

# INSPECTION REPORT

**MILLBROOK COMBINED SCHOOL AND  
NURSERY**

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 131815

Headteacher: Mrs Pauline Martin

Reporting inspector: Mr Alan Fullwood  
21184

Dates of inspection: 11 - 14 March 2002

Inspection number: 242882

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mill End Road  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
Postcode: HP12 4BA

Telephone number: 01494 524791

Fax number: 01494 533361

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Saqib Deshmukh

Date of previous inspection: None

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21184	Alan Fullwood	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
10965	Pat Edwards	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?
16283	Sandra Brown	Team inspector	Religious education Art and design Music	
23917	Tony Clarke	Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	
20752	John Collings	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20614	Don Kimber	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Equal opportunities	
24027	Bharathi Kutty	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle  
The Brow  
23 Trewartha Park  
Weston-Super-Mare  
North Somerset  
BS23 2RT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>13</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>THE PROVISION MADE FOR AND THE STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>33</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Millbrook Combined School and Nursery is a larger than average sized primary school situated in the town of High Wycombe. There are 332 boys and girls on roll taught in 14 single aged classes. There is also a 78 part-time place nursery that currently caters for 54 part-time pupils. There are at present 30 Foundation Stage children in the reception class. There are slightly more girls than boys but the balance of girls and boys varies significantly from class to class. About a quarter of pupils live in owner-occupied dwellings while three-quarters live in rented accommodation. There is much movement of pupils to and from the school throughout any one year. Approximately a third of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register as needing some form of additional support and approximately a third are eligible for free school meals, above national averages. Approximately three-quarters of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and speak English as an additional language, including approximately ten per cent who are at an early stage in the acquisition of language. These figures are very high by national averages. The attainment of children on entry to the school, although wide ranging, is generally well below average.

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

Millbrook Combined is an effective school that provides a sound education for its pupils. It is a cosmopolitan community in which children come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. These include families from Pakistani, Indian-Sikh, Indian, European: Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian; African, Vietnamese, Russian, Chinese and British origin. It reflects the cultural diversity of the High Wycombe area. The school respects and celebrates this diversity and uses it to positive educational advantage. In this it is successful in meeting its aims to value and include all children in the school community. The leadership is good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- Pupils are encouraged to respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs.
- The standards pupils attain in religious education by the age of 11.
- The school maintains a caring, secure environment in which pupils feel valued.
- The provision made for extra-curricular activities is good and wide ranging.
- The establishment of high levels of participation in and enthusiasm for physical education.
- The quality of educational support staff is good.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the work of the school.

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

- Pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- The use made of the school's good assessment procedures in planning work to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- The role of the co-ordinators in monitoring provision in their subjects and the standards pupils attain.
- The co-ordination of the planning and provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has not been inspected before as it only came into existence in September 1999 when three schools were joined and renamed as Millbrook Combined School and Nursery. Despite the fact that many key staff have changed, the school has made good progress since the appointment of the headteacher in September, 2001. Through the changes she has made, including better pupil management procedures, a whole-school management structure and the improvement in the provision for all pupils, particularly those with English as an additional language or special educational needs, the standard of education has improved. Much has been achieved in a short period of time and the areas identified by the inspection for improvement are already targets for development in the school improvement plan. The school is, therefore, well placed to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	N/A	E	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	N/A	E	E	D	
Science	N/A	E	E	D	

The above table shows that pupils' attainment in national tests is well below average when compared to all schools and below average when compared to similar schools based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. This takes no account of the high number of pupils with English as an additional language or the number of pupils at an early stage in the acquisition of English. Results in 2001 were better than those achieved in 2000 in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present group of Year 6 pupils is well below national expectations in English, and below expectations in mathematics and science. However, pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects. Pupils make satisfactory progress and attain average standards in other National Curriculum subjects. Standards attained in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school's targets for 2001 were achieved in English but not in mathematics.

