

INSPECTION REPORT

MIDDLE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brighton, East Sussex

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique reference number: 114369

Headteacher: Mrs Gina Hutchins

Reporting inspector: Dr Melvyn J Bradshaw
6169

Dates of inspection: 12th to 15th November 2001

Inspection number: 197057

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Middle Street Brighton East Sussex
Postcode:	BN1 1AL
Telephone number:	01273 323184
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Murdo Morrison
Date of previous inspection:	15 th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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6169	Dr Melvyn Bradshaw	Registered inspector	Science Geography History Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
8919	Mr John Kerr	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23048	Ms Diane Wilkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education Foundation stage Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22055	Mr Gordon Cheesman	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Middle Street Primary School occupies an enclosed site in the Lanes district of Brighton. It has 194 pupils who attend full-time from Year 1 to Year 6. The current Reception class has 14 children who attend full-time and 16 part-time. There is also a Nursery class with 32 children who attend part-time, either mornings or afternoons. The numbers of boys and girls are about equal. Children normally enter Reception either part-time or full-time in September, most of those who are part-time become full-time in January. The school's roll changes during the year; about eleven per cent of children leave or join at other than the normal time. Most pupils, 87 per cent, are from a white ethnic background. The remainder are from a wide range of backgrounds, although mainly from various Black origins. Six pupils have English as an additional language, much lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Fifty-nine pupils (28 per cent) claim free school meals, which is above the national average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is about average; 51 pupils (23 per cent) in Reception to Year 6 are on the register of special educational needs (SEN). Three pupils have a statement of SEN. Attainment on entry is wide and varies from year to year. On entry to the Nursery, it tends to be below average, and in some cases much lower than this because of the need to provide places for children who have a range of very specific needs. Owing to the very good progress made in the Nursery, it is generally close to the average when children start in Reception.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Middle Street Primary School provides its pupils with a very good quality of education and is very effective. The headteacher, supported very well by staff, has provided the school with clear direction to ensure improvement. An excellent ethos is evident, and the school's desire to ensure equality and inclusion for all is a significant strength. As a result, most children display very positive attitudes. Their learning and progress are good, because of mainly good or very good teaching. Attainment has improved significantly and is now usually above the average by the end of Year 6. Teaching observed during the inspection was very good overall, and never less than satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' progress, and the effective use of the data obtained, help to set appropriate targets for all children. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. The school uses its resources well and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Management of the school is very good, and the headteacher provides clear direction and support. As a result, the teamwork of staff and governors has a very positive impact on all the school's work.
- Inclusion and equality of opportunity are central to the school's ethos and all it does.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall, and was never less than satisfactory in the lessons observed. This is leading to good learning in each class in the school, which has a positive impact on achievement and standards of attainment, especially in mathematics.
- Very good provision is made to support pupils' personal development, especially in the social and cultural areas. As a result, pupils' personal development and relationships, and their attitudes to school, are very good. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is mostly good.
- Assessment of pupils' academic progress, and the care provided, are very good, and effective use is made of the information gained to plan strategies for further improvement.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are assessed systematically, very well supported and make good progress throughout the school.
- The curriculum, especially in the Nursery and Reception, is stimulating and very well organised. It is strengthened by the strong links with the community and partner institutions. The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent and enhances children's learning.
- The links with parents are very positive, they receive very good information, and are fully involved in their children's education and the life of the school. Partnership with parents of Nursery and Reception children is exceptional.

What could be improved

In the context of the school's many strengths, there are no key issues to address. Minor areas which should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan include:

- monitoring the impact of the strategies put in place to improve standards in reading in Years 1 and 2, and to extend writing opportunities for older pupils;
- developing the monitoring roles of both subject co-ordinators and governors;
- making greater use of marking, especially in Years 3 to 6, to help pupils know how to improve further;
- considering ways of improving the behaviour of the small minority who are unaware of the impact of their actions on others;
- working with parents to improve pupils' punctuality in the mornings.
- making written reports to parents clearer.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Middle Street Primary School was inspected in April, 1997 and found to have many strengths. Very good progress has been made since then. The areas of weakness identified in the previous report have been dealt with, and its strengths maintained and improved further. Staff expertise and provision for music have improved significantly and, as a result, standards are better. Resources for information and communication technology are more extensive, used effectively and attainment has risen. A wider range of resources is available for geography, but this has not yet resulted in a significant rise in attainment. The school development plan is a helpful, clear document, with its targets closely linked to the school's financial planning. The statutory requirements for collective worship are fully met within the school's aims to promote inclusion. Teaching is better and, as a result, attainment and progress have improved and most pupils achieve at least the expected level, and often higher, when they leave at the end of Year 6. Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is better. Although it dropped last year, attendance has improved. The provision for physical education, and the range of extra-curricular activities, are much better.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	A	A	A
mathematics	C	A	A	A*
science	D	B	A	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

There has been an improvement in the school's results since 1997; the rate of improvement is better than that nationally. As a result, standards, when children left the school at the end of Year 6 last year, were well above those found nationally. When compared with the results of similar schools, that is with between 20 and 35 per cent eligible for free school meals, results were well above average in English and science, and very high in mathematics, being in the top five per cent. The school is exceeding its targets. Current pupils in Year 6 are not likely to attain as highly, as almost a third have special educational needs. Results, at the end of Year 2, have been mostly similar to, or above, the national average in mathematics and science since 1997, but below this in reading and writing. This year, attainment in Year 2 is about average. The school has put in place mechanisms to improve reading further, and has recognised the need to extend writing opportunities for older pupils. In other subjects,

standards are at least average and often better. Children in Nursery and Reception make very good progress, and most will attain the expected standard when they enter Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well during their time in school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy their learning and are very keen to take part in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is mostly good, but a small minority of pupils is not naturally well behaved.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils mature as they progress through the school forming very good relationships with each other and staff.
Attendance	Attendance has improved and is satisfactory. For a variety of reasons, it was below the average last year. Too many pupils are not prompt in the mornings.

Pupils' personal development is very good. They show initiative and take on responsibility around the school. They are polite and friendly. Very occasionally, the behaviour of a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory, and these pupils are unaware of the impact of their actions on others.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very 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.

The quality of teaching has improved further since the previous inspection, and is very good overall. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, the majority was at least good and over two fifths very good or excellent. Very good teaching was evident in every class. The teaching of English is good in Years 1 and 2, and very good for older pupils. In mathematics, it is very good throughout the school. Teachers often make very good links between subjects, which help to enhance pupils' learning and understanding. They use pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well to enhance learning. Strengths of teaching evident include teachers' subject knowledge, the good teaching of essential skills and relationships with pupils. Owing to the fact that some pupils do not naturally behave well, teachers have to ensure that management of pupils is given careful attention. This is usually successful. Marking is satisfactory, and some of the best very helpful. The quality of teaching evident is helping to promote children's learning throughout the school and is one factor which has resulted in the improving standards. Most pupils show interest and concentrate well. Those with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, are well supported by teachers and other staff and, as a result, their progress while in the school is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
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The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils. It is rich and interesting and meets the needs of all pupils particularly well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for these pupils is very good. The learning requirements of pupils with special educational needs are well known, their progress is closely monitored and planned work is well matched to their learning. Pupils are very well supported in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The few pupils for whom English is an additional language have made good progress and it is often difficult to tell who they are.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for pupils' personal development. It is excellent in the areas of social and cultural development. It particularly supports the school's aims for all its pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school makes very good provision for the support and care of pupils, their academic progress and personal development. Very good attention is given to ensuring pupils' welfare.

The school's curriculum is enriched by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is excellent. The commitment to equality of opportunity for all who learn and work in the school is exceptional. Both the local community and other educational organisations give particularly good support to pupils' learning. The school involves parents in its work very effectively, and provides them with very good information about its work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very effective leader with a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She is very well supported by the senior management team and all staff, who work very well together as an effective team. There is a clear commitment to providing an education of high quality and richness of opportunity for all pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. The governors make a good contribution to the management of the school. They have a good knowledge of the school and are clear about the direction of further improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school uses the results from National Curriculum tests and other assessments very well to track pupils' progress and its own performance, particularly in English and mathematics. The information is used very effectively to help bring about improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of all its resources including finance and additional grants. Staff, in particular, are used to very good effect.

The school's aims and values are reflected very well in all its work. The number and quality of teaching and support staff enable pupils to make good progress. Very good support is given to teachers new to the school. The accommodation, quality and range of learning resources are generally satisfactory. The principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Children's progress and behaviour are good. • Teaching in the school is good. • The school is approachable. • Homework is well organised. • The range of activities outside of lessons. • The school expects children to work hard. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More clarity in pupils' written reports.

Inspectors support parents' positive views of the school. Children do like school, most behave well and become mature and responsible. Their progress is good because of effective, well organised teaching. Expectations of pupils are high, and they are expected to work hard. They receive a rich, interesting curriculum, and inspectors agree that it is enhanced by an excellent range of activities outside of lessons. The school sets suitable homework in most subjects. Staff are very approachable and work very well with parents. Management and leadership of the school are very good. Inspectors agree that written reports about children's progress, although often detailed, lack sufficient clarity.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Over the period 1996 to 2001, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Year 6, pupils' results have improved at a rate faster than the national improvement. As a result, in 2001, they were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, they were well above the average in English and science, and very high in mathematics, being in the top five per cent. Inspection evidence shows that standards are currently about average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This is because the group has almost a third of pupils who have special educational needs. The targets set for at least Level 4 attainment in English and mathematics are usually exceeded. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.
- 2 Over the period 1996 to 2001, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Year 2, pupils' average results have fluctuated close to the average. Results in reading and writing have tended to be below the average, while those in mathematics have been above the average. In 2001, overall attainment in reading was about average, mathematics results were well above average, but writing was well below average. In comparison with similar schools, results were above the average in reading, very high in mathematics and below the average in writing. Teacher assessments in science indicated that, over the last two years, pupils' results have been of a high standard. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading and writing are about average, those in science and mathematics are above average. In reading, pupils understand what they have read. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.
- 3 The previous report indicated that standards were about average, or better, in most subjects in both key stages. Strengths were most evident in art by Year 2, and in English, art, design and technology, geography and history by Year 6. Standards were not high enough in music. Attainment is similar or has improved in most subjects, including music where attainment is now above average. By Year 6, attainment has improved at a rate greater than the national improvement.
- 4 Attainment on entry to the Nursery class is below average. Good progress helps to ensure that when children join Reception their attainment is close to that expected. Children's progress in Reception is mostly good and, as a result, most children should achieve, or in some cases exceed, the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1. In communication, language and literacy, children listen well and most speak clearly. They handle books satisfactorily and they know that words have meaning. They write most letters well, and many can write their own names correctly. Children have a secure knowledge of numbers and most can count up to ten. Children's knowledge of the world increases well, and is likely to be similar to that expected by the time they enter Year 1. They understand that babies change, grow and become stronger as they grow older. They also understand the need for food to do this. In creative development, children's work should be similar to the expected standard by the time they start Year 1. They use a range of media, including paint, satisfactorily. Almost all children hold their pencils and paint brushes with good control. Children's physical development is promoted well because of a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities.

