary with the introduction of key words. These help to ensure pupils understand terms used in specific contexts. As a result, all pupils, including those with special needs and with English as an additional language, work with interest and concentration and make good progress. The specialist language teachers and special educational needs staff are highly valued by the staff and the pupils. Learning support assistants are very well informed, are competent and are used effectively to help pupils make good progress.

17. Throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils are very good and the mutual respect shown has a good impact on learning and pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The quality and use of ongoing assessments in classrooms are good and staff offer helpful and supportive comments to pupils as they work. Pupils' books are marked in a positive and supportive manner and pupils are given useful pointers to help them improve their work in the future. These strengths in teaching make learning a pleasure for pupils and they respond by being interested and determined to do well in all aspects of their work in the school.

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

18. The school's curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there were inadequacies in history, design and technology, music and religious education. The current curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils. In particular it takes account of the large proportion of pupils for whom English is not a first language and of pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum for the youngest children in the nursery and Reception classes is appropriate and gives adequate attention to each of the six areas of learning.

19. The strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are sound. In the case of literacy, the school has allocated significant curriculum time beyond the daily literacy hour to allow for: (a) a time each week for pupils to produce longer pieces of writing and (b) a time each day for them to read quietly. These arrangements were made in response to standards in reading and writing that were well below average and they have served the school well. Numeracy is taught to mixed ability classes in Years 1, 2 and 3 and in ability groups in Years 4, 5 and 6. The setting arrangement for the older pupils is effective, allowing teachers to focus on the reduced ability range

within each set. Younger pupils are also served well because of the effective joint planning with support staff that takes into account the range of ability in the class and the focus of support that is needed.

20. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities: music, sport, study support and others. All of these are on offer to both girls and boys. There is a music club and pupils in Years 3 and 4 can learn to play the tabla. There are opportunities to play football, netball and basketball. Study opportunities include a reading club, homework club and home language classes in Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu are enjoyed by both pupils and staff. Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to experience adventurous activities such as canoeing and orienteering by spending a week away from home. The school subsidises this visit and works hard to encourage parents to allow their children to participate. Last year was the highest take-up to date.

21. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a significant impact on pupils' personal development, particularly their very good behaviour and good attitudes to school. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

22. Pupils' spiritual development is good. It is enhanced through religious education where pupils learn something of the faiths represented in the school. They have the opportunity to visit places of worship such as a local church, a gurdwara and a mosque. Most assemblies provide time to reflect upon the main message of the day, although more could be made of these occasions by providing deeper spiritual experience through stories and practices from world religions. The school celebrates religious festivals such as Eid and Christmas. Year 3 pupils have recently made lanterns in art lessons to be used in the local Divali procession. Pupils are taught to appreciate the natural world in geography. In Year 4 history, pupils learnt and thought about what life as a child was like in Victorian times, appreciating other people's points of view.

23. The provision for moral development is very good. Mutual respect is a key feature that results in very good relationships throughout the school. Teachers reinforce their high expectations for good behaviour in lessons and provide very good role models for pupils. Codes of conduct are displayed around the school covering different aspects of school life in classes, meals, playtime and assemblies. Pupils are taught right from wrong and know and understand the reason for school rules and are willing to talk about them.

24. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. This is partly developed through the many after-school clubs but also through the school council where democratically elected representatives discuss a range of issues that affect them. A very good feature of this social involvement is that during Circle Time, council representatives lead discussions on topics raised, allowing others to express their views and to listen to others speaking.

25. There is very good provision for pupils' cultural development, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was only satisfactory. The school draws successfully on the cultural experience of both staff and pupils to promote cultural awareness. In Year 2 religious education, Hindu pupils and staff bring objects such as Divali cards and a puja tray into school for pupils to see. Art also makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development, particularly by giving them the chance to use and imitate the works of known artists. Opportunities are given for pupils to visit museums and art galleries. In assemblies sensitive use is made of music from a variety of cultures. Unfortunately music is not sufficiently developed to contribute positively to pupils' cultural education, despite the good works of the LEA music support team. Opportunities for pupils to perform regularly to an audience in a band, choir or dance troop are rare.

26. Some curriculum policies are out of date and a programme to review them is only at the planning stage. The school has a good quality curriculum map that provides the learning context for each term and each year group. It ensures coverage of the National Curriculum and the content of the Local Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. It also translates neatly into teachers' half-termly documents from which they plan their individual lessons.

27. The school has an adequate programme for sex education and has worked with parents to allay their concerns about the content of the resources used by the school. Health education and drugs awareness is dealt with adequately and the school has a good personal development programme for which time is set aside on a weekly basis.

28. Pupils benefit significantly from the good community links. Firms sponsor visits and professional footballers visit regularly to teach football skills. Pupils have worked as 'reporters' on the local newspaper. The school has constructive relationships with the secondary school to which pupils transfer. Joint visits by teachers and pupils from both the primary and secondary schools ensure smooth transfer into secondary education at the end of Year 6.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school continues to provide a good level of care for its pupils. Regular health and safety checks are made and reported to governors who then take appropriate action. This ensures the safety and security of all. A number of staff are trained in first aid and a comfortably equipped medical room is provided for pupils who are unwell. The school's procedures for the protection of children are good. The acting headteacher is the member of staff responsible for child protection matters; she effectively ensures new or temporary teachers are aware of child protection procedures. The school receives a good level of support from other agencies, including the education welfare service.

30. The school has been unable to significantly improve the level of attendance despite having good procedures in place for promoting and monitoring attendance. Pupils and classes that have good attendance are rewarded in 'Achievement Assemblies'. Statutory requirements for the registration, coding and recording of absences are all met. The electronic system of recording pupils' attendance enables the school to closely monitor the attendance of individuals as well as groups of children. The education welfare officer regularly works with staff and is in contact with families that cause the school concern.

31. Good behaviour evident throughout the school is effectively promoted and awarded with certificates in assembly, as well as stickers for good behaviour in class. Teachers and support staff apply behaviour codes consistently and monitor behaviour closely. The school is good at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Parents are happy that the school deals with bullying issues very well. Pupils also confirmed that adult support or advice is always available should it be required.

32. The learning mentors provide good induction for children entering the school. Detailed information about pupils is used effectively to support their learning. Parents are greeted informally when they bring or collect their children giving them an opportunity to discuss with staff any problems or issues that concern them. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Staff use their detailed knowledge of pupils to care for them very well.

33. In the previous inspection, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and use of information to guide curricular planning were unsatisfactory. Since then, there have been some significant improvements. A recently developed draft assessment and marking policy guides current assessment practice in the school. Pupils are assessed early on in the nursery and again at the end of the Reception year to provide the necessary baseline information that is now used to measure individual progress. Ongoing teacher assessments in mathematics, reading and writing provide detailed information that is checked against government backed assessments completed by each year group. Results of these are formally reported to parents in the annual reports at parents' meetings. However, a number of parents would like more information about their children's attainments and how they might support them.

34. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work against what they expect them to learn. However, the use of National Curriculum levels to help pupils understand their current levels of achievement,

where appropriate, are not always used. The advice teachers give in written or oral feedback is useful and encouraging often providing pupils with pointers on what to do in order to improve, but this is not consistent in all subjects.

35. The use of new technologies to provide detailed information on pupils' attainments and progress shows a marked improvement since the last inspection. The school now has the information to enable the senior management team to identify the progress of different individuals or groups of pupils and to evaluate the impact of developments and procedures that support pupils' personal and academic progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Parents have very positive views of the school. They confirmed that staff are always prepared to listen and individual concerns are always dealt with. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire the vast majority of parents said they would feel comfortable approaching the school.

37. The impact of the parents' involvement on the life of the school remains satisfactory as it was at the last inspection. Many parents are supportive of the school and contribute to their children's learning at home by helping with homework and ensuring that it is completed. However, only a small number come into school and help out in the classroom. The Parents' Association has only just been re-introduced and is run by a small number of parents. A significant number do come along and support fund-raising events. At the last inspection parents said that they did not feel the school did enough to encourage them to become involved with the school. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting parents still said they would like to be more supportive but that they didn't feel they were given enough information about the school.

38. Information provided for parents whose children have special educational needs has improved. These parents are involved in the review process and in the construction of individual education plans that help to focus work on their children's specific needs. However, the information provided by the school for parents in general is unsatisfactory, largely because it is inconsistent. Not all classes send out information to parents detailing what their children will be studying during the coming term and where parents might help. Termly newsletters are sent home giving general information about what is happening in the school giving dates for events. Some evening meetings have been organised to discuss areas of the curriculum and SATS; however, many parents are unable to get to these meetings. The school's documentation such as the School Prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report for Parents do not meet statutory requirements as some of the required information is missing.