National test results at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed pupils' standards of attainment in reading and writing to be in the lowest five per cent nationally for all schools and well below average for similar schools. Standards in mathematics were well below average. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current group of Year 2 pupils is below national expectation in English, mathematics, and science. Pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects and other National Curriculum subjects and religious education.



The attainment of the children on entry to the school, although wide ranging, is generally well below average. While in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> children generally make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. In the nursery their progress is often good. Most children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> in their creative and physical development, and in most aspects of their personal, social and emotional development. In their linguistic and mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Year but a significant minority will not.

Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make sound progress overall because of the good support they receive. Children at an early stage in the acquisition of English make good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Generally pupils are enthusiastic about their work. The majority are motivated well by the encouragement they receive from staff and when work is matched well to meet their individual needs.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Pupils behave appropriately in lessons and around the school. They know what the school's expectations of them are and follow school rules.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Generally, pupils have open and friendly relationships with one another and school staff. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds have high levels of mutual respect for each other's values and beliefs.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory and consistently below national averages. A significant minority of pupils arrive late for school. Many parents take annual holidays and excursions abroad during term time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

<sup>2</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in approximately nine out of every ten lessons. Four out of ten lessons were good. One in 20 lessons were very good. Nearly one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory. Teaching was particularly good in some classes at Key Stage 2.

In the better quality teaching good use is made of assessments and pupils of all abilities are effectively challenged by the work set for them. Activities are interesting and pupils are successfully challenged to work hard and give of their best. Where teaching is unsatisfactory either the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject are insecure and the work set lacks challenge or teacher expectations are low and the teacher spends too much time in managing pupils' behaviour.

The quality of teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall but assessment information is not always used to plan effectively for pupils' needs in the reception class.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and pupils make satisfactory progress. Planned opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and opportunities for pupils to write more extendedly are limited.

The quality of teaching in most other National Curriculum subjects is satisfactory. In history it is good.

Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly but rarely includes comments on how pupils could improve their work.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. However, the teaching of these pupils when withdrawn for specific help or when supported in classrooms by the special educational needs co-ordinator or Minority Ethnic and Traveller Achievement Support (METAS) co-ordinator is good.

Across the school inconsistent use is made of assessment data to plan work to meet pupils' wide and varying individual needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad and relevant and meets the needs of the pupils. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils including those who have English as an additional language. The provision made for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is made well for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics or who have behavioural and physical difficulties. Individual education plans are detailed and set out precise, attainable learning targets. Pupils are given good, skilled assistance from the well-qualified, experienced and committed support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There are good procedures for assessing and supporting pupils with targeted work and these are beginning to have an impact on their progress. Pupils are well supported by bilingual teaching assistants and by the co-ordinator for METAS.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. Daily assemblies provide pupils with opportunities for prayer and reflection. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They learn to socialise and co-operate with their peers and to begin to gain an understanding of citizenship and to appreciate their own role by helping in the daily routines of school life. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is promoted effectively by visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and through study of the wide range of cultures and customs in Britain today.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is a caring community where pupils work together well. Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour and regular attendance are good. Procedures for child protection policy and for ensuring pupils' health and safety are effective. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall and good in mathematics and English. However, insufficient use is made of these assessments by classroom teachers to ensure work is accurately targeted to pupils' individual needs. The quality of marking varies and does not always inform pupils of how they might improve their work.

The school has a positive partnership with parents but as yet there is little involvement of parents in their children's learning.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction to the work of the school. She is ably assisted by the senior management team. The role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Many members of the governing body are new. They are enthusiastic and supportive. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are becoming involved more directly in monitoring the work of the school and developing a strategic view of its future development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school improvement plan is based on the school's own thorough self-evaluation of its work. Appropriate targets have been identified and good progress is being made in meeting those targets.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The budget is well planned and appropriately linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Good control systems ensure day-to-day financial administration is smooth and effective. The school has procedures to ensure the school gets good value for money when it makes purchases but there are no formal procedures incorporating the concept of best value.