- 5 Pupils in Year 2 are now achieving about average standards in English and religious education. They are better than this in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils read with satisfactory accuracy, but with a good understanding of what they have read. Writing skills have improved and are about average. They use correct punctuation and spell most common words accurately. Handwriting is mostly neat, with letters well formed. Most pupils speak clearly and listen attentively. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is above average, with particular strengths in number. The majority accurately add and subtract numbers to 100. Higher attaining pupils are confident with simple multiplication or division. They know a range of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developing well and are used very well to support learning in other subjects. In science, pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2. They have a broad knowledge across all areas of science. Pupils' scientific skills are particularly good. In ICT, pupils' work is well above average. They input text confidently, select different icons, control the mouse very well and print their work. They know how to program a floor robot to carry out a range of instructions, recording these as part of a literacy activity. In religious education, pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity, and a range of festivals of other faiths.
- 6 Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate attainment that is above average in English, mathematics and science. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, attainment was well above average; it is not likely to be so high for pupils in Year 6 this year. Pupils read with good understanding and accuracy. Their writing is satisfactory, although pupils do not have enough opportunities to draft and redraft their writing, or to write at length for different purposes. Handwriting is generally well formed. Speaking and listening skills are good. Many pupils are confident and articulate speakers. Pupils' literacy skills are used very well to support learning in other subjects. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is above average, especially in the area of number. They have good number skills and solve number problems accurately. Higher attaining pupils think methodically and are becoming mathematicians in the way they tackle problems. They draw and interpret simple block graphs, histograms and line graphs with accuracy. Numeracy skills are used well in science. In 2001, pupils' knowledge of science was well above average, illustrated by the detail in their writing about materials and how they are changed, electrical circuits and the growth and life cycle of flowering plants. Pupils' scientific skills are well developed, with pupils planning investigations and recording results accurately. In ICT, attainment is well above average, and pupils use their skills very well to enhance learning across much of the curriculum. In religious education, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and a range of other faiths, a strength is their understanding of how faith can influence an individual's life.
- 7 Throughout the school, pupils achieve mostly above average standards in other subjects. In art and design, in both key stages, pupils develop good skills and apply these well using a range of two- and three-dimensional media. The quality of work in design and technology is above average, pupils design, make and evaluate artefacts well. In music, standards are above average. Pupils show good standards in, for instance, singing in two-part harmony. In history, the stimulating curriculum and teachers' enthusiasm help to ensure that pupils' attainment is well above that expected. Pupils often write with feeling about people from the past, such as sailors in Tudor times or Victorian children. In geography, relatively limited evidence was available, but standards are at least average by Year 6. In both key stages, pupils have an adequate understanding of locations in this country and abroad. In physical education, pupils attain average standards overall, although there are strengths in

swimming.

- 8 Pupils' achievement during their time in school is good because of the quality of teaching, which was mostly good or better in the lessons observed. Progress throughout the school is consistently good. In most subjects, teachers challenge pupils and this helps them to achieve well. Teachers' enthusiasm, and the very good relationships with pupils, are significant factors in ensuring the rate of progress seen in each class. Lessons are often very interesting, and this stimulates pupils' attention and wish to be involved. Pupils with special educational needs, or those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress during their time in the school. The progress of these pupils is illustrated by the fact that recently most have achieved at least Level 3, and often the expected Level 4, in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. These pupils' good progress is associated with good teaching, well organised support provided by classroom assistants and the detail in the pupils' individual education plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 9 Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to their work. As they arrive in the morning, they clearly enjoy school. From the early years, they cope well with the school's routines and show an interest in all they do. Since the last inspection, the school continues to emphasise the need for pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to each other. This has resulted in a flourishing work ethic and the very good relationships between pupils and teachers. In Year 1, for instance, after some hard work, the whole class had fun as they joined their teacher in an amusing song, full of wild words, rhythm and mime. The strength of the provision within the curriculum for pupils' personal development has a very positive impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Extra-curricular activities also have a significant impact.
- 10 As they mature, pupils become increasingly more confident in asking questions, in using their imagination and in putting forward ideas and suggestions. This developing confidence is beneficial to their progress. By Year 6, the teacher could expect pupils to question their peers taking the parts in 'A Midsummer Nights Dream' about their reactions to the plot. Most pupils quickly develop a sense of self-discipline which helps their powers of concentration and their willingness to complete a task. They work equally successfully on their own, in pairs or in small groups.
- 11 The behaviour of almost all pupils is good in class and about the school. There is very little oppressive behaviour. Any lapses which may become potentially disruptive are dealt with equally well by all members of staff. This means that pupils respond to the high expectations of good behaviour. Only one pupil has been excluded in recent years, although he was excluded on three occasions. Although poor behaviour rarely interrupts learning, there is a minority of pupils who do not always consider the whole class and waste time, as they need constant correction.
- 12 Pupils respond well to the high levels of challenge. When set the task of using an abacus for the first time to help add tens and units, pupils in Year 1 quickly grasped the concept. Target setting has helped to focus pupils towards the means to improve their own learning. Pupils are very individualistic, but they listen well in discussions and are always ready to praise the good work of their peers. They are very responsible for one another, the older pupils looking after the younger ones, often purely voluntarily. All pupils with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, have positive attitudes to their work and learning. Many are well

motivated by good teaching. Their behaviour is good.

- 13 Relationships in the school are very good reflecting its inclusive ethos. Pupils are confident when speaking to adults and are courteous to staff, visitors or volunteers helping in school. Their positive relationships with each other and with adults make a significant impact on their personal development. Pupils of all ages mix well in the playground. Although space is limited, there is little friction as they share the play equipment provided by the school.
- 14 Attendance is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. In the last year, it fell below the national average as a result of a number of epidemics during the very wet winter. Almost all absences are accounted for as parents keep the school well informed. On the other hand, punctuality is unsatisfactory which results in a rather ragged start to the day as some pupils arrive as much as twenty minutes late. This situation has not improved since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 15 Pupils are well taught in the school, this is helping to ensure good achievement and pace of learning. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, most was good and over two fifths of lessons were very good or excellent. There is little difference in the quality of teaching across the school, although a greater proportion in the juniors was satisfactory. The quality of teaching is better than that described in the last inspection report, this is partly due to improved staffing levels, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- 16 The teaching for Nursery and Reception children is very good overall, and rarely below this standard in the Nursery. The teachers, often working closely with other adults, provide a stimulating learning environment. Careful attention is given to all areas of learning and the children are well prepared for entering Year 1. In particular, children's confidence is boosted by the effective use of praise. Careful attention is given to ensuring that the needs of the diverse range of children in the two classes are met. Their personal, social and emotional development is given good emphasis and, as a result, children are beginning to share resources well and co-operate when necessary, for instance when working on the computer or using play dough. Teachers provide a good range of activities, which effectively promotes learning in language and mathematical development. Early reading and number skills are given a high priority. Assessment is very well organised and the information gained is used effectively to plan activities. Most children concentrate well and show increasing confidence and independence, although there are a few children who seek attention and find difficulty in working on their own. Most enjoy what they do and are confident to describe their work to the older pupils in the class. Classroom assistants are used very effectively to help Nursery children learn, and make a positive contribution to their progress. In Reception, there is less adult support, but that available is used effectively in the classroom. When children are engaged in outside activities, there is not always enough adult intervention or discussion with children to help promote the development of language.
- 17 The quality of teaching in the school is very good overall, and none observed was less than satisfactory. It is very good in Years 1 and 2, and good overall in Years 3 to 6, with much that is very good. Teaching of English is good throughout Years 1 to 6, with examples of better teaching in the Juniors. In mathematics, it is very good throughout the school. In other subjects, teaching in both key stages is never less than satisfactory, and usually good or better. The strengths of teaching are similar

throughout the school; there are few weaknesses. Pupils' learning in the lessons observed was good or better. This was because of the high proportion of good or very good quality teaching, which ensures pupils' good progress as they move through each class in the school. Careful attention is given to ensuring that all pupils, whatever their backgrounds or needs, are helped to achieve their best. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good, and good in-service support following the previous inspection has helped to improve staff expertise in music. Pupils are challenged effectively in their work, this is due to good planning. Literacy is well taught, and improving because of the school's recognition of the need to improve pupils' reading and writing skills using a range of new strategies. Literacy is used very well in other subjects, including the development of speaking and listening. The teaching of mathematics is very good and has been helped by the National Numeracy Strategy. It is especially strong in number. Well organised activities are encouraging higher attaining pupils to approach problems in a way in which a mathematician would. Mathematics is often used well in science where pupils collect, display and interpret data.

- 18 In each class, some pupils, mainly a minority of boys, can exhibit challenging behaviour. They are not always aware of the impact of their actions on others. All staff work very hard to manage pupils effectively, and to ensure they have high standards of behaviour. Despite this, there are still occasions when pupils do not respond in an appropriate manner. This is the main reason why, although teaching is very good overall, learning tends to be good. Lesson planning is good and pupils know what they are to learn and why. A range of methods is used well and, in a range of lessons, effective cross curricular links are made. The good relationship between staff and the vast majority of pupils is a strength of many lessons. The pace of lessons is usually good and pupils are encouraged to complete a good amount of work. Resources, including ICT, are used effectively to support learning. Very good use is often made of support teachers and other adults during lessons. Teachers know their pupils very well and assessment during lessons is often effective. The quality of marking is quite variable, it is satisfactory overall, and on occasions very helpful. There is not always sufficient guidance on helping children to know how they can improve. Parents are satisfied with the amount of homework, and inspectors agreed that it is relevant, adequate and covers a good range of subjects. The most common weakness occurs during physical education lessons. Too often, pupils enter the hall making a noise. The hall has difficult acoustics, and this makes it difficult for pupils to hear. The best lessons in the hall invariably featured very good control and high expectations about low noise levels and paying attention to the teacher.
- 19 Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, receive good or very good teaching from classroom teachers and other adults. If necessary, they have specialist support outside the classroom. This includes sensitive, well-planned support for pupils who have particular behavioural problems. There is a good balance between support in the whole-class part of lessons and focused individual or small group work. All pupils are included in the wide range of activities offered. As a result, these pupils learn well and make good progress. The very good teaching in the school is helping to promote good learning in each class. This results in most pupils making particularly good progress by the time they reach Year 6 and this results in standards that recently have been above, or well above, average. Almost all pupils concentrate well and work hard. Acquisition of new skills and knowledge is good across the majority of subjects.

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

- 20 Strengths of the curriculum are the breadth and richness of learning opportunities which the school provides for all its pupils. In addition, the curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is outstanding. The quality and range are good throughout the school and especially good for literacy, numeracy, ICT, art and design and history. The school has been very effective in ensuring that the curriculum remains broad and rich, as well as responding to national initiatives, such as those for literacy and numeracy. The “arts” co-ordinator plays a crucial part in helping to monitor this aspect. The success of the school’s provision is seen in the above average standards pupils achieve in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as in ICT, history, art and design, and music. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum was satisfactory, so the present provision represents a very good improvement.
- 21 The yearly planning and schemes of work are good and ensure that the plans for what is to be taught in each term are effective. Termly planning is then translated very well into what is to be taught each week. The good planning gives very effective support to the high levels of good and very good teaching seen throughout the school. In particular, it gives very clear guidance for teachers to build on and extend pupils’ skills and knowledge and these help pupils to make good progress.
- 22 The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is of the very highest quality. A great deal of expertise, time and thought has been given to planning a very interesting and effective range of learning experiences which is extremely well targeted at children’s needs. As a result, children learn well in all their activities and develop very good attitudes towards school. All children, of different abilities and needs, make good progress. Throughout the school, appropriate emphasis is given to teaching numeracy and literacy, and pupils are given opportunities to use and improve these skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as history and geography. The curriculum is enriched significantly through a very good programme of visits pupils make and the contribution visitors bring to the school. These include sporting and musical activities, as well as visits to places of worship and art galleries. The school takes every opportunity to become involved with special projects and this enhances pupils’ learning opportunities exceptionally well. At the time of the inspection the school was involved in the Department for Education and Science Museum Project.
- 23 The school’s programme of extra-curricular activities is excellent and it has received an award for this aspect of its work. Both boys and girls are encouraged to take part in all these activities, which cover a wide range of sports, art, music and other subjects. Older pupils can learn about Samba music, or receive football and basketball coaching from some of the young players at Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club or Brighton Bears Basketball Club. Currently, pupils receive violin tuition from peripatetic teachers. Parents would like to see this aspect of the school’s work extended. Until recently, there have not been enough instrumental teachers available, but this situation has changed and keyboard lessons are due to start very soon. Younger pupils are also included in some of the extra-curricular activities, as well as those in Years 3 to 6, for example in a lunch-time sewing club. All these opportunities help to support pupils’ personal development very well and give them opportunities to extend skills learnt in lessons. The school encourages pupils with a specific gift or talent to enhance their learning in this way. A particularly good example of this is seen in the “Cabinets and Pods Club” which encourages pupils to investigate and classify unusual artefacts. The school aims to include each pupil fully, whatever their needs, in all that it has to offer and in this it is exceptionally successful. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have an

equal access to the curriculum.