39. Written annual reports for parents are satisfactory. They tell parents what their children know, understand and can do, but they do not say how well the children are doing in relation to others or against national curriculum levels. Some reports contain areas for development but these are not always specific and are not consistent across the school. There are opportunities for parents to meet informally with staff at the end of the school day as well as at the formal consultation evenings, which take place during each term. During the summer term parents receive their children's written annual reports at the meeting and are able to discuss the reports. The children's work is also available for parents to see at this meeting.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The school's results in national tests have been below those of schools with a similar proportion of free school meals for some years but governors have not had secure information in order for them to challenge this data or to hold the school to account. Until recently there has not been sufficient information to track the rates of progress of individual pupils or to show the impact of pupils moving in and out of the school other than at normal entry and leaving dates. The effect of having so many pupils with early stages of English language acquisition was not closely evaluated, particularly in terms of the additional value the school provided for these pupils. The lack of

information available extended also to the school's budget. Governors were not fully aware of the large overspend in 2001. The school has experienced significant turnover in staffing, 29 staff left in the last two years and not all of these have been replaced by full time qualified teachers. The school was without a special educational needs co-ordinator for some time due to long term sickness, and a number of experienced teachers moved to other schools leaving the school in a vulnerable state particularly when the substantive headteacher left at the end of the summer term 2002.

41. However, there have recently been some significant developments as a result of intervention by the local educational authority and the appointment of the deputy head teacher to be acting head in the absence of a substantive head teacher. The leadership she offers has been inspirational in gaining the full support and confidence of the staff, governing body and parents. She has analysed the school's performance data and ensured that all staff have a focus on raising standards of attainment most notably in reading and writing. There is now significantly more assessment information available to staff and governors to inform developments and set targets. She and the governors have a very clear awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have appropriate plans for improvement. The senior management team has been increased and there is now greater consultation and involvement of staff in decision making. The leadership and management of the extended leadership team are good, particularly the Year heads. They, along with subject co-ordinators, have provided clear guidance for curriculum planning and more importantly very good support for the large number of inexperienced or temporary staff new to the school. This has enabled the school to run efficiently and effectively during times of change. The LEA officer and governors both stated: *"Without these systems and procedures in place the school would not have got off to such a calm start at the beginning of September."*

42. The school has a large number of policies to guide its work and in many respects the school effectively reflects its aims and values in all that it does. However, a number of policies are in need of review to ensure that they actually reflect what is going on in the school. Staff job descriptions are clear and detailed but leave little room for flexibility in management terms. They are very precise in their wording for holding staff to account, with the exception of that in the headteacher's job description.

43. Since the implementation of performance management many of the targets set are closely linked to classroom performances and pupil achievements which provide the school with a clear focus for its work. Subject development plans identify targets for improvement and along with the school development plan are clearly costed in terms of teacher time, resources and staff development. Some subject plans are clearer than others, most notably science. Many of these plans have been carried forward from last year and have yet to be evaluated and refocused on current development needs. A notable exception to this is the planned improvements for special educational needs where improvements are going ahead at a good pace, largely because of the clear focus on identification and support, good leadership and effective link governor involvement. The links between learning support staff and the support provided by the ethnic minority achievement teams are very good. In both cases leadership and management of these groups is good clearly focusing on pupils' needs and informed by reliable assessment information.

44. The school makes good use of educational initiatives to support provision in particular as part of the Excellence in Cities project, two staff are employed as Learning Mentors. They do a valuable job in supporting pupils and parents with school induction, acting as a prime link between school and homes. They work with pupils to support them with any difficulties they may have and ensure staff are aware of any external issues that may affect the rate of learning of individual pupils. In addition to learning mentors there are over 40 support staff working in various roles in the school. All provide valuable support for the wider range of pupils' needs and help to ensure all make good progress. Their management is effective and together with the teaching staff they make a good team that is focused on providing quality education for the pupils of Elmhurst.

45. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are sound. There is good evaluation of subject files and pupils' work. Moderation of teacher assessments has proved invaluable in establishing common standards for each national curriculum level, although more work is needed on this, particularly for foundation subjects. Members of senior management team effectively support each other in carrying out any monitoring and review activities in the school. This is particularly effective with the involvement of the year heads overseeing both curriculum developments and pastoral support for both pupils and staff. The increased opportunities for the senior management team to meet and discuss issues have ensured greater openness as well as providing more information for governors in order for them to fulfil their statutory roles. The current training programmes provided both in school and by the local education authority support key curriculum developments. Senior teachers work hard to ensure new staff are kept up to date in relation to national initiatives. At present there is not a school in-service training co-ordinator to strategically organise, monitor and evaluate the impact of continuous professional development activities on classroom outcomes and pupil achievements. This is much needed because of the large number of new and inexperienced staff.

46. Governors are beginning to apply the principles of 'best value' in their work. They now have the information to compare standards, costs and other performance data and seek additional information from subject co-ordinators. This enables them to make informed decisions and to challenge the school on the pace of developments and the progress pupils make. The fact that there was inaccurate and insufficient financial information available, leading to a budget deficit, has meant that key educational priorities can not be fully implemented because of the shortage of funds. The most notable area being affected by this is support for pupils with English as an additional language through added classroom assistants. For a school of this size and with the very large number of pupils at an early stage of English language development, there is insufficient staff available for support. Another priority area is information and communication technology - where long term strategic planning for replacement and development of both hardware and software has been adversely affected through lack of funds and clear leadership. This is now being addressed. The planned recovery to achieve a balanced budget is sound. The use of income from lettings and other services along with savings from the staffing budget as a result of having younger, less experienced teachers will enable the deficit to be repaid but at a cost to school improvement unless carefully managed and effectively monitored.

47. Accommodation is generally satisfactory. There are currently six classes in temporary accommodation and there are only two small halls each of which are used for dining facilities restricting access for physical education and other curriculum activities at certain times of the day. There is a planned refurbishment programme for existing buildings and a building project just starting to provide a sports-hall and community centre. This new building programme when completed should provide much needed space to enable the school to extend curriculum activities. Resources for learning with the exception of information and communication technology facilities have improved since the last inspection and most subject areas have adequate resources to ensure effective teaching and learning can take place. The key resources of the school are teachers and support staff and at present there are insufficient support staff to meet the needs of all pupils with English as an additional language and a shortage of full-time experienced teachers to ensure high quality teaching.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. However, the school remains vulnerable as a result of two main factors mentioned above:

- 1) lack of funds available to support the very large number of pupils in very early stages of English language acquisition;
- 2) shortage of full time qualified teachers to provide good teaching consistently.

49. Staff and the governing body are clear of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and many of the issues arising from the inspection have already been identified in the current

development plan with key priorities given to core subject development, most notably English and information and communication technology. There is a review of assessment procedures particularly in the foundation subjects and a clear commitment to supporting the more able pupils. However, in order to raise standards particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, the headteacher, staff and governors need to focus on the following:

- (1) Improve standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology but particularly in speaking, reading and writing by ensuring:
 - increased opportunities for pupils to talk about their work, ideas, opinions and strategies for solving problems;
 - pupils read a range of different texts linked to other subjects in order to develop skills of skimming and scanning as well as research and referencing skills;
 - appropriate writing frames are provided to support writing for a range of different audiences in a wider range of contexts;
 - that pupils understand what is required in order to achieve the next level or stage of development in speaking, reading and writing.

Paragraphs – 61, 66 to 74, 81 to 85, 89, 90, 91, 105, 117, 119, 124,

- (2) Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop investigative skills and engage in investigations, research and problem solving activities in all subjects but particularly in mathematics, science and information and communication technology by:
 - extending the range of investigative activities to involve more precision measurement, data logging and data analysis and evaluation of information;
 - increasing the proportion of problem solving activities in daily mathematics lessons;
 - making greater use of computer software with a strong emphasis on problem solving, particularly in mathematics;
 - making greater use of the Internet as a reference and research tool to support learning in other subject areas.

Paragraphs – 83, 85, 88, 91, 93, 105, 116, 119, 120, 128,

- (3) Improve the provision and use of information technology as a subject in its own right as well as developing information and communication technology skills in other subjects by ensuring that:
 - staff have the skills and resources to use computer hardware and software to support learning in all subjects;
 - there is a programme of development and replacement of information and communication technology equipment to meet the changing demands of the curriculum and new technologies both in a computer suite and in classrooms;
 - staff make better use of the information held on computers including assessment data and pupils' records to inform curriculum planning and teaching.

Paragraphs - 83, 85, 88, 91, 105, 116, 119, 120, 128

- (4) Improve communication with parents to enable them to be better informed in order to support their children's learning and to improve pupil attendance by:
 - ensuring that the prospectus and governors annual report to parents meets statutory requirements along with information that is useful and informative;
 - providing comparative data for parents to be able to make judgement about the relative rates of progress achievement and attainment of pupils at Elmhurst;

- providing consistent details of curriculum topics and areas of study so that parents can support their children;
- ensuring that parents are informed and involved in the target setting process so they can support children in the next steps of learning.

Paragraphs – 36 to 38, 58,

- (5) Governors should address the budget deficit and ensure that sufficient staff and support are available for those pupils with English as an additional language by ensuring:
- that the principles of 'Best Value' are embedded in their work particularly in evaluating standards and school developments;
 - close working with the LEA to support recruitment and retention programmes;
 - there is a sustainable programme for refurbishing and replacing learning resources particularly information and communication technology equipment;
 - statutory requirements are met in school documentation.