The school has an appropriate number of teaching and support staff but currently lacks permanent co-ordinators for literacy, design and technology and music. The school has good accommodation. The range, quality and accessibility of learning resources are satisfactory. However, the quality of the large gymnastic apparatus is unsatisfactory.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The children enjoy school.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and is helping them to develop more mature attitudes.</li> <li>• Staff are approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework set.</li> <li>• The way the school works in partnership with parents.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Some parents thought that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. There is, in fact, a good range of such activities. Most clubs are held during lunchtimes because of many pupils' commitment to visit their place of worship after school. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress with their teacher and pupils' annual progress reports are appropriately detailed. The new headteacher is hoping to encourage parents to have a closer partnership with the school and for them to be more involved in their children's education.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment of the children on entry to the school, although wide ranging, is generally well below average. Evidence from the inspection indicates that, by the age of 11, standards in English are well below expectations and standards in mathematics and science below expected levels for their age. However, pupils including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
2. Generally, children's attainment on entry to the reception class is well below average. While in the nursery and reception classes children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. In the nursery their progress is often good. Most children are on track to reach the Early Learning Goals in their creative and physical development, and in most aspects of their personal, social and emotional development. Children make satisfactory progress overall, and sometimes good progress, in their linguistic and mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, and although most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the foundation year a significant minority will not. Children at an early stage in the acquisition of English, make good progress in their language skills because of the good quality support they receive from language teaching assistants.
3. In the year 2001 National Curriculum tests at the age of seven, pupils' attainment in reading and writing was in the bottom five per cent nationally when compared to all schools, and in writing when compared to similar schools. In reading it was well below the average for similar schools. In reading, pupils' levels of attainment were an improvement on the results of 2000. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current group of pupils in Year 2 is on track to achieve below average attainment in reading and average levels in writing. This indicates further improvement on the results of 2001. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below average. However, pupils make satisfactory progress from the low base they start at when they enter Year 1. Where teachers plan specific opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and extend their spoken vocabulary, pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make satisfactory progress towards meeting their individual targets.
4. Standards in reading are below expectations by the age of seven. The school gives a high priority to the teaching of reading by encouraging pupils to read regularly at school and home. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' phonic knowledge and using a wide range of texts through which their reading skills are systematically reinforced. As a result, although still below expected levels of attainment, pupils make satisfactory progress. Some more able pupils read with fluency and understanding at the expected level. Standards in writing are below expectations for seven year olds. A minority of pupils write simple sentences, spell some words correctly and use capital letters and full stops with increasing accuracy. However, many pupils are, as yet, unable to achieve this.
5. In mathematics, the results in the year 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 were well below average for all and similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Inspection

evidence indicates that the attainment of the current group of Year 2 pupils is below expectations. All pupils make sound progress in their number skills because of the good emphasis given to this aspect and the good support they receive. Many pupils know number facts to ten but are less confident in calculations using numbers to 20. Although most pupils can name common geometric shapes they are less confident in knowing their properties of edges, faces, and corners.