- 24 The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There are well-planned arrangements to support pupils' development of literacy and numeracy skills in class or as part of a smaller group. The classroom assistants who support the pupils are attentive and enthusiastic about their work. Individual education plans are well written, with manageable targets set. The school's provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The school ensures that these few pupils are effectively supported and that their needs are identified and planned for.
- 25 The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. This includes the teaching of sex education and drugs awareness appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils. These programmes effectively emphasise healthy living and the importance of positive relationships. Personal and social education is particularly well supported in 'Circle Times'¹, where pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and worries. The school expects pupils to form good relationships with each other and with adults, and in this it is very successful. It is also very good at helping to encourage pupils' confidence and self-esteem. As a result, those pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language are very well integrated into the school.
- 26 The links with the local community are excellent and significantly help to enrich the learning activities of pupils. In this the school is assisted very well by parents and by members of the governing body who have links to The Brighton Arts Festival. The school sees itself very much as part of the community in the area of Brighton where it is situated. In particular, the historical and arts culture helps to enrich the curriculum in these subjects. This leads to pupils making good progress in their learning and to achieve standards which are above national expectations. Pupils, for instance, gained a very good understanding of mosaic art by studying mosaics from around the city. Visitors from the local community also help pupils to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding, for example when a visitor spoke to them about Buddhism. Strong links exist with a range of local businesses. During the inspection, a group of local residents from Age Concern were helping Year 2 pupils to sew a Father Christmas puppet. Very good links with other educational institutions also support pupils' learning well. The religious education co-ordinator worked with other teachers in the area in developing the Brighton and Hove guidelines for this subject. Other opportunities have been gained through links with Brighton University for ICT and for learning about samba music in a project with a local secondary school.
- 27 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Its provision for social and cultural development is excellent and that for spiritual and moral development is very good. This is a good improvement since the school was last inspected when the provision was good overall.
- 28 From the time they enter the school in the Nursery class, pupils are helped to be reflective and this gives very good support to their spiritual development. Children showed awe and wonder when adults talked to them about animals. The ability to reflect on the wonders of the world continue to be encouraged very well across the curriculum as pupils move through the school. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 sat spellbound listening to a woodwind duet. Religious education lessons contribute exceptionally

¹ During Circle Times pupils discuss a wide range of personal and other issues. All pupils are encouraged to participate and to value the views of others.

well to this aspect of pupils' learning. Year 1 pupils were very excited when admiring the gifts given to welcome a new baby into the world. Older pupils begin to have a good understanding of the meaning of religion to people of different faiths. Year 6 pupils carefully copied the gestures seen in the different statues of The Buddha as one pupil in the class told them of the significance. The collective acts of worship, which did not meet statutory requirements at the time of the last inspection, now provide good opportunities for spiritual development. Pupils were keen to ask questions when the local vicar spoke to them in assembly about the important features of his work. They were especially interested in the chalice he brought to show them and why this is important to Christians. Very good opportunities are provided for quiet reflection, as well as a prayer which ends every assembly. The school also has its own special prayer, which most pupils know and say with their teacher. The support, praise and encouragement which pupils are given help to lift their self-esteem. Pupils' work is valued and very effectively presented for other pupils and visitors to admire. This good use of praise gives exceptionally good support to pupils with special educational needs who feel proud of their achievements.

- 29 The school's provision for moral development is very good and plays a significant part in ensuring that very nearly all pupils behave well for the majority of the time. The behaviour policy emphasises positive reinforcement, for example teachers often praise a pupil who has responded quickly to a request and this encourages others to follow. The school has a number of pupils, mainly on the special educational needs register, who have specific emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, although their needs are being effectively dealt with through their individual education plans, some pupils do not yet fully realise the impact of their actions on others and on a small number of occasions this affected the rate of learning in lessons. Good behaviour is rewarded and the differences between right and wrong clearly stated and reinforced. Often pupils work towards gaining team points and this helps them to co-operate well with others. Pupils have helped to write, and are familiar with, their own class rules which are all positively framed and aimed at achieving a harmonious community in accordance with the school's aims. The school makes much of the achievements of pupils and encourages effort, for example through awarding certificates for good work and behaviour. Positive attitudes are also fostered through the school's personal, health and social education programme, especially in 'Circle Times'. The ethos of respect seen in the school and the very good role models which adults provide help to support the very good relationships seen.
- 30 The school makes exceptional provision for the social development of its pupils. This helps to make it an inclusive community where all pupils work and play harmoniously together. A particularly good feature is that all pupils feel valued and respected members of the school community, which helps them to develop confidence and self-esteem. This was very evident during the inspection week where pupils readily engaged in conversations with inspectors on many occasions. From the time they enter the Nursery, pupils are encouraged to work together in lessons and at other times during the day. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes were observed working and playing happily together without the need for constant supervision. The work planned in many lessons successfully pairs pupils together for discussions or requires them to share equipment, such as resources in numeracy lessons. There are particularly good links between older pupils and children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and this arrangement gives very good support to both groups of children. The school works hard to give all pupils, whatever their needs or abilities, equal opportunities in all that it has to offer and this also includes taking their turn as monitors. Pupils assist teachers in various jobs around the classrooms and in the school. The school takes very good account of pupils' views, through the

School Council, and also by consulting them on their progress and achievement. Pupils help to write their own targets for improvement and also make a contribution to their annual report.

- 31 The school's provision for cultural development is excellent. A very good emphasis is given to the creative arts and this helps pupils to reach standards which are above the national expectations, especially in art and design, and music. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own culture, especially that in the local area. This aspect of their work has been considerably enhanced by the contribution of a number of parents and also by the support of two governors who are members of the Brighton Festival Committee. As a result, pupils develop a very good knowledge of the rich historical and artistic culture of Brighton. Alongside this, the school has worked very hard to help pupils understand the cultural diversity of today's society and also the wealth of traditions from many parts of the world. Some very good quality artwork, which was on display, was the result of pupils' study of Australian Aboriginal art. Pupils also gain a good understanding of the local Jewish and Buddhist traditions in Brighton through visits and visitors to the school. The rich music curriculum helps pupils to gain a good knowledge of different traditions, for example pupils performed an African song in the Yoruba language.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 32 The school continues to make very good provision for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils. Pupils say that every member of staff knows their name and they feel confident to approach staff if they have a concern. Behaviour is well managed throughout the school. Parents find it easy to talk to teachers about their children's progress and any difficulties they may experience.
- 33 Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very good. These are very individualistic children. This is evident from their demeanour, the originality of their names and the clothes they wear to school. The school is very successful in preserving that individuality while developing their personality and leading them in the ways of citizenship. The School Council plays a significant part in the running of the school. Members of the Council will raise issues with the headteacher about matters of which she may not be aware. They spoke to her, for instance, about a new boy who was not settling in. Discussions in class involve pupils of all abilities. They are encouraged to be independent and to become more responsible. Year 6 pupils take turns to show parents round the school.
- 34 Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are also very good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. There are well planned routines for introducing new children and their parents to the school to ensure those children adjust quickly to their new surroundings. This smooth transition is helped as many children attend the Nursery at the school. Teachers know their pupils well. They recognise their individual needs, particularly those who are thought to be making less progress than expected. Very good procedures exist for assessing pupils with special educational needs, and work is carefully planned to meet their needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is regularly reviewed in relation to their targets for learning. Parents of these pupils are involved at an early stage.
- 35 The school sets targets for each pupil. These are beneficial to the progress they make and they take pleasure in achieving their goals. Pupils' ability in meeting their targets forms part of the individual reviews between teachers and parents. They are

given guidance on how to help their children achieve their targets and move on. Individual Education Plans for pupils with special educational needs are regularly reviewed with parents. There is very good support, including outside support, for pupils whose English is not their first language. Their progress in English is only discussed specifically with parents if there is a particular concern. Awards are given consistently by all the staff, and cover work and personal achievement, both in and out of school. Pupils value their awards.

- 36 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. The guidelines encourage staff to foster good manners and a sense of self-discipline amongst pupils, and to give them increased responsibility as they mature. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour. In most classes, with the pupils' positive attitudes to their work, lessons proceed at a good pace. This is not always the case. In some classes, a minority of pupils interrupt the teacher and divert attention away from the main objectives of the lesson.
- 37 Pupils are clear what to do if someone is unkind to them. On the relatively few occasions when behaviour is not of a high standard, staff act quickly and effectively. Older pupils who look after younger ones are taught how to diffuse tensions which may arise in the playground. Parents say teachers take time to explain if there are differences. There are no raised voices. The teachers, with senior management, work closely with parents to prevent any likelihood of exclusion.
- 38 Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are good. Parents are very co-operative. As a result, almost all absences are accounted for. Where this is not the case, staff are vigilant and take prompt action. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer when necessary and there are very few families with poor records of attendance at the moment. The punctuality of pupils in the morning has not improved since the last inspection. Attendance features regularly in the newsletters. An improvement in punctuality would improve the start to the day's work.
- 39 There are very good procedures for child protection and the promotion of pupils' wellbeing and their health and safety. All staff, including those new to the school, are fully aware of the child protection procedures. Staff and governors carry out routine checks of the premises and equipment, and defects are dealt with swiftly. Pupils' personal health education is covered in a programme which is appropriate to the age groups in the school. The programme is well developed and includes sex education and drugs awareness. Pupils are encouraged to discuss issues about their health and safety, as well as life after primary school.
- 40 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are very good. Written assessments are kept in every subject to record how well each pupil is achieving. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Regular assessment, and the analysis of the assessments, identify weaker aspects. These analyses also help to identify improvements which could be achieved by adapting teaching. This is particularly so in the analysis of mathematics. The analysis and use of assessment in the other subjects is in place, but in some areas requires further refinement. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators analyse the school and national results which are used in setting overall targets. The teachers set individual targets for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. Pupils are aware of their targets. Their progress against these targets, and any individual education plan, is used as the basis for discussion with parents. The school is in the early days of forming a database for tracking progress of each pupil.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 41 The school works very well in partnership with parents. They have a high regard for the school and all that it does in the education of their children. Parents particularly value the quality of teaching and the high expectations teachers have for their children. They are very satisfied with the way the school is led and managed. Their views are all confirmed in this report. The partnership with parents of children in Nursery and Reception is exceptional.
- 42 Except for the written reports to parents, the quality of information for parents is very good. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with the life of the school, its successes and with coming events. The information for new parents and the governors' annual reports are helpful and readable. The school recognises that, though there has been an improvement in the school reports on pupils' progress, they have become too stereotyped. They say what pupils know and can do, but there is too much teaching 'jargon' in much of the wording. Targets are used to focus parents' review meetings and they are given guidance on how they can help their children achieve a target and move on. Parents appreciate the help the school gives in support of their children's work at home and they regularly use the home reading diaries to pass on comments to the teachers. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged from the beginning to be fully involved with the education of their children. They are kept fully informed of development and invited to attend the annual reviews of the progress of their children.
- 43 Parents regularly volunteer their services in school, in class or on visits. Some have teaching experience, for instance with swimming instruction. This assistance is much appreciated by the school and helps pupils' social development as they interact with volunteer parents and they see adults mixing freely in the friendly atmosphere. The parent teacher association is well run and has the aim of involving as many parents as possible. It not only raises valued funds, but also helps to encourage support from the community. In this, they are very successful, as the community has a high regard for the school in its midst. They help in a number of ways, such as with school productions and fundraising events. For some years now, all the Year 6 pupils are given a meal by a local restaurant when they leave.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 44 The school's leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction for the life and work of the school. She is ably supported by her senior management team, by other staff with management responsibilities and by the governors. The quality and effectiveness of the school's leadership and management are directly responsible for the continued and sustained improvements made since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher's strong, determined and sensitive leadership is effective in engendering team spirit and a clear commitment by all staff to the school's improvement agenda.
- 45 The headteacher and staff have a very clear vision for the inclusive nature of the school, which is evident in all documentation. The school aims to be "an inclusive school where all children will be able to achieve through dynamic leadership, quality teaching and support for their individual needs." It is very successful in achieving this aim. Everywhere one looks in the school all its aims are very clearly visible in its day-to-day work.