Paragraphs 36 to 46, 48, 52,

The governors will be responsible for drawing up a school action plan to address the key issues and other weaknesses that are identified in the report. Among them includes:

- a review of the organisation and management of staff professional development; (paragraph 44, 106,)
- improve assessments in the foundation subjects. (paragraphs 124,126)

English as an additional language

50. The vast majority of pupils in the school come from an Asian background where Gujarati, Bengali, Urdu or Punjabi are the most common languages spoken, as well as English. However, pupils who arrive at the school are often at an early stage of language acquisition. Many teachers and support staff are themselves bilingual and able to support both pupils and parents in most languages. Communication with parents is established well from the time pupils enter the school. The home language clubs on Fridays enable pupils and staff to learn together to read and write in their respective home languages. At parent consultation evenings the school provides a valued translation service. There are bilingual signs for parents and pupils around the school but written communication in other languages has yet to be developed.

51. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress building on the previous good practice for supporting pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). An Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) co-ordinator has a smaller team, there are now only two full time staff who with the help of a part time teacher support over 800 learners alongside class teachers, support assistants and other special educational needs staff. Communication and joint developments take place between the Ethnic Minority Achievement and Special Educational Needs support teams. There has been good improvement in provision and support for pupils and their families. The Ethnic Minority Achievement team now has a wider context for work supporting not only EAL pupils but also those of minority ethnic backgrounds. There is however, insufficient expert support across the school for the very large number of pupils with EAL.

52. The school effectively monitors the progress of these pupils, and has reliable data from which challenging targets are set. As EAL pupils move through the school they clearly make good progress through the stages of language acquisition starting from a very low starting point. However, by Year 6 the majority of pupils are still only three-quarters of the way through the stages with very few attaining the final stage 4. The fact that so few pupils master English adequately impedes their progress in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils make the greatest progress in

Years 2 and 6, but the high proportion of EAL pupils moving in and out of the school makes it difficult to recognise easily the full impact of the good progress made.

53. A programme of support across the school for pupils with EAL is organised well, mostly in the form of 'Partnership teaching'. Teaching in these partnership lessons is often very good. Drama is used effectively to illustrate concepts, with opportunities for speaking and listening. Pupils work very well in pairs talking to each other describing their ideas, reinforcing both language and subject knowledge. The Ethnic Minority Achievement team is deployed very effectively. However because of the restricted number of staff in the team their work has to be carefully prioritised. This term it is focusing on raising the standard of reading in Year 2. In a Year 2 science lesson pupils were supported in a discussion on household equipment that needed electricity. This lesson was culturally challenging, as some appliances were not familiar to all learners. In another example of support two Spanish pupils from different groups worked together with an Ethnic Minority Achievement teacher using their first language. The happiness of these two was evident not only knowing they were improving their Spanish but also they were becoming more confident with English.

54. The curriculum and resources used to support learning are both culturally sensitive and relevant to these pupils and reflect a range of cultures. Some pupils find certain curriculum aspects challenging because of their home experience, particularly with music. The school deals sensitively with these issues without diminishing pupils' access to a full curriculum.

55. The school has recognised gifted and talented EAL pupils and supports them by developing imaginative writing or science extension work. All EAL learners in the main ethnic groups are represented within the gifted and talented groups. More support is needed for class teachers who do not have access to Ethnic Minority Achievement support, particularly in providing guidance on specific language needs for those pupils in the earliest stages of language acquisition.

56. Co-ordination and management of EAL support is good. There are clear targets for developing EAL support provision with success criteria. The development plan includes staff training and support for monitoring the impact of the current provision for these pupils. The Ethnic Minority Achievement co-ordinator is a member of the senior management team and is now in a position to influence strategic developments in this area in order to improve the already good provision.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	115
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	49	45	6	0	0
Percentage	0	13	43	39	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	748
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		119

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	88

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	797

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	129
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	141

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.38
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.78
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	64	51	115

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	38	49
	Girls	38	40	42
	Total	81	78	91
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (74)	68 (76)	79 (82)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	48	49
	Girls	40	38	43
	Total	81	86	92
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (77)	75 (81)	80 (67)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	65	48	113

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	40	47
	Girls	30	27	33
	Total	63	67	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (59)	59 (57)	71 (70)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	36	37	41
	Girls	31	29	29
	Total	67	66	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (55)	60(63)	62 (72)
	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	12	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	327	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	218	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	228	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	46	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	25	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	82	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	17	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)	33.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	28
Total aggregate hours worked per week	776.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	236
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	29
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	27
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	2,140,005
Total expenditure	2,295,798
Expenditure per pupil	2357
Balance brought forward from previous year	68,595
Balance carried forward to next year	-87,198

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	800
Number of questionnaires returned	409

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	41	6	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	36	2	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	33	14	6	3
The teaching is good.	54	34	5	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	38	11	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	38	6	1	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	32	5	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	39	36	12	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	46	35	5	2	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	39	7	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	32	9	5	13

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

57. The Foundation Stage has been created since the last inspection and the school has managed its introduction appropriately. Overall improvement in resources and provision for pupils who are under five since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Over one hundred children attend the nursery part time; this is slightly fewer than at the time of the last inspection. There are satisfactory procedures in place to assess children against the early learning goals when they start in the nursery. Most children arrive with very low baseline scores especially in communication, language and literacy, as well as knowledge and understanding of the world, both of which impact on children's creative development. This is because the vast majority of children have English as an additional language and many are at a very early stage of language acquisition. The main improvement since the last inspection has been provision for physical development with better equipment for outside learning areas as well as a shared area for creative development used by both nursery and Reception classes; this has resulted in improved standards in these areas. Curriculum planning covers the Early Learning Goals building on guidance from the Local Education Authority. There is a sound approach to introducing the literacy hour and the daily maths lesson through the Reception year enabling children to progress naturally into the national curriculum at the end of the Reception year. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is never less than satisfactory and is mostly good because of the staff expertise, good planning and very good relationships. Children with special needs as well as bilingual children are supported well. Overall, attainment of children at the end of the Foundation Stage is well below expectations but despite the very low starting point the children make good progress.

Personal social and emotional development

58. Most children enter the nursery with weak personal, social and emotional skills. They are often timid and staff work very hard to gain their trust and make them feel secure. Staff use their bilingual skills to warmly welcome children and involve them in activities from the start, sensitively encouraging their independence. Children quickly learn classroom routines responding positively to instructions and showing initiative in the role-play areas when given help. Many persevere with activities eager to please their teachers. Snack time is very special and organised well. Adults sit with the children modelling conversation and talking about a range of likes and dislikes encouraging reluctant learners to talk or interact with others. Relationships are very good and children respond politely because they are treated with respect.

59. By Reception most children engage in activities independently. At the beginning of the day they answer the register politely and enjoy listening to Indian music and reflecting on the theme for the day. They can dress and undress themselves for PE or for going outside. Most children are developing a positive self-image. Children make good progress with personal social and emotion development due to the commitment and good teaching of staff. Many will achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of Reception.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Only the most able are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is because almost all are still learning to understand and speak English. Bilingual staff support children in their home language enabling them to make good early relationships and give them confidence and opportunities to try to speak English.

61. In the nursery many children play alongside each other with little direct conversation, rarely questioning or sharing experiences. All children listen attentively to their teachers and enjoy joining in repeating familiar parts of stories. During story-times staff organise smaller groups to increase

opportunities for pupils to contribute. Adults intervene effectively during the excellent role-play situations introducing key words to extend children's language and then gradually withdrawing to let children take over. Children are introduced to books early on and reading is encouraged particularly in the very good story-time sessions. A lending library is available to parents but more needs to be done to encourage parents to read stories with children rather than focus on the alphabet, colour and counting books. All activities in the nursery are designed to underpin the development of language acquisition. In the Reception classes independent games and practical activities continue to support children's development of language.

62. Speaking and listening are a high profile in activities. In Reception, children enjoy a range of books and teachers introduce big book story sessions with shared texts weaving them gently into an aspect of the National Literacy strategy. Often they will sit with a book between tasks and are quite absorbed in role-playing with books. A few children can read very simple texts and identify characters in a story but are reluctant to talk about what they have read. More able pupils can write, 'I like ...' choosing who they like from a range of characters. They can also copy writing reasonably accurately but with immature formation of letters. Lower ability children have limited understanding of letter names or sounds and cannot write letters accurately. Most children enjoy rhyming words in poems and offer good suggestions, such as in and bin, but their vocabulary is very limited. Children make very good progress in this area of learning.