6. Teachers' assessments in science at the end of Year 2 in 2001 show the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or above, to be well below the national average. However, the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3, was close to the national average and an improvement over the results in 2000. The standard of work found in the school during the inspection was below expectations overall but well below expectations in pupils' ability to carry out science investigations. Pupils' achievement in science is good when compared to their well below attainment on entry to the school.
7. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in information and communication technology. Pupils are confident in using word-processing and graphic programs but are less confident in using data-handling programs. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
8. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards of attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with national expectations. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects.
9. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in English show pupils' attainment to be well below average in comparison with all schools and below average when compared to similar schools. These results show a sharp rise on results in 2000. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' standards in English are well below average. A significant number of pupils in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in reading and writing but the proportion of pupils who achieve average levels is well below expectations. This is because over half the pupils are on the special educational needs register, and a third of pupils receive both special educational needs and English language support. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress towards meeting their individual targets. However, a lack of suitably challenging tasks restricts the good progress that many pupils might make. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their speaking and listening skills but they are below national expectations by the age of 11. There are inconsistent opportunities for pupils to express their opinions or explain their ideas and sometimes teachers have low expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving with encouragement. The school has recognised the need to develop teachers' competence in promoting better oral language skills. Progress overall is satisfactory with many ten and 11 year olds achieving well.
10. Standards of attainment in reading are below expectations. Pupils are accurate in their reading but do so without expression and their limited language restricts their comprehension skills. Many pupils are able to find relevant books in the library which is used well by pupils. Standards in writing are below average but pupils make satisfactory progress. Some pupils make use of description in their writing but most pupils' spelling and grammar are poor and their progress is restricted by overuse of work sheets. There are few opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing in English or other curriculum subjects. Handwriting and careful presentation are

emphasised in some classes at the upper end of the school but overall the quality of handwriting is below average. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are given good support when withdrawn from the classroom but few teachers include details of individual targets in their planning.

11. Pupils' attainment in the year 2001 National Curriculum tests in mathematics at the end of Year 6 was well below average when compared with all schools and below average when compared to similar schools. Standards show a small rise on 2000 results. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment in the current Year 6 are below national expectations overall but that a minority of pupils will achieve above the expected level. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Most Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of the place value of number and use the number operations of addition, subtraction and multiplication appropriately. They are less confident with division. Their skills of mental calculation are satisfactory. Many pupils use the formula to work out the area of a rectangle but fewer do this with other shapes. Pupils' progress overall is satisfactory but variable between year groups particularly in data handling, shape and space and in mathematical enquiry work. There are some instances when the poorer attitudes and behaviour of a few pupils hinder the progress of others.
12. The school's targets in 2001 for the number of pupils who would attain the expected Level 4 or above in English were exceeded in but fell well short in mathematics. Evidence from the inspection indicates that targets for 2002 will be achieved in mathematics.
13. In science, the results of the year 2001 national tests at the end of Year 6 showed pupils' attainment to be well below the national average for all schools but below average in comparison with similar schools. Results in 2000 were similar. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the current group of Year 6 pupils is below national expectations. All pupils make satisfactory progress except for those with special educational needs who make good progress although their attainment is still below expected levels. They receive good support from teaching assistants. Where activities are challenging, all pupils make better progress. However, the scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work shows that work is sometimes inappropriate for the age and ability of the pupils.
14. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils develop appropriate skills in word processing, the use of spreadsheets, and in sensing physical data, such as temperature. However, pupils' skills are not sufficiently applied in other subjects and some teachers' knowledge and confidence in the subject are not always sufficient to extend work for higher attaining pupils. Work does not always build on what pupils already know.
15. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards of attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils make good progress and achieve above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. They describe the key features of major world faiths and they understand the importance of belief and how it affects people's lives. Some Year 6 pupils show a real interest in religious matters and are able to contribute well to thought provoking discussions by explaining their own beliefs and opinions. Teachers make good use of questioning to encourage pupils to do so.

16. Overall provision for special educational needs is good including those pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need. Reference to the special educational needs register, to individual education plans and discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers, and learning support assistants indicate that most pupils are making sound progress towards meeting their individual learning targets. There is very good provision for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics. The provision for those pupils who have behavioural and physical difficulties is equally comprehensive and detailed, and they make the same good progress towards the targets set for them. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and are generally in higher attaining groups.