- 46 Since the school's last full inspection, it has made a considerable improvement. Standards of achievement have improved in almost every subject. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, with more that is now very good or better. The areas identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection have been addressed through development planning, which has focused on the steps needed to make the difference. The profiles of music and ICT have been raised significantly, leading to higher standards of achievement. Further investment in geography resources has taken place. Development planning is more closely linked with financial planning and statutory requirements for collective worship are now fully met. Overall, the key issues from the previous inspection have been effectively addressed and the school has a very good capacity to continue to improve in the future.
- 47 There is good and effective delegation to staff with designated roles. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well led by their co-ordinators, who have very good knowledge of their subjects. Of the other subjects, leadership is excellent in music, very good in ICT, religious education, art and design, design and technology and physical education. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good. The co-ordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. Provision is highly organised and all adults involved in supporting pupils are well informed by the co-ordinator. She has been responsible for the very good liaison between classroom teachers, classroom assistants, outside agencies, parents and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs. Funds allocated to special educational needs are well used and the school also contributes significantly, to good effect, from its own resources. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is managed well with support from the local education authority.
- 48 The work of the school is well monitored. The monitoring of teaching is the responsibility of the headteacher and senior managers, which leads to targets for improvement, which are reassessed through later monitoring. All subject leaders review their subjects on an annual basis and write a report that informs the next stage of the school development planning. These reports are informative and detailed and outline the areas of further development required in order to raise or maintain standards, and to improve aspects of provision, such as resources. The development role of co-ordinators is strong, but their involvement in monitoring the quality of teaching in their subject is under-developed. The school recognises that this is an aspect of its work requiring further development.
- 49 The governing body makes a good contribution to the management of the school. It has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through the use of nominated governors, who liaise with subject areas in the school. This knowledge is shared at committee and full governor level. They are very supportive of the efforts of the headteacher and staff. Their involvement in planning the strategic direction of the school and monitoring the progress of the school improvement plan are not so well developed. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well.
- 50 There is a strong commitment to monitoring and evaluating the performance of individual pupils and to the school's performance overall, compared with all schools nationally as well as with similar schools. There are rigorous procedures in place for analysing the results of both national and other standardised tests that enable the school to identify aspects that require further improvement. A close analysis of the answers that pupils gave in the most recent tests at the end of Year 2 led to adjustments in the planned curriculum for Year 3 to address the skills and knowledge that were weak. Tracking of individual pupils has also led to early intervention where necessary to ensure that support is provided quickly.

- 51 The raising of achievement for all pupils, and the provision of a rich and broad range of learning opportunities, form the basis for all school improvement activities. The school development plan focuses on the standards achieved and the progress that pupils are making and uses this information to set the direction for further activity. This very focused approach has enabled the headteacher to define a manageable number of key areas for development, which include writing, spelling and reading. A further strength in the structure of the development plan is in the detailed review of progress from the previous year, which sets the course for further direction, and its close links with financial planning. Overall, the school development plan is a very useful tool for informing further development.
- 52 The school is suitably staffed with well-qualified teachers and a large number of well-trained learning support assistants. Staff work well together as a team with a shared sense of purpose, which successfully fosters the academic and personal development of the pupils. Performance management procedures are fully in place and all teaching staff have job descriptions and targets for professional development and pupils' progress. The school has excellent arrangements for the induction of new staff, and newly qualified teachers participate in the local education authority's induction programme as well as having an assigned school mentor. Classroom assistants, working effectively under the direction of class teachers, make a significant contribution to the quality of education provided for the pupils. Midday assistants, who also work as learning support assistants, office staff and the premises manager contribute effectively to the management of behaviour during the lunchtime period. All staff work together to support the aims of the school, creating an efficient, supportive and effective working environment, which encourages pupils' learning.
- 53 The school's accommodation is satisfactory, but is cramped and overcrowded. The school makes very good use of every available space but classrooms are small, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and classes often use shared areas. Attractive displays of pupils' work enhance the learning environment and celebrate achievement. There is an attractive ICT suite, but the library is not so welcoming and has been identified by the school as a priority for future development. There is an ongoing maintenance plan to continue the refurbishment of the school's interior. Hard playground space is small and classes take turns to use the hall at breaktime. Although there is no field or grassed area, there are attractive planted and seating areas and a small pond with snails, who even have their own web page!
- 54 The quality and range of resources are good, with finance being effectively deployed through the school development plan to support curricular development. Teachers make very effective use of the available resources to support and extend pupils and this encourages effective teaching and learning throughout the school.
- 55 The school makes good strategic use of its resources, including specific grants and other funding. Short-term financial planning is good and cost estimates are provided for the longer-term strategic targets identified in the school improvement plan. The headteacher and bursar apply best value principles when negotiating purchases of goods and services. Additional support for pupils with statements of educational needs, and others on the register, is very efficiently used and is effective in supporting pupils' learning. Specific grants received by the school for additional support for pupils are being used effectively for the designated purpose.

- 56 Budgeting to date has been the responsibility of the headteacher and bursar. The resources and finance committee has a satisfactory overview of the process. Administrative routines are very good, and the school office functions very smoothly. The school's bursar ensures that updated financial information is available to the governors, headteacher and senior managers. Good systems are established for checking and collating purchases, and paying creditors. An audit in 2001 by the local education authority required only small adjustments to financial procedures. These have all been implemented. The audit indicates the proper expenditure of all funds allocated to the school, including those for pupils with special educational needs. The core curriculum is generously funded, and spending totals for each subject are readily available to staff. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?

- 57 The school has no major weaknesses. Although attainment in reading by Year 2 is not as high as in other subjects, the school has already implemented a programme to improve standards. Similarly, the school has recognised that there is a need to extend further pupils' writing during Years 3 to 6. The monitoring roles of subject co-ordinators and governors could be extended. Although marking is sound, it is not used consistently to help pupils appreciate how they can improve. The behaviour of a minority of pupils, mainly boys, can affect other pupils. Too many pupils arrive late in the mornings. The school recognises that written reports to parents are not clear enough.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 58 There are no key issues for the school to address; but in the context of the school's many strengths the following areas should be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan.
- (1) Monitoring the effectiveness of the school's plans to raise further standards in reading and writing.
(Paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 17, 76, 79, 81)
 - (2) Developing the monitoring roles of both subject co-ordinators and governors.
(Paragraphs 48, 49, 101, 112, 116, 132)
 - (3) Making greater use of marking, especially in Years 3 to 6, to help pupils know how to improve further.
(Paragraphs 18, 81, 100)
 - (4) Considering ways of improving the behaviour of the small minority who are unaware of the impact of their actions on others.
(Paragraphs 11, 18, 29, 36, 70, 75, 91, 99, 131)
 - (5) Working with parents to improve pupils' punctuality in the mornings.
(Paragraphs 14, 38)
 - (6) Improving the clarity of written reports which parents receive about their

children's progress.
(Paragraph 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	23	23	8	0	0	0
Percentage	3.6	41.1	41.1	14.3	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	16	216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	59

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	0	51

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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
	2001	12 (18)	20 (14)	32 (32)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9 (15)	9 (14)	12 (15)
	Girls	17 (14)	17 (14)	20 (14)
	Total	26 (29)	26 (28)	32 (29)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (91)	81 (88)	100 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10 (13)	12 (15)	12 (16)
	Girls	18 (14)	20 (14)	20 (13)
	Total	28 (27)	32 (29)	32 (29)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (84)	100 (91)	100 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
	2001	17 (17)	13 (14)	30 (31)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12 (14)	14 (16)	16 (17)
	Girls	12 (12)	13 (11)	13 (14)
	Total	24 (26)	27 (27)	29 (31)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (84)	90 (87)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8 (15)	14 (17)	15 (17)
	Girls	11 (10)	11 (10)	12 (13)
	Total	19 (25)	25 (27)	27 (30)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (81)	83 (87)	90 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	9
Black – other	7
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	168
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.3
Average class size	30.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	178

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	523852
Total expenditure	504333
Expenditure per pupil	2262
Balance brought forward from previous year	9087
Balance carried forward to next year	28606

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	90

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	19	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	29	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	43	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	37	8	0	13
The teaching is good.	73	24	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	30	7	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	10	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	27	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	70	21	3	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	81	13	0	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	20	0	1	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	26	3	1	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 59 At the time of the previous inspection the provision in the Nursery was found to be satisfactory, although it was stated that teachers had a good understanding of the needs of children and planning was good. The school has made very good improvement in provision since then. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is of an exceptionally high quality and the teaching is very good.
- 60 As was the case when the school was last inspected, there is a wide range of attainment on entry to the Nursery. In addition, the school takes special account of applications from children who would particularly benefit from attending a Nursery class. This means that the overall prior attainment of children is below that seen nationally. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, all children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and the majority reach the standards expected by the time they enter Year 1.
- 61 Children aged three and four spend around two to three terms in the Nursery. Currently, there are 32 part-time children, attending either for mornings or afternoons, although the places have been allocated to ensure a full complement next term. Most children enter Reception in the September of the year in which they become five, gradually becoming full time by January. However, good arrangements have been made to consult with parents regarding the best time for children to move from the Nursery class according to their needs and development.
- 62 The high quality teaching and learning experiences offered are the result of the school's commitment to meet the needs of most children, whatever their abilities and interests. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is a highly skilled practitioner who has an exceptional understanding of how young children learn. As a result, the needs of all children, whatever their ability, are supported particularly well. The curriculum for both children in the Nursery and in Reception is excellent and is a result of the exceptionally good understanding staff have of the needs of children of this age. Assessment throughout the Foundation Stage is very good and it is used especially well to help build on and extend children's skills and understanding. This helps to promote good progress.
- 63 In the Nursery, teaching is consistently very good in almost all the areas of learning and adults contribute very well to children's learning, ensuring they make good progress. The quality of teaching and the richness of learning opportunities are supported particularly well by the very good contribution made by the two nursery nurses. The overall quality of teaching for children in Reception is good, and very good for the teaching of literacy skills, and is meeting children's needs well.
- 64 The Nursery learning environment is very stimulating and extremely well organised and presented, with many opportunities for the children to engage in purposeful activities independently. Very effective use is made of the limited outside areas, including using part of the main playground when other pupils are in lessons. In addition, money has been spent well on providing large equipment inside which supports children's physical, as well as creative, development. Owing to the very high quality provision, most children make consistently good gains during the time they spend in the Nursery and especially good gains in their personal, social and emotional and creative development. The learning environment for pupils in Reception is

effectively organised, and children also have access to the secure outside areas, as well as the school hall, to support their physical development.