Mathematical development

63. Most children have very poor mathematical understanding when they start in the nursery. The curriculum is appropriately planned with good teaching to support the development of key mathematical skills. The theme on 'Number' is used to support good progress in mathematics as well as other learning areas. Children manipulate dough into shapes and count them and cut and paste one, two and three objects with support staff. Staff use the pupils' home language to encourage them to join in shape recognition and to play with jigsaws. The number theme is carried through with stories for example, "Three Billy Goats Gruff" and in the role-play shop, enabling children to enjoy activities with numbers. Few Reception children are secure in counting beyond ten correctly. Most count by rote but many become quickly muddled when asked to identify what comes before or after a given number. Many find it difficult to work independently to sort and draw five shapes in order of size despite good modelling from the teacher. Most children have difficulty finding the words to describe their work in cutting thin and thick strips of paper. Children use computer programmes to consolidate number recognition enthusiastically but the use of a sand timer to ensure they take turns fairly is not always effective. Aspects of the daily maths lesson are being introduced into Reception using short focused number activities; these are good. The school has set very challenging targets for pupils at the end of Foundation Stage in an attempt to raise expectations and achievements in mathematics. Children make good progress and although below national average many are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development by the end of Reception.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very weak. Limited language skills and experiences restrict opportunities to build effectively on the little knowledge they do have. They find it difficult to retain key facts once an activity has ended, largely because they do not have secure command of language or sufficient opportunities to talk about their experiences.

65. Many children have limited experiences of playing out in different types of weather at home and attendance is often very poor if it is cold or wet. They really enjoy the excitement of going out in the rain at school, looking at puddles and feeling the drips of water in the nursery, talking about rivers, mud, forests and caves in the story game, 'The Bear Hunt'. Even the youngest pupils enjoy using the classroom computers, making simple patterns and in the Reception many are developing their skills appropriately. The role-play areas help children to gain a sense of place and self. In the nursery adults and teachers work hard to teach children to value their heritage, their locality and

awareness of the world beyond, talking about day to day experiences as much as possible. Within such a diverse community children are very tolerant and accept each other's differences, the variety of languages and different styles of clothes. In Reception they appreciate the role of families and their extended families, producing books about their families. Stories like 'The Three Billy goats Gruff' are used to talk about the environment and why the goats wanted to move across the bridge. During science week there were many opportunities for children to take an active part in investigations, such as activities with hot, cold and warm water; recognising the differences between day and night, light and dark or predicting if materials would float or sink and delighting when their predictions were right. In spite of good teaching and the good progress made many are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of the Reception year.

Physical development

66. There is good provision for children to develop independence, self-control and awareness of personal space and this has a positive impact on their physical development, which is very low on entry to the nursery. Pupils have access to a range of ride-on toys or climbing frames to develop skills in pedalling, balancing, climbing and negotiating space over bridges and through tunnels. In the nursery they build objects with large construction equipment but better learning takes place when an adult supports and challenges what they are doing and why. In Reception many pupils can use equipment and operate independently. They develop skills in catching and throwing, kicking balls and taking turns to throw a ball into a basketball net. Progression in children's physical development from nursery through to Reception is not as well planned as the other learning areas particularly in the building on the good development of movement and control started in the nursery. Children in Reception are aware of being healthy and can explain aspects of personal hygiene. A few children are beginning to become aware of what happens to their bodies when they are active. Good provision for physical development and satisfactory teaching over the Foundation Stage enables most pupils to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.

Creative development

67. Children make good progress in creative development as a result of good teaching and effective support, enabling them to begin to interpret words and music and to engage in wide range of creative activities both in the classroom and outside. Children learn well together acting as doctors attending the wounded or making up stories using stick puppets in a theatre in the well organised role-play areas. In Reception, outside PE is made fun as the teacher tells them 'Put your coats on, we're going on a bear hunt'. They enjoy the rain and are excited as they hunt far and wide for the bear, acting like bears themselves by curling their hands like claws and stalking through the outdoor area making bear noises. Children develop skills in music making using simple instruments to accompany a favourite story. Music and songs of different types from different cultures are used at different times during the day to encourage listening and to widen children's awareness.

68. Creative artwork is good, using a piece of modern art introduced at the beginning of the week as a focus for further work. Reception children make stripes with different media to create a collage. When asked about it, many can say only a few words about what they are doing often not wishing to talk about the exciting effects they are experiencing. The support staff make a significant contribution to the learning of the children. They encourage talking and discussion. They help others to maintain concentration in order to see a task through to completion. Children enjoy creating things. Access to outdoor activities for creative development is planned well. Almost all children in Reception are working within the strands of 'stepping stones'. Most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in creative development by the end of Reception.

ENGLISH

69. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. This has been the case for the last three years and at the time of the last inspection. This is most probably because the school is providing for a constantly changing population of children as they move in and out of the school. In the 2002 national tests for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, results are well below average for all schools in English. However, results for those pupils who have attended the school since Year 1 show that at the end of Year 6, their results are comparable with those of pupils in similar schools. This reflects the consistently good planning and improved teaching and learning seen in the school.

70. Scrutiny of the pupils' work, together with lesson observations shows that pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, receive targeted support within the literacy lessons and make good progress as a result. The national initiative in literacy has been implemented effectively and provides helpful guidelines to teachers about the structure and content of lessons.

71. Many children have well below average skills in spoken English when they start in the nursery or Reception classes. However, by the end of the Reception year, although they still do not meet the communication, language and literacy goals set for them, they have made satisfactory progress. This is because all the staff focus on language teaching, and developing children's vocabulary. When pupils enter Year 1, their overall attainment and standards in speaking, reading and writing are still low. The school has already identified the need to ensure a smoother transition between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 so that the pupils are better prepared for the literacy period.

72. In all classes pupils listen carefully to their teacher's instructions and to each other. Teachers constantly encourage their pupils to use 'good listening' to ensure they concentrate effectively and take in the main lesson points. However, pupils' speaking skills are under-developed. They find it hard to express their own ideas and opinions, or to explain their thinking to other pupils in a larger class group. They lack confidence when speaking to the whole class. Most pupils respond willingly to questions but many find difficulty in answering questions, which require more than a surface understanding of a written text. An example of this occurred when pupils thought that the answer to the question, 'Where did Mr Bear find peace?' was, 'In the morning'. Pupils had confused 'where' with 'when'. As they move through the school, pupils learn to discuss and share ideas in pairs or small groups. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils discussed maturely how to decide whether some examples of written passages were autobiographical or not. However, they were very hesitant in giving explanations and reasons for their decisions. Although they produced accurate answers, these were very short and relied heavily on the teacher's prompts written on the board.

73. Teachers' plans often include specific vocabulary to be taught, and they provide pupils with good opportunities to use these new words in their discussions. Those with English as an additional language benefit from working in small groups where they get more opportunity to practise speaking. This strategy supports all pupils, and especially those who are in the early stages of learning English, in successfully developing their knowledge and use of new words.

74. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are below average but are improving. Skills with letter sounds are beginning to be developed in the Year 1 classes. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, most pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds to tackle unfamiliar words, and read simple texts with reasonable understanding. Most pupils enjoy reading and listening to stories and generally make good progress in their reading. However, they find difficulty in answering questions that require even a basic understanding of a written text. They use a range of strategies to help them read new words successfully. Repetitive texts are used to encourage pupils to join in with familiar words. Those who are above average read simple texts fluently, but others struggle because their knowledge of phonics is limited and they make unrelated guesses at new words. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are more confident and use a range of reading cues to help fluency and recall.

Most have a good understanding of character and plot, and the higher attainers can predict story outcomes. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils read short passages with reasonable accuracy and have a sound understanding of the main points. They confidently refer to the text to answer straightforward questions about their reading, but find it harder to deduce implied meanings. As a result, standards in reading are still below average at the end of Year 6. This is an aspect already identified by the co-ordinator as needing improvement.

75. Some higher-attaining readers enjoy books and talk eagerly about their preferences for different authors. Although some time is allocated during the week for quiet reading, not all pupils have a book “on the go” and many do not read every day. Pupils do not always realise that when they read aloud in literacy circle groups, adults are actually listening to them and noting their progress. This arrangement has undoubtedly helped, but some pupils do not improve sufficiently in their reading skills and need extra support. Only a few of the pupils questioned about their reading could recall books which they had enjoyed. Some pupils said they enjoyed “Harry Potter” and books by Roald Dahl, but were unable to describe the characters or plots of the stories.

76. Pupils do, however, acquire a sound understanding of non-fiction texts. By the end of Year 2 pupils have understood alphabetical order. Because of this they are able to use the index in the library, and locate information by using the index and contents pages of reference books. By Year 6 many pupils understand how to locate key words quickly but they have few opportunities to use these skills for independent research in subjects such as history. Pupils visit the school library each week. They learn then how to use index and contents in books and older pupils know how to use a glossary for explanations of word meanings. Younger pupils take a reading diary home and all pupils are able to change their library books on a regular basis. Older pupils write the title and reviews of the books they have read.