- 65 The school has set up an exceptional partnership with parents of children in the Reception and Nursery classes. This is initiated with very good induction arrangements, which help children to settle quickly when they start school. These include home visits by staff, and visits to the school for the children and their parents, which ensure a smooth, confident start for the youngest children. The home visits are also used as an opportunity to feed in to the very effective assessments of children's skills and needs. Parents are seen as equal partners in their children's education and they give very good support, through encouraging their children to talk about or demonstrate what they have learnt in school, as well as sharing books together. Parents are welcomed to help in the classrooms at all times and, due to the good advice given them, they make a very significant contribution to children's learning. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, parents encourage children to "tell a story" through talking about the pictures.

Personal, social and emotional development.

- 66 Strong priority is given to this area in the Nursery and the children make very good progress. They understand the routines, settle happily and confidently to well planned activities when they arrive, and often persevere with these. Careful nurturing and very good teaching helps them to develop confidence and take pride in what they achieve. Children begin to co-operate, for example when playing with the pirate ship, or when building a track for the train, and most work together well. However, there are some children with specific behavioural needs who find this difficult. The sensitive support given by all adults who work there helps the majority of children to take turns and behave well most of the time. A particularly good feature of this is the expectation that children will make their own decisions to behave well, rather than being told to do so. Most children help to tidy the equipment away when requested. In both the Nursery and Reception, good story telling sessions help children to stay focused. In Reception, very nearly all children work well together, often organising the activity for themselves and remaining focused for a long time. However, many still find it difficult to take turns in whole-class activities when they have to spend longer listening to the teacher and other children. In this aspect, most children reach the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1, although a significant minority still find it difficult to wait their turn.

Communication, language and literacy

- 67 Children's language skills are often limited on entry to the Nursery, and very effective opportunities are provided to develop these. The constant oral interaction with the children by most adults involved, with many questions to encourage a response, is very beneficial. When children are engaged in outside activities, there is not always enough adult intervention or discussion with children to help promote the development of language. Overall, however, the teaching is very good. Children enjoy hearing stories read or told well and they love acting out scenes from the story. They use the role-play area confidently, developing their communication skills well. Children enjoy looking at books and help adults to tell the story through the pictures. Most children are confident speakers, although some are limited in the vocabulary they use. Some, but not all, children recognise their name and a few practise writing it. The more able children love writing pretend letters, which they "post" to other children and their teachers. There is still a wide variation in attainment in Reception. Opportunities to develop the children's communication skills are well planned to support progress. In

literacy activities, they are helped through good teaching to recognise initial and final sounds and this helps them in their early reading skills. Most children recognise their own name and attempt to write it, the more able children doing so well. The average and more able children copy the letters of the alphabet and words their teacher writes for them. Less able pupils do not recognise many letters and have difficulty saying what sound they make. The majority of children are likely to reach the expected standard in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

- 68 As part of the very good teaching, many opportunities for counting, sorting and using mathematical language are planned effectively in the Nursery. Children are helped to count in sequence and to learn that the last number is the total amount. A rich range of opportunities, including joining in number rhymes and songs, encourages understanding, for example in counting the three bears in the story of Goldilocks and in comparing their sizes. Children also learn to use mathematical language through role-play, for example when asking for a specific quantity, or a large or small object, when acting as a customer in the shop. Sand and water play also help children to recognise whether containers are full or empty and which container is the heavier or lighter. A good range of activities, focused on other learning areas, such as creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world, helps children to learn about pattern, shape and colour, to place objects in a sequence and to gain a secure understanding of the concept of time. This good emphasis on practical activities is continued in Reception, although there is now more focus on children recognising numerals and matching them accurately to a specific quantity. Most children recognise, count and order numbers to ten and are beginning to learn simple addition and subtraction concepts, for example in identifying the number before or after five. They can also say "If there is space for four children at the table and only two are here, there is room for two more." The majority of children count orally to 20 and the more able beyond this. In this aspect of mathematics most children will reach the Early Goals for Learning before they enter Year 1. Through good opportunities in art work and other activities, children gain a secure knowledge of colour and common shapes, such as a square and triangle. They begin to use balances to effectively compare weights. In these aspects of mathematics, most children reach the standards expected by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 69 Provision and teaching for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them is very good overall, and particularly good in the Nursery. There is an especially good focus on science and the skills of using a computer. Children enter Nursery with below average attainment. They make good progress and, by the time they reach the end of Reception, they should reach the standards expected, and in some cases exceed them. The curriculum is very well planned so that there are very effective links between Reception and what is taught in Year 1. In the Nursery, children extend their knowledge through a wide range of well organised activities. In role-play, by playing with castles and a pirate ship, they learn about differences in the past. They talk about different farm animals and are encouraged to care for, and examine the characteristics of, the guinea pig. When biscuits are made, they become aware of changes to materials. In Reception, children's understanding that change has occurred over a period of time, and the science of growth, was developed by a well organised discussion about why the baby owls in 'The Owl Babies' could not yet fly after their mother. This was further extended in the week when a mother brought her baby in to the class. Reception children confidently use the computer mouse

when using drag and drop programs to produce pictures of objects, such as a firework display. The children support each other very well, such as when a boy was unsure how to find the program he wanted and two children rushed to help. They showed what to do, but made sure he did it himself. They independently used a tape recorder to listen to a story. In role-play they use technological equipment, such as a mobile telephone. In religious education, children learn about festivals which are familiar to them, such as Christmas.

Physical development

- 70 When they enter school, the attainment of children in this aspect is very varied, but tends to be below that expected for their age. Nursery children have a secure area which they use for a wide range of activities. There is no designated, independent area for Reception children, however, the school provides good opportunities for children to use resources, such as large, wheeled toys, in the playground each day when the weather is fine. Teaching in this area of learning is good, and children make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress. A wide range of activities and equipment are used effectively to promote the development of physical skills. Children ride the wheeled vehicles with confidence, balance and an increasing awareness of other children and adults. Their balance skills improve as they move through Nursery and Reception. Greater thought could be given to how to support, and extend, Reception children's use of these resources, compared with what they do in the Nursery. In a good physical education lesson in the hall, Reception children made good progress in their accuracy of throwing bean bags and rolling a ball at a target. The lesson could have been improved had attention been given to assessing the extent to which children had developed particular skills. About half the Nursery children confidently climb on apparatus, move around sensibly and are aware of others. However, other children, especially a small group of boys, do not yet show control and an awareness of others. The teacher sensibly curtailed the lesson owing to this behaviour. Dexterity in both the Nursery and Reception is well developed through handling objects, such as sand, water, jigsaws, puzzles and construction toys. Opportunities are planned carefully for children to use paint brushes, tools, pencils, crayons and felt pens for making marks or drawing pictures. Although in the Nursery many children do not hold their pencils correctly, this improves and, by the time they join Reception, most have overcome their errors.

Creative development

- 71 Nursery and Reception children make very good progress in this area and most reach the expected standard before the end of the Foundation Stage. They enjoy painting, and very good teaching in this aspect allows them to paint and draw at a good standard. Children love to take part in role-play activities, taking great care to dress up as the character they want to be. In both their actions and speech they show a good awareness of role. Likewise, they enjoy stories, often listening spellbound, for example to see what happened to 'The Gingerbread Boy'. When playing with different story props, such as the model castle, they tell the adult the story they are creating with the figures. Children enjoy singing, often doing so spontaneously, for example when acting as "Bob the Builder". They have a good knowledge of percussion instruments and play these carefully. Children take great care to choose the colours they will use in their painting, for example to match the tones of autumn leaves. They are developing good skills, for example in using a roller in print making. Children's imagination is further developed when they move on to the Reception class. Here they confidently paint pictures of themselves or their friends. They have a good understanding of how to combine and merge different colours. Good pencil control

means that most children draw well, for example one child chose to draw her family members with good skills in portraying their different features. Children are also making good gains in learning to observe closely and then accurately draw what they see. The enjoyment of role-play continues with children often making up their own stories to act out.

ENGLISH

- 72 Good teaching throughout Years 1 to 6, based on a good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, enables pupils in the school to make good progress in all aspects of English.
- 73 Inspection evidence shows that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is in line with what is expected in speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven, the number reaching the expected level or higher in reading and writing was below or well below the national average, except that the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 in reading was well above the average. When compared to schools with a similar number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, results were above average in reading and below average in writing. Although the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading was well above the average for similar schools, it was below the average for these schools in writing. The performance of all children in reading was significantly stronger in comprehension than in mechanical reading.
- 74 Standards of attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 are about average or a little above those expected of pupils aged eleven. They are a little lower than the pupils who left in July 2001. In the 2001 tests, results were well above average overall. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above in English was about average, and well above the average for similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was well above the national average and very high when compared with the results of similar schools. The school's performance for this age group over the past four years has seen an improvement at a greater rate than the national improvement. Indications from this year's tests are that girls achieve slightly better than boys by Year 2 and slightly worse than boys by age eleven. This may be explained by differences in the prior attainment levels of boys and girls in those years.
- 75 At the time of the last inspection, standards in English were in line with the national expectations at the end of both key stages, but pupils had too few planned opportunities to develop speaking skills. Across the school, pupils now learn to listen closely to their teachers and to follow instructions, though the attention of a minority of pupils in some lessons wanders if they are not involved through carefully focussed questions. However, most teachers are very successful in engaging the interest of pupils of all abilities during whole class sessions. Pupils readily join in reading and discussing the shared text. Teachers in all classes give encouragement by listening carefully and appreciating the quality of the answers. As a result, most pupils try hard to explain their ideas clearly. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 adapt their speech to listeners' needs and are beginning to be aware of the importance of using 'Standard English'. By the end of Year 6, most pupils listen attentively to each other, asking questions to develop ideas and take account of others' views. Very good emphasis is placed upon pupils using precise language and using extended vocabulary. The teacher in a good Year 2 literacy lesson reminded pupils about using precise vocabulary when writing instructions about growing a bean in a jar. She used much genuine praise when the pupils used exact words. Another good example was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where the class teacher inspired pupils to be confident in composing

and answering questions in role about characters in 'A Midsummer Nights Dream'. Pupils' confidence in speaking is a direct result of the very good relationships established by teachers in their classrooms.

- 76 Teachers have a very good understanding of basic skills, and teach them well. In consequence, by the age of seven, many pupils are independent and confident readers, and show good understanding of what they have read. In Years 1 and 2 many pupils are unable to sound out words to discover meaning. The systematic teaching of the relationship between letters and sounds is underdeveloped, and is a current focus for development.
- 77 Pupils know how to use the well-arranged libraries and information books for study purposes. This ability supports their learning in other subjects and develops their independent learning skills. Pupils have sound knowledge of the library and use information books for study purposes. However, the library is underused by children for individual research and the school has identified it as needing refurbishment and restocking to make it a more welcoming and attractive area.
- 78 By the end of Year 2, attainment in writing is broadly in line with national expectations. Teachers offer their pupils a good range of work within literacy and across the curriculum. They encourage pupils to write in a variety of forms. Pupils write instructions, book reviews, labels and stories using appropriate language and format. They write clear instructions for making a puppet in Year 2, and in Year 1 are challenged about writing the "command" words for operating a tape recorder. Teachers have high expectations of presentation, handwriting and use of punctuation, pupils respond appropriately and complete their work with care. Most pupils still print but form their letters satisfactorily so that they can read back their own writing. Progress is good throughout Years 1 and 2.
- 79 By the age of eleven, pupils produce good writing and write in a range of ways and for different audiences. This range includes letters, explanations, reports and accounts. Writing in other subjects, such as science and history, makes a good contribution to pupils' writing for a variety of purposes. Pupils are introduced to the different types of writing early on in the school and have opportunities to refine their writing as they mature. In some lessons, the introduction to the writing task takes too long, leaving little time to complete work of sufficient length and depth. There is good evidence of the use of word processing in the work scrutiny, but little evidence of drafting, redrafting and refining work to improve their writing with support from the teacher or each other. The school has rightly identified writing as an area for development.
- 80 Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons. They are well supported by well-trained and well-briefed learning support assistants, and make good progress. A measure of the school's success is the number of pupils with special educational needs who attain expected standards in national tests. The targets set in their individual education plans guide their learning. Expectations for average and higher attaining pupils are high, and teachers' planning gives consideration to written tasks that challenge these pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language also progress well because of good support from class teachers and classroom assistants.
- 81 Standards of spelling across the curriculum are in line with the national average. By the age of eleven, most pupils' spelling is generally accurate. Too often though, the good approach to teaching and testing spelling is not reinforced when staff correct

spellings for pupils, even of words they should know. This reduces the incentive for pupils to put their tested knowledge into practice. There is good practice in the organising and testing of spelling, where, for example, pupils' own errors are included in the words to be learnt and, as was seen in most classes, high frequency words are checked at the beginning of literacy lessons. Pupils' handwriting is in line with the national expectations across the curriculum, although some have very attractive, fluent, legible styles. The standards of presentation vary between classes. Where the expectations of high standards are set and sustained, and pupils are reminded how to set out their work and present their writing, the quality of the work in the books improves considerably. However, this is insufficiently consistent across all classes.

- 82 Teaching is good overall and there is some very good teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In imaginatively planned lessons, the teachers' use of role-play and "hot-seating" encourages empathy with characters. The proportion of high quality teaching ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was mainly satisfactory. The improvement is the result of better planning linked to the National Literacy Strategy and more rigorous monitoring of the curriculum and teaching.
- 83 The main features of the good or better teaching are instructions that emphasise pupils' involvement, high expectations of work and behaviour, and well-structured activities that guide all pupils in applying and extending their knowledge. Where teaching is satisfactory, although planning is good, teachers' expectations of all pupils contributing answers, or of working on tasks at a good pace, are not high enough.
- 84 Throughout the school, pupils' progress is secured because the achievements of each group are closely monitored and lessons to follow are adjusted to meet their needs. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils' learning is further supported through drama. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make use of dramatic techniques, such as "hot-seating", to investigate characters and issues, and devise and write plays.
- 85 Planning in the school is based on the targets of the National Literacy Strategy, and teaching generally follows the recommended structure. Pupils in most classes are well trained in literacy hour routines, so that no time is wasted. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson, in which the lesson moved smoothly from one part to the next so that the pace of pupils' learning was maintained. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject, including the teaching of letter sounds. Pupils are told the target for each lesson, and most co-operate well because they understand the lesson's purpose. Teachers read aloud well, helping pupils to understand, and raising their interest in books. Learning support assistants are well used in lessons and are confident in their work. The quality of their support ensures that pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, have full and equal access to the curriculum, and play a full part in lessons.
- 86 The co-ordinator is well qualified and knowledgeable in her role and has been identified by the local education authority as a Leading Literacy Teacher. She has continued to oversee the National Literacy Strategy. Direct initiatives have included the updating of the policy, the introduction of standardised medium- and short-term planning, Grammar for Writing and Developing Early Writing, national target setting and assessment procedures and lessons observations. These initiatives are leading to greater uniformity in the quality of teaching and are having a positive effect on pupils' learning. There is a clear action plan for the development of the subject that shows an understanding of the present strengths and weaknesses. The school's

literacy resources are very well managed and effectively used to support learning. Events, such as theatre visits, book weeks, visiting authors, book fairs, whole school "Read-ins" and taking part in dramatic performances enhance the curriculum and enrich pupils' experiences.

MATHEMATICS

- 87 At the time of the last inspection, standards were around those seen nationally and the provision was satisfactory overall. The school has made very good improvement since then. Both the curriculum and teaching are now very good. Across the school, very nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and the more able, achieve well and reach standards which are above the national average.
- 88 The results of the National Curriculum Tests for Year 6 pupils who left in July this year show that an above average proportion of pupils reached the expected Level 4, and a similarly high proportion reached the higher levels. This means that the school's performance is well above the average of most schools and very high when compared to schools in a similar context. This continues the good success the school has enjoyed over the past five years where standards have improved better than most schools. Boys tend to perform slightly better than girls and this is in common with the national picture. Current Year 6 pupils achieve well. However, their prior attainment is not as high as that of last year's Year 6, although the majority are likely to reach average standards and around a third to exceed this.
- 89 Last year, all pupils in Year 2 reached the expected Level 2 in the national tests with a high proportion reaching the higher levels. As a result, the school's overall performance was well above that of the majority of schools and also those in a similar context. As in Year 6, the results have improved more over the past five years than in most schools. Girls have performed much better than boys which is different from national statistics. However, this is largely due to the fact that a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs are boys.
- 90 By Year 2, pupils have made good progress and reached above average standards, especially in their number work. They have a good understanding of the difficult concept of place value and most add and subtract with hundreds, tens and units accurately. The more able pupils work competently with numbers up to a thousand. They accurately collect data to complete a block graph. They know the value of different coins and are able to work out what they would have spent in total on a variety of items and the change they should receive. They use standard measures, for example centimetres, and are fairly accurate in estimation. A good focus on this aspect helps pupils to identify the method they will use to work out simple problems. This good foundation is built on well as pupils move through the school. By the time they leave, most pupils add, subtract, multiply and divide larger numbers with a good degree of accuracy. They have a good knowledge of different fractions and of proportion, probability and statistics. They confidently investigate different mathematical problems, making secure judgements about which calculation they must use.
- 91 Most pupils enjoy their work and the more able are very enthusiastic, taking great delight in discovering a pattern or formula in their work. The school has a number of challenging pupils who find it hard to concentrate and who do not fully recognise the impact of their actions on others in the school. It is due to the hard work of teachers that these pupils rarely disrupt the learning of others and this ensures good progress

takes place in most lessons.

- 92 Teaching is very good throughout the school. The very good support given by the co-ordinator has helped to ensure that all teachers have very good subject knowledge and teach numeracy skills very effectively. The classroom assistants also have good expertise and so pupils are supported very well. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set challenging and interesting activities, well matched to the ability of different groups of pupils. This means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, the more able, and those for whom English is an additional language build on and extend their skills and knowledge well. A particularly effective example of this was observed in a Year 3 lesson on problem solving. In this lesson, the more able pupils made up their own number problems before solving each other's. These were of a very high standard. At the same time, the class teacher and assistant worked with pupils who found learning more difficult. The careful explanations helped these pupils to complete their work. Very good learning took place in all ability groups in this lesson. Teachers are particularly good at explaining and demonstrating new skills and concepts, and also including pupils in demonstrating. The explanation of the difference between tens and units in a Year 2 lesson led to very good gains being made. This quality of explanation, seen in very many lessons, is the main reason why pupils have a very good understanding of number. In an excellent lesson seen in Year 5, the teacher explained the formula for calculating perimeter particularly well. This led to pupils making exceptional gains in their understanding and for the more able pupils to work out that the perimeter of a car park was 1.4 kilometres, 1,400 metres and even 1,400,000 millimetres. The good range of resources is very effectively planned for and used in lessons to help pupils understand more easily, such as in the use of an abacus to help pupils understand place value in Years 1 and 2.
- 93 The quality of teaching is significantly supported by the very good curriculum based on the National Numeracy Strategy. This has been adapted exceptionally well to meet the needs of different pupils in the school. Planning for the next stages in learning is also supported particularly well by the very good assessment procedures. These are very helpful in identifying for teachers what pupils need to move on to next. Several of the lessons planned during the inspection had been adapted to focus particularly well on the exact level of pupils' understanding.
- 94 The subject is particularly well led by a very knowledgeable and experienced co-ordinator who is a Leading Numeracy Teacher in the local education authority. She has used her skills and the knowledge she has gained through this work to benefit the school. The very good improvements seen are also due to the support of senior managers and the commitment of staff to provide very good quality learning for pupils. In this they are very successful.

SCIENCE

- 95 In 2001, at the end of Year 6, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests was well above the national average and that of similar schools. Virtually all pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or above, a figure above the national average, and half achieved the higher Level 5, which was well above the average. These results continue the strong trend of improvement evident since 1997. Results generally have been above average. Inspection evidence for the current Year 6 pupils indicates that attainment is about average, reflecting the high proportion of children with special educational needs in the class. Over the last five years, there has been no consistent

pattern in relation to the relative attainments of boys and girls. No significant difference is evident this year. Teacher assessments, at the end of Year 2 in 2001, indicated that all pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or above, and over four fifths the higher Level 3. Both figures were very high, in the top five per cent, when compared with the national figures. Inspection evidence confirms these results and indicates that standards this year will be above average.

- 96 The previous inspection found that attainment was about average in both key stages, with pupils making satisfactory progress. Teaching was good, but resources were unsatisfactory. The school has made very good progress in science, with attainment rising and pupils making good progress. Teaching is consistently good, with examples of higher standards. The presence of two teachers in both the Year 1 and Year 2 classes is aiding pupils' progress. Resources have improved, and are now satisfactory.
- 97 By the end of Year 2, pupils acquire good knowledge and skills. They know that different forces can be used to slow down or speed up objects, or change their direction of movement. They label the different parts of the human body accurately. Higher attaining pupils produce detailed, labelled drawings of insects, such as beetles and dragonflies, the latter in particular having good detail of its segments. For average and lower attaining pupils, the details are less precise. Good teaching is helping to ensure pupils learn a good range of scientific skills. As a result, they observe closely, use good descriptive vocabulary and record their observations accurately. They use their numeracy skills well in science, for instance when investigating cars going down ramps at different angles. These measurements include both distance and time. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support which helps to ensure that they extend their knowledge and skills. Teachers encourage pupils to record their observations in a variety of ways, including drawings, and this enables them to demonstrate a secure understanding of the scientific ideas involved, whatever their level of attainment.
- 98 During Years 3 to 6, teachers build effectively on the strong base achieved by the end of Year 2. Pupils' scientific knowledge expands well so that, by the end of Year 6, attainment is generally above average, or higher. Their skills are also developed so that they know how to plan an experiment, what must be done to ensure the test is fair and how to record their findings. Current pupils in Year 6 have attainment that is about average in relation to scientific knowledge, but better than this for knowledge of features such as fair testing. Relatively few pupils were sure of scientific terms related to solutions and dissolving. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills, including the production of bar charts and line graphs. Year 5 pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on the human body. Teachers' consistent use of accurate scientific vocabulary results in pupils' improved learning. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress because they are given very effective support.
- 99 Pupils enjoy their science, especially when involved in practical activities, even though the rooms are often cramped and rather overcrowded. They share resources and tasks well, and listen to each other when they discuss scientific problems associated with dissolving or the human body. Their attitudes to science are mostly very good, as evident when pupils share ideas during group or paired discussions which have been well organised by the teacher. Behaviour is good in both whole class and group activities, although some pupils, mainly a few boys, do not always show the same high standards, such as by calling out too frequently.