77. Standards in writing across the school are below average but are improving. However, pupils’ written work often does not reflect their understanding. In Year 2 most pupils can sequence their ideas sensibly when they write. They produce short passages and use some basic punctuation in their writing, although their vocabulary choices are often limited. A few higher-attaining seven-year-olds write lively short stories, employ a variety of punctuation, vary their sentence structures and use some imaginative vocabulary. By the time they are in Year 6, higher attaining pupils write fluently, and in their best work, the average attainers show a satisfactory grasp of grammar and punctuation. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have a limited understanding of punctuation, and make frequent spelling errors. In all books teachers give pupils useful guidance on how to improve their work. In a new initiative gifted and talented writers receive extra teaching support on a regular basis. This has already had a very positive effect on pupils’ standards of thinking and writing and this helps them to make very good progress.

78. The school has made writing at length a priority for improvement and has been very successful in this. Time is given for extended writing work in all classes and proper emphasis is given to grammar, spelling and punctuation within a well-planned piece of work. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils worked well together to agree on the most important questions they would need to ask in order to obtain information on their topic. In this way, they successfully planned a strategy for ensuring that their written accounts would be interesting and well structured. Small whiteboards are used effectively by pupils in Year 6 for noting down their ideas, drafting sentences and editing their work. They are given a range of contexts such as book reviews, biographies, suspense writing, and newspaper reporting in which to develop and refine their skills.

79. Pupils’ handwriting is well developed. They practise handwriting regularly so that these skills are transferred to their own written work. Most pupils’ writing shows a neat, well-formed, fluent style. Presentation is very good, with carefully labelled diagrams and well laid out reports. There is a very strong emphasis on writing neatly, and this provides pupils with good opportunities to practise their skills. Word processing is used in the classrooms, but keyboard skills are limited.

80. Pupils respond very well to English lessons and their behaviour is very good. They are enthusiastic, fully engaged and produce good quantities of work in the time available. In guided

reading, they are confident about stating their preferences and putting forward their own ideas. In group work, they collaborate well, taking ideas from each other which they then go on to develop effectively.

81. Teaching is good across the school although there are variations in teachers' skills. It is particularly strong where teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they have a real enthusiasm for language. They transfer this enthusiasm well to their pupils and this results in pupils working hard and achieving well. Lesson introductions are crisp and involve the pupils from the very beginning. Teachers state the purpose of the lesson at the outset so that pupils are clear about what is expected of them and are able to gauge their own progress. Effective 'recapping' at the end of lessons allows pupils to indicate what they have learned and teachers to identify remaining uncertainties. Teachers' marking also provides very good advice to pupils giving them a good indication of their success and the things they must do to improve their work. In most lessons, the work set for pupils during the independent part of lessons is organised well for pupils of different ability levels. However, in a few lessons, this is not so well organised and pupils make only satisfactory progress. Teachers here do not take enough account of pupils' individual needs or plan well enough to move pupils onto the next level. Teachers in all classes use praise very effectively to encourage pupils and to give them confidence. Relationships during lessons are good and pupils know that their ideas and efforts will be valued and are willing to try. The environment in classrooms supports language learning, for example, through displays on poetry, and reflections by pupils about stories they have read.

82. Another strength of the literacy lessons is the good contribution made by staff who work with pupils at the early stages of learning English and those pupils with special educational needs. New vocabulary and figures of speech are always clarified, and the staff are skilful at checking that those with limited skills in English are fully included in lessons. Support is targeted, and often involves highly effective "team teaching", where two teachers work together and take turns to lead parts of the lesson. Presentation is often lively in these lessons, motivating the pupils to offer answers and to try hard. As a result these pupils make progress similar to their peers.

83. Older pupils have targets in reading and writing, and they know what these are, at times referring to them as they work. Assessment procedures are good, and official test results are used at the end of each year to assess progress in reading and writing. The results are used to set targets for pupils' achievements for the following year and help to identify those who need additional help. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual education plans, which guide the good support they receive. Although teachers' on-going assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory, there is often a lack of clarity about what pupils still need to achieve in order to move through one level and on to the next.

84. Management of English is good. The two co-ordinators work very well together and have analysed pupils' work and the results of national tests to see where pupils are weak and what aspects of teaching could be better. Their enthusiasm and clear thinking is having a considerable impact on the provision for the subject and on the standards, which the pupils reach. The school has begun to focus closely on improving pupils' speaking skills and their reading comprehension. There is scope for the time at present allocated for extended writing to be linked more directly to support learning in other subjects such as science and history. Few classes make full use of information technology during literacy periods and this is an aspect that needs to be developed across the school. There is the potential for substantial improvement when the school upgrades its information and communication technology access and availability.

MATHEMATICS

85. At the time of the last inspection standards in mathematics were judged to be below average in Years 2 and 6. Current inspection findings show that this is still the case. Between then and now, however, test results have consistently shown standards to be well below national averages. Current standards are better than shown in the latest national tests: that is, they are now below the national average rather than well below it.

86. The school sets challenging targets. The 2002 target was for 69 per cent of Year 6 pupils to reach Level 4. In fact 59 per cent did so. The target for 2003 is 73 per cent. Given the current rate of progress in Year 6 it is unlikely that this will be met, particularly as the slowest progress is currently being made by the least able pupils in the year group, the class where some teaching is weak. Despite this however, most pupils are making good progress from very low levels of prior attainment.
87. Basic numeracy skills are well or very well taught in most classes and this enables pupils to cope with mathematical elements in other subjects, measuring in design and technology and drawing graphs in science, for example. Attainment in basic numeracy skills is satisfactory and often good.
88. The fact that almost all pupils have English as an additional language is a significant factor in determining the standards they achieve and the progress they make in mathematics. Pupils find it difficult to explain their thinking or their methods. Year 2 pupils could sort numbers into odd and even but had significant difficulty in explaining how they could tell the difference between the two. While pupils are relatively comfortable with basic computation, they are much less confident with mathematical problem solving. Furthermore, close scrutiny of the work covered so far this year suggests that there is insufficient time dedicated to investigations and problem solving mathematics to address the problems that pupils are experiencing.
89. Pupils at this early stage (October) in Year 1 count in twos to 20. About one-third confidently recognise odd and even numbers. The least able and those in the early stages of learning English count the spots on a die and move a counter the same number of places along a 'snake'. The most able Year 2 pupils make a specified sum of money from a given number of coins (24p from three coins, for example). Those of average attainment add coins within 20p while lower attaining pupils, with help, understand 'more' and 'less' in values below 10p. More than half can tell the time on the hour and half hour.
90. Pupils in Year 3 begin to understand place value, they total coins and give change, and plot simple co-ordinates. Year 4 pupils know the names and properties of some two- and three-dimensional shapes. The most able pupils in Year 5 draw the diagonals in a regular pentagon and try to work out the number of triangles these lines produce. Pupils of average ability discuss the properties of triangles. Able pupils in Year 6 calculate probabilities of scoring one, two or three on a range of spinners. Some pupils are able to express this as a percentage. The least able pupils in the year group produce bar graphs but need a great deal of support in the process.
91. The quality of teaching seen ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Of the 16 lessons, five were very good, five were good, four were satisfactory and two were unsatisfactory. Fast pace, high levels of challenge and an ability to engage and enthuse pupils typified the very good lessons. Questions were open-ended and pupils were expected to think for themselves through the problems posed. The unsatisfactory lessons spoon-fed pupils, and took them step-by-step through the process of drawing a bar graph. There was no evidence to suggest that they understood the mathematics involved or that they would be able to produce such a bar graph themselves. In addition, pupils chattered through much of the lesson, while the teacher simply raised her voice over theirs when she wanted to speak.
92. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons when their teachers engage them in the task; this is not difficult as they are keen to learn. Only when teaching is uninspiring or weak is their behaviour less than good. There is a 'maths challenge board' in the entrance hall displaying two problem-solving activities: one for Year 1 and one for Year 2. It is changed weekly and is linked to the work in the classroom. It is popular with the pupils and those who are most successful are rewarded in assembly. This generates interest: pupils talked about it a lot and many of them had submitted entry papers!
93. The two mathematics co-ordinators work intelligently to improve standards in mathematics. They are furnished with whole-school test data and make a close analysis of their

own. They recognise strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance and have efficient systems for dealing with the weaker areas. Linked with the difficulties of teacher recruitment, they work hard, particularly with overseas staff to ensure that their knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy is sufficient for them to teach it adequately. To that end, they organise appropriate training. Several staff, for example, have benefited from a five-day mathematics course. They use advice and support from the LEA, particularly in modelling lessons for newly appointed staff and they also use expertise in other schools locally.

SCIENCE

94. Standards in science throughout the school are below the national average. This is because of the limited experiences pupils have of knowledge and understanding of the world when they first start school, coupled with their low levels of English language acquisition.