- 100 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and this is helping to promote good learning by pupils. Good attention is given to the correct use of scientific vocabulary and organisation of practical activities. Learning throughout the school is good because staff are confident when discussing science and because relationships within lessons are very good. In an excellent lesson in Year 1, very effective use of a range of resources helped pupils explore light and dark, and the use of different senses. Pupils are often stimulated by the teachers' enthusiasm for science, this was evident in a Year 6 lesson examining solutions and how dissolving could be speeded up. The use of questions was especially effective in this lesson. The work of pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, is aided by the well planned activities and good support. Teachers throughout the school make good use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to promote learning in science. Marking varies, last year for instance much in Year 6 was detailed and helpful, but this is not consistent across all classes.
- 101 The pupils follow a broad, interesting curriculum, which helps to ensure a good balance between the development of pupils' knowledge and their skills. The school bases its work on national guidance and its own detailed planning, which is designed to develop scientific skills and knowledge logically from the Reception class. Effective links are made with other areas of the curriculum, for example the investigation of how blocks of stone for building 'The Pyramids' could be moved more easily by the use of log rollers. Although pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills in many activities, they have few opportunities to analyse data presented to them from a range of sources. Assessment is very good. Pupils' knowledge and skills are assessed in considerable depth. In addition, National Curriculum tests are analysed carefully to identify areas needing further improvement. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. In particular, pupils are encouraged to work together and share resources, and to reflect on the links between animals and plants. The subject is well led and staff, working together as a team, are helping to improve standards. The co-ordinator took over recently, but last year worked together with the previous teacher responsible for the subject. Although she looks at pupils' work, she has not had chance to monitor the delivery of the subject in the classroom.

ART AND DESIGN

- 102 By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain standards in art and design that are well above those of most pupils of similar ages nationally. Standards were above national expectations in the last inspection and the school has done very well to improve them even further. Across the school, evidence shows that pupils achieve well and make good progress in working with a range of media, materials and techniques in two- and three-dimensions, with good quality outcomes. Standards of observational drawings are very good, as was seen in a Year 2 class where viewfinders were used to help pupils focus their attention on a limited area. In Year 5, this was further developed in great detail when pupils drew three studies of their favourite objects in a box, concentrating on shape, tone and colour. From an early stage, pupils learn how to appreciate art. Year 2 pupils studied a Gainsborough portrait in rapt attention before moving on to their drawings. They also studied modern paintings by Mondrian and Miro before designing their own computer aided picture in the same styles. Art skills are developed further by older pupils when they use a variety of media in experimental ideas on journeys after studying Aboriginal art.
- 103 The quality of teaching observed was very good. All teachers have excellent subject knowledge and their enthusiasm motivates the pupils. Cross-curricular links are

much in evidence, particularly in the introductory and final sessions, effectively reinforcing learning. The standard of resources is extremely high and they are used effectively to enable pupils to succeed in the task set. There are high expectations of behaviour, and pupils show a high degree of concentration and interest in their own and other pupils' work. Work is well matched to pupils' ability levels so that those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress.

- 104 The quality of learning is very good. Pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic, and have high levels of concentration. They select and use a range of appropriate materials and processes to interpret set tasks and create a wide range of effects. Pupils work in a very wide range of media, including fabrics, clay, paint, pencil, crayon and inks, and in different scales. During the inspection, they were seen using a variety of media, including inks, crayon, paint and pencil drawing. Pupils observe closely and demonstrate a good sense of proportion and composition. The consistent use of sketchbooks throughout the school, in which pupils develop their ideas, is a strength. A regular art club gives pupils further opportunities to develop their interest in the subject, and Age Concern also runs two craft clubs, for Year 2 and Year 6.
- 105 The subject is very well co-ordinated. Pupils' work is sensitively displayed around the school. It is stimulating and shows the use of a range of materials and techniques. Displays are of a very high standard and reflect the values of the school. Displays also reflect links with other areas of the curriculum and the study of other cultures, such as the one on mosaics linking Fishbourne with the Lanes area of Brighton. The school continues to welcome outside expertise to enhance the teaching of art and design, with a potter and sculptor both visiting the school recently. The school has also taken full advantage of its central locality and been on many visits for drawing, and to galleries and museums to inspire work taking place in school. The co-ordinator is in the process of applying for the Artsmark award to recognise the good arts practice that occurs in the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 106 The last inspection found standards at the end of both key stages to be in line with national expectations. Standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2 and by Year 6 are above those of similar aged pupils. Analysis of pupils' work, and lesson observations of teaching and learning in throughout the school, show that boys and girls attain similar standards. Good support for pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, ensures their good progress in all years. The national model scheme of work provides contexts that the teachers use effectively to provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop skills across all areas of the subject.
- 107 Satisfactory standards of seven-year-olds are reflected in the designing and making of puppets and of a variety of wheeled vehicles for specific purposes, such as a dump truck or an ambulance. Pupils use tools and assemble, join and combine materials and components to complete these products. There is a progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding, for example, when designing and making products such as a photograph frame in Year 3 and moving books in Year 4. In Year 5, they design and make sketch plans which they use for making moving toys, involving the use of a cam and levers to provide moving parts. In Year 6, standards of designing and making slippers are average, but those related to fairground rides are above average. Pupils use batteries, circuits, motors, pulleys and belts well so that their rides rotate.

- 108 Although only two lessons were seen during the inspection, high quality work was evident, in folders, around the school and in the co-ordinator's photographs of work. It is judged, therefore, that teaching is good throughout the school. Activities are well planned and teachers ensure that pupils understand the design process and develop appropriate skills and learning. In a Year 1 class, the teacher insisted on the correct vocabulary, such as "levers" and "sliders", when the pupils were making teddy bears and magicians hats. In a Year 4 class, the teacher clearly showed that products are designed for different purposes and uses when the pupils were examining different money containers. Literacy and numeracy are both supported well, in the development of technical vocabulary and measurement skills. Management of the subject is good. The curriculum has been trimmed sensibly to take account of the less available time in the light of the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and now concentrates on the development of essential skills. The co-ordinator monitors all planning. Pupils are assessed at the end of each topic, though this assessment is not yet used consistently in planning the curriculum. Resources are satisfactory and used well, but the cramped accommodation hinders large projects in some classrooms.

GEOGRAPHY

- 109 The previous inspection report indicated that attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 was similar to the average, or a little above, especially for older pupils. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 was good. Resources were not sufficient, especially in helping pupils to achieve the highest standards. The school has made satisfactory progress and resources are much better. Limited evidence was available during this inspection, and it was not possible to observe geography being taught. Standards remain at least average by Years 2 and 6. Pupils' work indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory.
- 110 By the time pupils leave the school, at the end of Year 6, attainment is about average, or a little higher. They know the vocabulary associated with rivers, such as source, estuary and tributary and their drawings show that they understand the main features of the water cycle. They record these details well in their books, but there is no difference between the work of the highest and lowest attaining pupils. Clear maps show an understanding that, across the world, some areas have a water surplus, while others have a deficit. The maps pupils produce do not always have a clear title or key. They know that locations around the world vary, having studied parts of the United Kingdom and overseas. Year 6 pupils have found out about a range of other rivers by use of the Internet. Year 5 pupils have produced good bar charts to compare temperatures in Brighton with those in Mumbai. This work is not extended sufficiently to enhance pupils' numeracy skills. World maps are used well by pupils to suggest how they might travel from the United Kingdom to India. In Years 1 and 2, pupils compare locations overseas, such as Tocuaro, in Mexico, which they compare with Brighton. They also consider life on the imaginary Scottish island of Struay, but opportunities to make comparisons between a seaside resort and an island are not developed in sufficient detail.
- 111 Pupils take care in geography, and present their work well. Their writing, in particular, shows interest in geographical change. This was enhanced in literacy by good poetry writing about 'Winter'. Pupils in Year 6 indicated that geography was not their favourite subject. This was partly because it is not being taught at present, but also reflected the comparatively stimulating curriculum in history. On the basis of the limited evidence, teaching of geography is at least satisfactory, and probably better for older pupils. Teachers are increasingly making links with other subjects, especially in

history. This was illustrated by the good use of historical maps when looking at Tudor voyages of discovery and in the production of three-dimensional models to illustrate the Nile valley, and the location of historical sites.

- 112 The curriculum is planned carefully using national guidance, and is designed to ensure the gradual development of pupils' knowledge and skills as they move from Reception to Year 6. The main strengths of the geography curriculum are the study of the local area, together with other locations in the United Kingdom and overseas, and the increasing links made with history. For younger pupils, it is to be enriched by hearing about the journeys of 'Rory Lion'. It is enhanced by a range of visits, such as to study the Cuckmere River. This work, together with the study of life in India and Mexico, enables geography to make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. The map work available was limited and did not include evidence of the use of co-ordinates, grid references and scale, all of which would also enhance numeracy work. Assessment of pupils' work is well established, based on national guidance. The co-ordinator has helped to improve the resources available, but has not had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and pupils' work.

HISTORY

- 113 The previous inspection indicated that the standards achieved by pupils were about average by Year 2 and above this by Year 6. Teaching was described as good. There has been a good improvement since then, with the strengths being maintained and improved further. The quality of pupils' work demonstrates that standards are above average throughout the school, and some is especially high by Years 5 and 6. Pupils' learning of both historical knowledge and skills is promoted effectively through well organised teaching.
- 114 By Year 2, pupils develop a good understanding that change has occurred over time. Good teaching, and the use of suitable artefacts, helped them appreciate that toys have changed since Victorian times. In Years 1 and 2, pupils recall very well the lives of some famous people from the past, such as Mary Seacole and her contribution to nursing during the Crimean War. By the end of Year 6, pupils show a very good understanding that the life of a Victorian child differed greatly from their own. Year 5 pupils have a very good knowledge of life of the Egyptians, and produce very well informed displays. Pupils in Year 4 know about life in Tudor times and have a good understanding about some of the voyages of discovery, such as those of Sir Francis Drake. In Year 3, pupils effectively used techniques similar to those used by the Romans to produce modern mosaics. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, make good progress, and for older pupils it is very good.
- 115 Pupils are fascinated by their work in history. They take great interest when examining genuine Victorian toys, using the computer to produce mosaic designs or finding out about the past from books. Behaviour in the lessons observed was very good, and there were very few examples of inappropriate behaviour. Teaching is good throughout the school, and the quality of pupils' previous work suggests it is often very good. The teachers successfully promote learning by enthusing pupils to find out about the past. As a result of the high quality teaching, pupils make good progress in acquiring historical knowledge and developing enquiry skills.
- 116 The curriculum is stimulating and very well planned, giving pupils the chance to learn about national and world history, as well as developing historical skills. The history curriculum is also enhanced by links with other subjects, such as literacy, design and technology, art and design, science and geography. History displays often include