95. Evidence from interim tests carried out at the end of Year 5 suggest that a significant number of the current Year 6 pupils are working close to national expected levels in the knowledge-based attainment targets. The work seen in pupils' books and on display in classrooms shows a wide range of scientific applications being covered by pupils of all ages. However, the range of investigative work focuses narrowly on observations and descriptions rather than on developing independent investigation and experimental skills, particularly data logging and measurement. As a result pupils are able to recall scientific facts but have difficulty reasoning or applying their knowledge to different situations. More able pupils in each year group tend to perform in line with national expectations. In Year 6, for example, pupils investigating habitats were able to use keys, interpret food chains and webs linked to predator prey relationships. However, the middle and lower ability pupils who have difficulty with English language tend to work below or well below this level. These pupils tend to work on tightly structured activities. The work is carefully explained to them and pupils follow set procedures such as using a key to identify particular animals or follow instructions to complete an electrical circuit. They describe what happens when a switch is closed but few suggest possible faults as to why a torch will not work. Many pupils have great difficulty recording their observations meaningfully. This lack of confidence and ability to use language to support science developments is a major factor in holding down standards. Overall pupils' science work is below national average but this represents good progress over time particularly for those pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs. The use of key words, planning and recording sheets guide these pupils through investigations and also help them to write experimental reports. Overall progress throughout all years groups is good.

96. The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory with half of lessons in Years 1 and 2 and over a third in Years 3 to 6 with many good features. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory teachers often rely on tightly structured activities to help them cover the science content. This approach often restricts the pace of learning in these lessons, whereas in the better lessons, tasks and teacher questioning are more open ended: as a result the pace of learning is brisk and pupils make good progress. A good example of this was in Year 5 where pupils were investigating factors affecting germinating seeds. Pupils were keen to talk about the different approaches to the work and discussed what they thought would happen. However, where activities have limited outcomes, it often depends on the class teacher's own subject knowledge to skilfully question pupils and challenge their observations. In some cases pupils would be better off sharing their ideas with one another than trying to record everything. Some good examples of collaborative recording were seen in Year 2. Pupils selected and grouped equipment found in the home into those that use electricity and those that do not. Later, the more able identified the form of energy converted in each case.

97. Pupils' attitudes to science are mostly good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Their attitudes tend to match closely the quality of teaching. In all cases pupils' behaviour is very good because of the very good relationships but when activities have restricted outcomes or where support is not readily at hand or the pace and expectations are lower than might be expected then some pupils become frustrated, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

98. The quality of leadership and management of science is very good. This is because the co-ordinator is a science specialist and has provided a clear curriculum framework based on the government-backed guidelines with a planning strategy that enables year heads to support teachers. The guidance given to temporary staff is very good. As one supply teacher claimed: *“Everything is carefully planned with all the equipment ready and working. There are clear expectations of what to do, how to assess pupils and what is expected in terms of feed back”*.

99. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and the quality of teaching are monitored regularly and attainment data is evaluated and used to support subject development planning and to set targets for individuals. The new bank of assessment information provides a secure base for challenging teachers' expectations of pupils. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in standards in both key stages, narrowing the gap between the school and national standards. This is down to the improved provision and management of the science curriculum as well as the moderation of teacher assessments to ensure consistency. Overall improvement in science since the last inspection has been good.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Very few lessons were available for observation during the inspection period. However, pupils' work in the very good displays in classrooms and around the school and from discussions with pupils show that they make good progress and learn well; this is due to the carefully planned progression in skills and experience provided for them.

101. The standards of attainment of pupils in Year 6 are in line with those expected for their age, with some that are above average in Years 5 and 6. This is due to the co-ordinator's expertise in planning a curriculum that gives pupils a wide range of experiences and skills especially in studying the work of known artists and sculptors. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with those of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards in some aspects of their work, especially when working in the style of Picasso, where some pupils' work is above average. There are examples of their work after his style in classrooms and in corridors, mostly in eye-catching black and white, and shades of grey, using chalks and coloured paper.

102. In the three lessons seen, there was good or very good elements in all lessons; teaching was never less than satisfactory and was very good in one lesson. Teachers plan for art effectively with some links across the curriculum such as those seen for English in Year 1. Pupils painted gingerbread men to go with their story, and drew shapes that help in their mathematics. However, across the age range of the school, there are insufficient links to some subjects such as mapping skills in geography or drawing diagrams in science. By the time pupils reach Year 3, they add to their work in art of pictures and drawing with sculpture and collage. For example, the extended work on leaves after the style of Andy Goldsworthy is good. They make wax rubbings, prints, and finally three-dimensional models of leaves. Overall, this work is above average showing effective examples of what pupils can do as they gain wider experiences.

103. The theme of gaining wider experience continues in Year 4, 5 and 6. For example, in Year 4, pupils use textiles and look at work by Sean Scully, imitating his warp and weft emphasis in their own weaving and painting. They use stripes and shapes in fabric versions and produce very creative works. The co-ordinator's expertise is exemplified by the above average work of some pupils in his Year 5. Some of their still life paintings of plants and their interpretation of Caulfield's "Pottery" are very good. Pupils learn to evaluate their work well and note colour, tone and texture. Year 6 have spent some time studying the work of Bridget Riley and have visited the Tate and National galleries. Their pictures based on Riley's work are good and they capture her typical zig-zag patterns well in striking black and white, and also in colour.

104. The co-ordination of the subject is very good. This is seen particularly in the planning across the school and how well the skills required in art and design are addressed. This is done skilfully and often through the work of known artists. Large sculptures such as a totem pole or the

work on Oldenburg's Plug sculpture are on display around the school and the subject as a whole is helping to develop pupils' cultural awareness of art and design.

105. Improvement since the last inspection is good namely in the range of work now available and in the leadership of the subject. This is particularly noticeable in the way in which the areas for development in the last report have been addressed, such as the very successful addition of sculpture into the schemes of work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. The two curriculum areas of design and technology and art and design are taught in alternate half terms. Due to these timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see a sufficiently representative sample of lessons in design and technology to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. However, from the few lessons seen, from talking with pupils and with the subject co-ordinator and from looking at past work, teachers' planning and the scheme of work for the subject, it is clear that standards meet expectations in both Years 2 and 6. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be below expectations in Year 2 and well below expectations in Year 6.

107. Pupils achieve well. The tasks they undertake give them opportunities to work with a range of different materials - textiles, food and other resistant materials in a way that enables skills to be developed systematically. Pupils in Year 1 make a hinged flap in paper or card to cover their 'hidden animal'. They are helped with their ideas through the use of "pop-up" storybooks that use similar techniques. Year 2 pupils learn the basic principles of pneumatics. They used a syringe to inflate and/or deflate a balloon. As the balloon changes in size and shape it is used to operate a model; for example the opening and closing of the jaws of a crocodile as the syringe is moved in or out. Year 3 pupils were able to use simple lever mechanisms to move models; pupils in Year 4 make a vehicle move using motors or rubber bands. In Year 5 pupils are taught about the properties of simple structures and build model bridges. They discuss the relative strengths of different structures. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 6 investigate the packaging of soft drinks as well as investigating the ingredients and ways of marketing products. In the numerous projects used across the year groups in the design and technology curriculum, there are imaginative links with art and design. A good example of art along with design and technology is in the work produced by Year 6 pupils. They make models of tools, on a very large scale, for example a huge model screwdriver made from corrugated card and plywood based on the design work of the artist Claus Oldenburg. The work of art and craft is also linked in Year 4 when pupils investigate textiles. They weave their own crude fabrics and make collages from these fabrics using sewing and weaving techniques in the style of the artist Sean Scully.

108. There is clear evidence in pupils' books that pupils plan projects in design and technology, taking account of the materials used and the purpose of the finished product. However, there is little recorded evidence of them evaluating their work although pupils claim they have discussed their work with each other and with the teachers.

109. The co-ordinator has considerable expertise in the subject, which he has used to produce a very good scheme of work for design and technology. This scheme fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, the subject co-ordinator has had limited time to share his skills and knowledge by supporting colleagues in their classrooms or by providing additional school based training. Nevertheless the scheme of work he has provided gives teachers first rate support for each of the 18 projects that form the basis of the design and technology curriculum used from Years 1 to 6. It is the quality of the guidance provided through the scheme of work and the examples of excellent practice from the co-ordinator that has been the main contributory factors in the improvements in provision and standard in design and technology since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Standards of pupils' work at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. This is the same as at the last inspection. The majority of pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over time.

111. In Year 1 pupils study the school and its locality. They examine where their homes are in relation to the school by producing a large-scale street map with drawings of their houses showing where they live, learning about different types of houses and the words used to describe them. However, some pupils find these tasks difficult due to weaknesses in their language skills. Pupils visit the seaside in the summer but there is limited evidence of geographical skills extending from this visit. The more able pupils in Year 2 show a clear understanding of the differences between a village and a city and record this clearly in their books. For a significant number of pupils, standards of drawings and written work are weak. Pupils recall with enthusiasm the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' and explain with interest how they examined maps to discover some of the places he visited. Many pupils by the end of Year 2 show some understanding about the way of life of the Masai tribe in Kenya.

112. In Year 3 pupils develop their skills further using geographical resources in their study of Chembakolli, a village in India, learning how to record information on maps using a key. They know about the crops grown in the village and how people travel around. In Year 5, pupils widen their knowledge of distant places through a historical and geographical study of Ancient Egypt with a particular focus on the Nile as a case study of a river. They show clear understanding about the importance of the Nile flooding to support agriculture. They study the location of Egypt and employ their skills in information and communication technology to produce a map showing key physical features such as deserts, seas, roads and the land by the river. They also make a comparison between the geographical features of their home area and those of a historical Essex coastal town - Maldon, which they visited. In Year 6, pupils study the continents of the world marking them clearly on a map. They study London and other capital cities, using atlases effectively to locate key cities of Britain in addition to using maps of London and the local borough. These older pupils visit some of London's important sites when studying the geography and history of city. Many pupils demonstrate skills in using information from a variety of sources including the Internet to compile booklets on topics. However, in a number of pupils' books, work is unfinished and there is limited evidence of pupils' ability to draw maps.

113. The geography timetable alternates with history throughout the school; as a result few geography lessons were taking place during the inspection. However, where teaching is good, teachers explain the lesson objectives clearly to pupils, use resources effectively and focus their teaching on key geographical skills, knowledge and vocabulary. They do this from a secure subject knowledge and make use of good planning.

114. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post a year but is enthusiastic and well informed. She has well organised plans for subject development and benefits from attending the local education authority's co-ordinators' meetings regularly. The government-backed assessment scheme has been introduced and a monitoring programme planned for next year. An effective system of feedback on each topic covered is already in place. The subject policy is currently in draft but gives clear guidelines for introducing and developing the scheme of work. Learning resources are organised effectively into topic boxes but their quality is variable. This is because priority has been given to replacing atlases. There has been satisfactory progress in provision for geography since the last inspection.

HISTORY

115. Pupils' overall attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

116. In Year 1 history is taught through topics, with learning relating to pupils' own experiences and to stories. They study Houses and Homes, Toys and Games and Leisure and Holidays. However, unlike in the older classes, pupils' recollections of their learning are often vague with limited written work or drawings to remind them of the topics they have studied.

117. In Year 3, the more able pupils show good knowledge of the differences between life in Tudor times and today and demonstrate perceptive observations of Tudor street scenes. They are able to compile with some accuracy a family tree showing the succession of Tudor monarchs. However, the work of less able pupils shows less understanding of the subject and is sometimes untidy and left unfinished. Pupils also make drawings of the wives of Henry VIII and know about their fates. Pupils' understanding is consolidated through the quiz that they devise towards the end of the topic. When studying the Romans, pupils are enthusiastic about the letter they write to Julius Caesar, and enjoy performing a play about the Roman invasion of England. Year 4 pupils are competent in making a comparison between Victorian times and the present and use the computer to draft their writing, which is subsequently placed on display. In Year 5, the combined geography and history topic about Ancient Egypt provides an opportunity for pupils to make good use of the Internet to obtain information about the pyramids and Egyptian mummies. There are some good drawings of hieroglyphics along with their interpretations. Year 6 pupils write with authority about London in the 'blitz' during the Second World War as part of their combined history/geography study of London.

118. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching. A key factor in good history teaching is the effective use of artefacts and a range of other resources and reference material used to capture pupils' attention, develop their understanding and stimulate discussion. In a good Year 4 lesson on the Victorians, an excellent range of interesting Victorian pictures, photographs and artefacts are complemented with good examples of pupils' drawings and writing. Good use is made of computers to produce a present-day map of the school's locality, which pupils effectively compare with one dating from 1895. Teachers support pupils of all abilities effectively enabling them to develop their historical knowledge and skills using evidence from a range of sources. Planning for history is thorough. In a Year 3 lesson, clear learning objectives derived from the school's scheme of work are shared with the pupils and different activities to meet the wide range of individual needs in the class are planned effectively supporting good learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge and good questioning enables pupils to develop skills in the use of historical evidence. However, the standards of pupils' written work are below average. The quality of marking is variable but is usually supportive, including useful questions to extend pupils' thinking about their work.

119. The acting headteacher has taken responsibility for the subject because of the temporary absence of the history co-ordinator. The subject policy is currently being rewritten, schemes of work are based on national guidelines and revised annually. As part of teachers' professional development a consultant has been employed to teach demonstration history lessons which teachers observe. Timetable arrangements for history are still an issue as they were at the last inspection but the school is aware of this. A key area for development is historical enquiry skills. The subject is now much better resourced than at the last inspection with sufficient resources to support the study focus for each year group held in topic boxes. A key strength in history provision is the use of educational visits to historical places to provide a stimulus for learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Since the last inspection information and communication technology (ICT) has become a key part of the National Curriculum requirements. In the previous inspection pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were below average and progress was unsatisfactory. There are some improvements since then particularly in Key Stage 1 where attainment by the end of Year 2 is now average and pupils make satisfactory progress. However, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is still below average in relation to the requirements of the National Curriculum, the age of pupils and compared to levels in other schools. During the inspection, there were a few occasions when it was possible to observe direct teaching of information and communication technology in classrooms other than planned lessons in the computer suite.

121. By the end of Year 2, the present pupils' achievements and progress are likely to be satisfactory and all indications are that they are making satisfactory progress. Pupils are beginning to use the controls competently. With a little adult help they can log on using a password, type their names and numbers, use capital letters and position the cursor accurately when deleting or modifying text or icons. Pupils understand some simple terminology when they do word processing and use capital letters and full stops. They are able to create a simple database about food and then save their own work. In one Year 1 lesson pupils were able to carry out repeated instructions to draw a symmetrical shape and learnt to use the 'undo' and 'fill' icons correctly.

122. Years 3 and 5 are familiar with cursor controls and the use of click and drag techniques, although their typing skills are insufficiently developed to enable them to input text as fast as they would wish. A lesson observed in Year 3 focused on pupils' using a CD-ROM to find information about rocks for their science lesson. The task proved too complex for pupils and they achieved very little during the lesson. In a Year 5 lesson pupils used the computer to draw and copy some regular and irregular shapes. Pupils respond well but most of them find it difficult to complete tasks satisfactorily by the end of the lesson. No evidence of work using adventure games or simulations was seen during the inspection, although some pupils said they had experience of programming a floor turtle by giving instructions in the correct order so that it carries out a sequence of travel and turning movements.

123. At present information technology is not used sufficiently to support and extend work in other subjects and several classrooms are not able to access the Internet for research. This limits the impact that the subject should have, for example, in assisting pupils to find information for their written work in history or science. In classrooms, pupils sometimes use word processing to present examples of work but they do not turn to it with a sense of familiarity as a means of improving the quality and presentation of their writing. Other major aspects of the subject such as data handling, using spreadsheets, and desktop publishing are similarly limited. Pupils have very limited experience in constructing and interpreting an appropriate range of data from a database or the use of power point or digital cameras. The skills pupils need for information retrieval are under-developed. Pupils are not yet familiar with e-mail, fax or the Internet. By the end of the year the present Year 6 pupils' progress and achievements are likely to be unsatisfactory.

124. Throughout the school pupils have good attitudes to their work in ICT. They are well motivated, apply themselves well and do not waste their time when using computers. They are very co-operative and freely help each other without prompting. During the times they were observed, pupils enjoyed the activities and worked well together. They eagerly pass on their knowledge to others and handle equipment carefully. They concentrate well on their work when working individually or in pairs. Pupils have limited understanding of the uses of ICT in the world and its impact in our daily lives. However, in lessons they quickly learn to use the correct terminology when discussing their work with adults and each other. Pupils are proud of their output and like to see it displayed when this is appropriate. There is equal access for boys and girls and good support for pupils with special educational needs. Higher attaining pupils sometimes show suitable independence in using information technology but many average and lower attaining pupils lack the confidence to proceed without adult support and guidance.

125. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good in Key Stage 1 and mainly satisfactory in Key Stage 2 except for one lesson. All these lessons took place in the IT suite, usually with half of the class in the library area under the supervision of a member of the support staff while the class teacher taught the rest of the group in the computer area. In general this works very well and means that pupils do not need to share a computer with a partner. However, it also means that pupils only have access once every fortnight and this lack of practice seriously impedes progress especially for the older pupils.

126. All teachers are now involved in the direct teaching of ICT. They have received training through the New Opportunities Funding programme and support from the local authority. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the teachers' knowledge and confidence especially when working with new programs. There is a positive attitude from staff and pupils are given clear instructions in order to achieve lesson objectives. Work is planned to enable the higher attaining pupils and those who are more confident to work at their own level and pace. There is equal access for boys and girls and for pupils with special educational needs. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work but has to amend it in order to ensure that it is closely matches pupils' needs.

127. The ICT co-ordinator has only been in post for one year but has carried out an audit of provision. The school has a very clear understanding of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. The school has plans to purchase new equipment, increase the number of computers and to extend the IT suite in order to ensure that every pupil receives her / his full entitlement to ICT time and resources. At present there are too few procedures for assessment in place to inform practice and to support pupils' learning.