time lines, but these are not always correct in relation to mathematical proportions, and do not make as much contribution to developing pupils' awareness of chronology as they could. Visits to sites such as Fishbourne Roman Palace, and visits by staff from museums, help to bring history alive. Links with museums have developed strongly and are having a very positive effect. History makes a very good contribution to raising pupils' awareness of cultures from the past. Pupils write with good feeling and reflection about the life of a child in Victorian times, or what it was like on board a Tudor sailing ship. Assessment is well organised, and linked closely to national guidance. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well and gives staff effective support. Although she looks at pupils' work, she has not had chance to monitor the delivery of the subject, especially to pupils in Years 3 to 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 117 Standards are very good at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an enormous improvement since the last inspection, when standards were well below average in both key stages. Attainment now is above, or well above, that seen in most primary schools. This is largely due to the creation of a computer suite, which allows improved access to hardware and software, and the appointment of a specialist teacher. On leaving Reception, pupils control a mouse competently and understand its connection to the pointer. By Year 2, pupils have successfully used a variety of programs in several areas of the curriculum. In mathematics, they have drawn bar charts, with teacher help. In geography, they have used 'drag and drop' programs to piece together and label the countries of the British Isles. Increasing confidence and skill in word processing are enhancing literacy skills. By the end of the lower juniors, pupils confidently use CD-ROMs to find information, for example, about musical instruments. They use a digital camera confidently, and edit their pictures to produce humorous effects, or to increase their knowledge and understanding of symmetry. By the end of the upper juniors, pupils are familiar with the use of scanners, and produce sophisticated documents using desktop publishing. There are several examples of this in the school: a newspaper, published in colour, using columns and pictures and a selection of creative writing from all years. Upper juniors are confident in programming robots, and in using sophisticated spreadsheets, adding to their knowledge and understanding of data handling in mathematics. They use computers with understanding to monitor the environment through heat sensors. Pupils use programmable toys in the infants and lower juniors. Screen turtles are used in Years 4, 5 and 6 to enhance knowledge and understanding of shape and space in mathematics.
- 118 The school has its own web-site with each class having its own page and links for parents, pupils and staff. (Even the snails in the school pond have their own page and send and receive e-mails.) This website has been developed by the co-ordinator and pupils at the ICT clubs. Staff training is being carried out so that each class teacher can help these pages be up-dated. Year 6 pupils have also produced an impressive Leavers' Yearbook CD-ROM using a range of photographs, images, text and sound with a separate page for each pupil. The school's expertise is developing fast and is an outstanding turnaround since the last inspection and deserves recognition.
- 119 Teaching is at least good in all aspects in both key stages, with the exception of assessment, which is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who is doing an excellent job, has produced a comprehensive scheme of work, which the school follows. The scheme is based on the acquisition of key skills, knowledge and understanding, and is very good. Information recorded in the new assessment scheme is cumulative, so

it can be passed from year to year with the pupil, and finally can be passed on to secondary school. However, this has only just been introduced, and will take some time to have an impact. Relationships with pupils, and consequent management of classes, are very good. Pupils enjoy working with computers and other information technology equipment and this enthusiasm is used well by teachers. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are particularly hard-working and enthusiastic, and teachers and classroom assistants use this to produce the impressive work in desk-top publishing, data analysis and the use of the Internet. The effects of the well planned improvement, good resources and teaching are that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, make good progress, learn well and show interest in the use of information technology.

- 120 The subject is managed very well. In order to provide the best for the pupils, money has been invested in a computer suite, and in the appointment of a part-time specialist teacher. This is money well spent, in that it ensures that all parts of the ICT curriculum are covered very well, a key issue of the last inspection.

MUSIC

- 121 At the time of the last inspection standards were below the national expectation because the curriculum and range of resources were limited. Very good improvement has been made in both the provision and achievement of pupils since then. The curriculum is very good, the subject is taught well and pupils have access to a good range of resources. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, now make good progress in their learning and achieve well. In the aspects seen during the inspection, pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards which are above national expectations.
- 122 It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection, but evidence was also obtained from assemblies, a videotape of pupils singing and their response to a visit and performance from the local authority school music service.
- 123 Throughout the school, pupils respond very well to the music played to them in a variety of settings. When listening to the "The Moonlight Sonata" played by one of their teachers during an assembly, pupils replied, "It makes me feel peaceful" and "It reminds me of the quiet in the countryside". Their good skills of reflection are also encouraged through listening to the music played during assemblies, which helps to emphasise the spiritual element. Pupils have a good understanding of how music should be interpreted and the mood it portrays. This helps them to sing reflectively and thoughtfully in assemblies.
- 124 By Year 2, pupils have developed a very good sense of rhythm. In the lesson observed, Year 1 pupils accurately copied a pattern clapped by their teacher. They then went on to compose their own rhythm and to score it using standard notation. This was very high achievement for their age. Younger pupils also use the correct names for notes and this helps them to gain a good knowledge of notation as they move through the school.
- 125 Both younger and older pupils enjoy singing and they sing well, and at a standard above national expectations. Year 1 pupils reach a good standard in singing "echo" songs in two-parts, whilst pupils in Years 3 to 6 who are in the choir sing very well in harmony. The curriculum provides very well for pupils to gain a wide and rich knowledge of music from different cultures and eras. In assemblies, pupils were singing religious songs from both the Christian and Jewish faiths with a good

understanding of how these should be interpreted. On the videotape of a music assembly, pupils were singing songs from the African tradition in the Yoruba language, with a good sense of the different tempo and rhythm.

- 126 The good programme of visits and visitors allows pupils to gain a secure knowledge of different instruments. They enjoy listening to live music very much and to take part in it themselves. This was very evident in the recital given by the music service, attended by all Years 3 to 6 pupils. At this, very nearly all pupils sat enthralled listening to a duet played of "The Clog Dance" and also a piece played entirely on percussion instruments. They showed a good understanding of what the music was trying to portray and many pupils "had" to clap or move in time.
- 127 As the result of the very high quality leadership provided by the two co-ordinators, teachers have increased their expertise and become more confident. This ensures that teaching is good and that pupils are now building well on their skills as they move through the school. The school is seeking to improve the quality of its provision even further by the recent appointment of a music specialist who is already helping to enrich the learning experiences for pupils.
- 128 The curriculum is now very good. A rich and stimulating range of opportunities ensures that pupils' attitudes and progress are good. The learning experiences give exceptionally good support to pupils' cultural development and fully support the aims of the school. One criticism made by parents was that the school was only able to offer the violin as extra instrumental tuition. This situation had arisen because of a lack of peripatetic teachers in the local education authority music service. It has now been remedied, and the school will be able to increase tuition over a greater range of instruments, for example the keyboard. Resources are generally good. The range of recorded music which the school holds has been carefully chosen to ensure pupils gain a wide knowledge of different traditions and styles. Pupils also have the opportunity to use ICT to help compose their own music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 129 The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment was about average and that they made satisfactory progress. Teaching was sound. The school's limited facilities restricted opportunities for pupils. Very good progress has been made since then, partly through establishing strong links with Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club and Brighton Bears Basketball Club. Standards currently remain about average, but are higher in swimming, and teaching is good. Extra-curricular activities have been extended significantly.
- 130 Year 1 pupils display satisfactory attainment in floor gymnastics activities, such as balancing on 'points' and 'patches' of the body. This develops well in Year 2, where about three quarters of pupils make very good progress and complete forward rolls with precision, including a good end position. The hall is used well to provide opportunities to develop various skills associated with ball games. Good teaching helped pupils to make sound progress in passing a ball with accuracy and dribbling it around obstacles. In a very good Year 5 dance lesson, pupils made significant progress in developing their interpretative skills and all attained at least satisfactory performance with the music 'Morning in Ghana'. About a third of pupils attained higher standards. In Year 6 pupils produced a satisfactory range of movements to illustrate cats, but experienced difficulty in setting these to music. Standards of swimming are above average by Year 6. All pupils are confident in the water and over two thirds swim 25 metres using a range of strokes. Lower attaining pupils swim a width of the

pool, on their back, using flotation aids.

- 131 Most pupils enjoy physical education and display good attitudes and behaviour during lessons. In the best lessons, pupils are keen and listen carefully to the teacher. A weakness, evident in a significant minority of lessons, was that pupils did not enter the hall quietly enough and time was wasted, especially at the start of the lesson. The hall's acoustics cause problems and it is difficult for teachers to make themselves heard even when pupils' noise is at a low level. The quality of teaching is good overall, but ranged from satisfactory to very good. In satisfactory lessons, greater attention could have been given to ensuring pupils' entered the hall quietly and were attentive; in the best lessons both these features were evident. On occasions, more attention could be given to the order of activities to help promote better progress, such as in the Year 6 dance. There were occasions when teachers had to work hard to maintain discipline and attention. As a result, although teaching was good, learning was only satisfactory. A feature of the best teaching is that time is taken to observe and then to step in to help improve particular skills. Consequently, pupils' learning and performance are enhanced. Although teachers get pupils to demonstrate the skills they have learnt, opportunities for them to evaluate each other's performance are not developed sufficiently. The well organised provision helps to ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress, and better than this in some areas.
- 132 All areas of the National Curriculum, including outdoor and adventurous pursuits, are taught, thus ensuring pupils have the opportunity to develop skills across all relevant areas of physical education. These opportunities are aided by residential trips. The links with community organisations are proving particularly effective. A very good range of extra-curricular opportunities, including competitive sport, enhance the curriculum available. Assessment of physical education is organised effectively, and based on national guidance. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, such as working as part of a team, co-operating in a range of activities and dancing to music from different backgrounds. The co-ordinator, supported by the headteacher who is keen to see sport in the school thrive, has led the subject very well and raised its status in the school. However, she has not had chance to monitor the delivery of the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 133 When the school was last inspected standards were in line with the expectations set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good or very good in Years 3 to 6.
- 134 Good improvement has been made since then. Teaching is now good overall throughout the school and very good teaching was observed for both younger and older pupils. The knowledge pupils have of different world faiths matches the standards set out in the national guidelines for religious education. However, across the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, achieve well in their understanding and they reach better standards in recognising the important part religion plays in the lives of believers. They also relate the moral and social teaching of different religions to their own lives. As a result of this good understanding, learning in the subject is supporting the personal development of pupils exceptionally well. In addition, pupils are helped to respect the beliefs of others, especially where they are different from their own. This helps to ensure that teaching and learning in the subject fully support the school's aims and values.

- 135 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know some of the important features of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. They recognise different symbols, such as the Five Ks in Sikhism and The Cross in Christianity. They know that many religions celebrate important occasions in people's lives, such as in a Christian baptism and a Jewish Bar Mitzvah.
- 136 As they move on through Years 3 to 6, pupils increase their knowledge and widen this to other faiths, such as Buddhism. Year 6 pupils know what teaching the different statues of The Buddha signify, and Year 5 pupils know the teaching that Muslims believe Mohammed received from Allah. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils recognised how important a pilgrimage to Mecca is for Muslims, as is a pilgrimage to the Holy Land for Christians.
- 137 The sensitive teaching and good learning activities help pupils to develop good attitudes to lessons. Pupils listen well, particularly when their classmates or other pupils talk about their own experiences. This helps good learning to take place.
- 138 Teaching throughout the school is good and some very good teaching was seen. A strength of the teaching is the very good focus teachers place on what different symbols and customs mean to believers. The need to respect the beliefs and customs of others is promoted very well, as is the importance of worship and belief in spiritual terms. Through this, the subject gives exceptional support to the provision for pupils' spiritual development. In addition, the moral teaching of different faiths, for example in The Ten Commandments in Christianity and Judaism, is effectively linked to the rules that pupils have to follow in their lives and helps them to make good judgements when agreeing their own class rules. The contribution that teaching and learning in the subject makes to pupils' social development is outstanding. It helps pupils not only to gain a good understanding of the differences between individuals and groups of people, but also to respect others' beliefs. This is particularly fostered through a very good range of visits and visitors, for example to the local church and synagogue. Pupils themselves contribute to this very well. Year 2 pupils sat spellbound when an older pupil spoke to them about his religion, Judaism. As part of their learning about Islam, it is planned that Year 5 pupils are to hear a talk given by two pupils, including one from their own class.
- 139 The curriculum has been well planned to give pupils a good range of experiences appropriate to their age. Interesting activities, a good range of visits and visitors, and the effective use of artefacts help to interest pupils. Monitoring of the effectiveness of planning and teaching is very good and a very effective assessment system has recently been introduced. The good improvements in the subject are the result of the very high quality management and development of the subject by the co-ordinators. In this, they have been very effectively supported by the senior management in the school, and also by all members of staff. The school works hard to ensure that teaching and learning fully support its ethos and the aims that it has for all its pupils. In this it is extremely successful.