MUSIC

128. Attainment in music is in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expectations at the end of Year 6. Almost all teaching is satisfactory particularly where teachers have good knowledge of the schemes of work and the skills to engage pupils in music making. In satisfactory lessons staff support pupils by encouraging them to listen and talk about their feelings that different music evokes. In the case where teaching is unsatisfactory this is because of a lack of clear focus on developing musical knowledge and skills. As a result pupils' attitudes to music are unsatisfactory particularly in Key Stage 2. Some styles of music are difficult for some pupils to accept because of cultural differences but the school responds sensitively to this encouraging respect for all styles of music.

129. Music has improved in some areas since the last inspection, standards are higher in Year 1 and 2 but lower in Years 3 to 6. There is now a very good detailed scheme of work providing clear guidance for teaching and learning but as yet there is no assessment in place. This is the next step in the subject development plan. New instruments have been purchased to support the new scheme. Some resources for the world music section are of very good quality and used well particularly with younger pupils. However, overall, there are insufficient resources of good quality to support the music curriculum.

130. Pupils have good opportunities to sing in weekly singing assemblies, talent shows, and cultural celebrations as well as in class - even the youngest children can name their favourite songs. However, few pupils talk about famous composers or their works despite the fact that music is played in assemblies daily and teachers introduce the names of composers to pupils and talk about the music. All pupils have access to un-tuned percussion instruments and a small number of pupils attend violin and tabla instruction after school. In Year 1 pupils enjoy opportunities to learn about and play Indian instruments; they listen to and talk about Indian music and sing songs tunefully in Hindi and Panjabi. In Year 3 pupils listen to 'Carnival of the Animals' and try hard to match the music to each animal. Year 5 pupils enjoy African drumming, beating out different rhythms.

131. There has been whole-school training for music and teachers have used this new knowledge to support high standards in music; for example, Year 6 pupils can now talk about and recognise some of the elements of standard stave notation reading and using music to play instruments. They have little idea about composing or appraising music largely because they do not have the vocabulary to discuss what they hear. Not enough use is made of information technology to compose music at present because there are insufficient programmes available. Pupils in Reception and Year 5 did use a music programme, unfortunately for both year groups it was the same software and used in the same way thereby limiting the outcomes for the older pupils. In general teachers lack confidence to teach music.

132. An interim co-ordinator for music has only recently joined the school, therefore she had had insufficient time to familiarise herself with the scheme of work and standards across the school. There are plans to develop assessment and opportunities for music tuition for recorders in the school and to develop music tuition further. But as yet music is not used as effectively as it could be in supporting cultural development or in providing opportunities for pupils to perform to an audience on a regular basis.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

133. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations in games, dance and gymnastics. Standards are similar to those found at the last inspection. The progress made by most pupils is satisfactory. Those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make better progress when they are supported in class by learning support assistants.

134. In Year 1 pupils learn to move imaginatively exploring movements from a story or using accompanied music to act as the stimulus for the movements they make. They learn the importance of warming up correctly, behaving sensibly and responding enthusiastically to their teachers. In Year 2 pupils learn to travel in a variety of different ways and participate with energy and concentration upon their movements. They learn new vocabulary and demonstrate their styles of travelling sensibly and confidently when requested to do so by the teacher.

135. In Year 3 pupils also understand the importance of warming up and cooling down and successfully investigate balancing, working with a partner to develop their skills. They participate in games such as football, learning to pass and receive a ball. By Year 4 pupils develop their agility and co-ordination by practising bouncing and catching skills with large balls and learn to apply these skills in competitive team games where they develop social skills as members of a team. Older pupils refine their gymnastic skills making good progress and focus upon controlled movements with carefully judged take-off and landings. These skills effectively lead into sequenced movements and apparatus work in Year 6.

136. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with a number of examples of good teaching. In a good dance lesson the teacher's good subject knowledge was used to explain clearly the lesson objectives, the reasons for the initial warm-up as well as demonstrating movements. This ensured that the lesson proceeded at an appropriate pace. When appropriate, she praised and encouraged individual pupils and helped them to evaluate and improve their performances whilst she took careful account of health and safety issues. In another good lesson the teacher made effective use of visual aids to ensure pupils really understood the movements they were trying to perform. Selected pupils were used effectively to demonstrate good techniques and opportunities were provided at the end of the lesson for pupils to reflect upon and review what had been learned. Less satisfactory teaching occurs when learning objectives are not clear, class control is inconsistent, health and safety matters are not fully taken into account and lessons not accurately timed.

137. PE is co-ordinated by two staff one with responsibility for Reception and Years 1 and 2 and the other for Years 3 to 6. Both have been in post for over a year. The school has close links with the local education authority's physical education adviser who supports the subject co-ordinators in

school-based staff development, for example in taking demonstration lessons for the staff. However, opportunities for co-ordinators to effectively monitor and evaluate PE provision in particular teaching across the school are under-developed. Curriculum planning has recently been up dated and is based on the government-backed scheme. The school currently uses the two school halls for gymnastics dance and small games activities. Both halls are adequately equipped with large and small apparatus but they also serve as dining rooms for the school, which creates problems immediately before and after lunch. The school has just been awarded a grant for constructing a new sports hall / community centre and work is commencing early in 2003. This should alleviate the current problems of shortage of space for teaching, and for the storage of physical education equipment. Outside, the school is able to use a small grassed area for athletics and football when conditions are dry and there are also junior and infant playgrounds for other outdoor games. Year 5 pupils attend the local swimming pool for swimming instruction for one and a half terms during the year. The school has clubs for football, basketball, netball, dance and drama and there is an annual sports day held annually on the school site. Overall co-ordination and management of physical education is good and provision throughout the school is satisfactory as is the progress since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. By the end of Year 2 and 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education is below expectation for the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In some areas particularly in the study on Sikhism, some pupils in Year 6 attain at the level expected. This is due to the good knowledge and understanding of the teacher. Overall, the rate of progress throughout the school is lower than it should be. These findings are broadly the same as those reported at the time of the last inspection and there has been no improvement in standards of attainment. This judgement reflects the fact that the co-ordinator has only recently returned after maternity leave and that a new locally agreed syllabus is due next term. Understandably no work has been done on the present schemes of work to evaluate their usefulness because the new schemes will come into force early next year.

139. The quality of teaching is good overall both for younger and older pupils, with no unsatisfactory lessons. Key features of teaching are the good use of storytelling by teachers, good use of the religious artefacts and the knowledge of support staff as well as pupils themselves. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson, the support assistant had brought Hindu Divali cards, a diva lamp, and a puja tray. She supplemented these by the knowledge of her own faith, and by sharing this with pupils. They learnt well from these enriching aspects of the lesson that was well planned and organised by the teacher. Teachers tell pupils stories from world religions well but there is in general insufficient written work in pupils' books. Overall, planning does not take enough account of the basic faith and founders of each religion. Some compensation for this unsatisfactory aspect is made by the school's celebration of major festivals. However, in Year 2 pupils do not know the story of Moses even though they have written some 'commandments' of their own. Overall, pupils are not familiar with stories of Jesus, or Muhammad (pbuh). They are confused about some of the signs and symbols used in religions such as the cross in Christianity or the Nishan Sahib in Sikhism. For pupils who find reading and writing a challenge, visual work about the symbols used in religions would enable them to learn more.

140. Where basic facts are being learnt, such as in Year 3 and their work on Hinduism, there is very little written work to be seen even though a satisfactory start has been made. They do not know the exciting stories that abound in Hinduism and only those pupils of that faith could answer questions about it. This proved to be true in discussion with pupils across all ages but especially in Years 2 and 6. Where pupils receive outside instruction they are knowledgeable and understand the faith. However, most of this knowledge is not being gained through religious education lessons in school.

141. Teachers take their pupils to visit local places of worship such as a church, a gurdwara and a mosque. In a very good Year 6 lesson, pupils were seen studying journeys and in particular those of Guru Nanak. The teacher had an excellent knowledge of this faith and was able to bring the lesson to life with many extra details.

142. Teachers ensure that pupils are learning to treat all religions with respect. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson had brought their own special things, such as a teddy, or a photograph. The teacher went on to demonstrate the great respect accorded to the Qur'an. Pupils learnt that they should wash their hands before touching it and to treat the holy book very carefully. Pupils in Year 1 learn about feelings and they heard a story about 'Mr Happy' and how he was able to make his sad friend feel happy too. Pupils suggested ways that they could make people happy. For example, they suggested that they could play with them, give them a present or some sweets, or invite them to a party. There is usually an effective link to speaking and listening in most religious education lessons and pupils are encouraged to answer questions put by teachers.

143. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory, an improvement since the last inspection. More work is to be done on the new syllabus and fortunately the co-ordinator is a member of the local authority's planning team for this. Assessment is unsatisfactory, although the school has development plans to rectify this in all foundation subjects. There has been overall satisfactory improvement since the last inspection particularly in teaching, better leadership and improved resources. The subject is making a satisfactory contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. More focused planning upon faith, founders and festivals is needed to raise this contribution overall.