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

17. Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are satisfactory. The majority of pupils react appropriately to the encouragement offered by staff. In some instances pupils find difficulty in maintaining concentration. This usually occurs when tasks are not well matched to the needs of the individual pupils. Generally, pupils are enthusiastic about their work, for instance, in a Year 4 English lesson pupils took part in a drama activity depicting David Attenborough's 'Life in the Freezer' documentary.
18. Behaviour at school is satisfactory overall. Pupils know what is expected of them and the majority follow the rules. A small amount of challenging behaviour was noted usually where the management skill of teachers was less effective. Playtimes and lunchtimes are social occasions when pupils generally play well together. They show acceptance of the recently introduced assertive discipline policy and care for one another, their belongings and school property. There were no instances of aggressive behaviour observed during the inspection and no pupils referred to instances of bullying in discussions with them. There was one fixed-period exclusion during the last reporting year.
19. Generally, pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning. The behaviour of those pupils without specific behavioural difficulties is good, with pupils showing good responses to their teachers and learning support assistants. The response of other pupils towards pupils with special educational needs is also good. Special educational needs' status appears to have no negative effect on relationships.
20. For the most part relationships are open and friendly. Pupils feel comfortable when chatting to teachers about their work and personal issues. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds have high levels of mutual respect for each other's values and beliefs. Pupils are willing to accept responsibility. They act as classroom helpers throughout the school, older pupils act as buddies to younger pupils, prefects and door monitors. Opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and take responsibility for their own learning are provided, for example, through homework activities.
21. Attendance is unsatisfactory and was below the national average for the last reporting year. The amount of unauthorised absence was well above that found in most schools. The school records indicate that much of this is the result of pupils being taken out of school for family reasons. Many pupils are late in arriving for school causing interruption during the first part of each session and this is detrimental to their learning.



## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in approximately nine out of ten lessons. Four out of ten lessons were good. One in 20 lessons were very good. Nearly one in ten lessons were unsatisfactory.
23. The overall quality of the teaching for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with the teaching seen in some lessons in the nursery good. Teachers and teaching assistants collaborate well together. They have good relationships with the children. They encourage children to talk about their experiences and to record their work using drawings and writing but more opportunities could be given to children in the reception class to choose their own activities. There is a good balance of self-chosen and adult-directed activities in the nursery that ensures that many children make good progress. Teachers use frequent opportunities to reinforce children's understanding of numbers and to make good use of questioning to further children's knowledge of mathematical concepts. In the nursery, the teacher raises the children's curiosity about what they see, hear and feel about the world around them and gain an understanding of the past. Teaching in the reception class is more teacher directed and the teacher provides fewer opportunities for children to develop their own ideas and to experience things for themselves. Sound opportunities are given to pupils to develop appropriate movement skills in physical education lessons and when using outdoor play equipment. However, in the reception class staff are insufficiently involved in encouraging children's imaginative and creative activity and interacting together.
24. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons and good in a third of lessons. It was unsatisfactory in one in ten lessons. The quality of teaching in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is satisfactory overall, and varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in approximately nine out of ten lessons, of which a half were good or better. It was particularly good in a Year 4 and Year 5 class and in two Year 6 classes. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum and when this is used well to match work to the wide range of individual needs, good teaching often results. Generally, teachers plan appropriate activities for the ability groups within classes. However, in some lessons teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and the same work is set for average and more able pupils. This judgement is reinforced by a scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work. In the better quality lessons teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in a given period of time and make use of tight time structures to keep the pace of lessons brisk. The work set is challenging and motivates pupils to work hard and complete their work on time. Where teaching is unsatisfactory either the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject are insecure and the work set lacks challenge, or teacher expectations are too low and the teacher spends too much time in managing pupils' behaviour.
25. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively and teachers have a sound understanding of the literacy framework which they follow closely in their planning. Most teachers make good use of questioning and specific vocabulary in their explanations. In the better quality teaching, teachers impart their enthusiasm for the subject and this motivates the pupils to take a fuller part in the lessons. Good use of praise and encouragement increases pupils' confidence. Teaching was good in most Year 6 classes.

26. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively and all teachers make use of its structure when planning lessons. The quality of teaching is generally good. Generally, lessons are planned well and initial mental arithmetic sessions have a good pace. In the better quality lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils and make these expectations clear to them. Teaching is particularly effective when teachers share with pupils what it is they are to have learned by the end of the session and make use of a plenary session to check whether they have achieved what they had to do. Teaching was particularly good in most junior classes.
27. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The teaching by the special educational needs and METAS co-ordinators, and those providing additional literacy and other support is good. However, inspection evidence shows that many teachers do not use the assessment information available to them when planning their lessons. Too often the planned tasks do not refer to the targets set for individuals and the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is not assessed specifically. Teachers do not plan appropriately challenging tasks in all subjects. Consequently, whilst most pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in learning, few make the good progress of which they are capable.
28. Pupils are given good, skilled assistance from the well-qualified, experienced and committed support staff. However, the good practice of some teachers in involving the support staff in planning and in giving them clear guidance in lessons is not widespread. Often the learning support assistants are given no specific goals and their assessments of pupils' achievements are not used to inform teachers' planning.
29. Pupils' work is marked regularly and often contains supportive comments. It sometimes includes comments on how pupils could improve their work. From some lessons observed and the scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work, inconsistent use is made of assessment data to plan work to meet pupils' individual needs and this leads to some underachievement. Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning.

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

30. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It meets statutory requirements including sex education, drugs awareness, the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and addresses the needs of pupils appropriately. The provision for special educational needs, extra-curricular activities and the contribution of the community to pupils' learning are good. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils including those who have English as an additional language. Literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and the provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The school has sound links with other institutions such as the secondary school.
31. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but is better planned in the nursery than in the reception class. Classrooms are set out to provide areas to support different aspects of children's learning but are better used in the nursery. Teachers aim to ensure that all children have similar experiences. The current organisational and planning arrangements of the nursery and reception classes do not fully support the aim of providing all children with similar experiences. It is hoped that this will be achieved after Easter when both classes will work

alongside one another in the newly completed Foundation Stage area. In particular, opportunities to provide for the development of children's personal, social and emotional skills, and their imaginative, and decision-making skills vary between classes. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to children's learning. Overall, resources are adequate but are far better in the nursery than the reception class.

32. Work in the school is firmly based on the requirements of the National Curriculum and the school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These have had a significant influence in ensuring that the teaching of English and mathematics are planned to meet the needs of the vast majority of pupils. The curriculum for science in junior classes is unsatisfactory as it includes work, which although challenging, is occasionally inappropriate for the age and ability of pupils in the school. For example, only very, very able pupils would need to know the definitions of volts and amperes. While the curriculum for information and communication technology is satisfactory and addresses what pupils need to know, the skills learned in information and communication technology lessons are not applied systematically across the curriculum.
33. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Reference to the special educational needs register, to individual education plans and discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and learning support assistants indicate that most pupils are making satisfactory progress towards meeting their individual learning targets. Provision is made well for those pupils who have specific learning difficulties in English and mathematics. The provision for those pupils who have behavioural and physical difficulties is equally comprehensive and detailed, and they make the same appropriate progress towards set targets. The organisation and the quality of the records kept by the school, including the register of special educational needs, are good. Individual education plans are compiled by the co-ordinator and are reviewed regularly by her. The overall quality of the individual education plans is good. They are detailed, clear and in most cases give precise, attainable learning targets. The school is considering the purchase of the IEP Writer 2 program to provide consistency in the details on individual education plans.
34. Teachers' planning of subjects is satisfactory and based on nationally recommended exemplars. However, in all subjects apart from literacy and numeracy planning is not sufficiently detailed to address the range of differing needs of pupils in classes. A large amount of work is based on worksheets and is often very similar for the majority of pupils. Insufficient consideration is given to planning for a range of expectations to ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged. Objectives are usually made explicit and shared with the pupils. However, this is inconsistent. The school has recently adopted new assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology against yearly predictions to ensure the curriculum meets pupils' needs more accurately. This initiative has not been in place long enough to have had a significant impact on pupils' standards of attainment.
35. Good use is made of local educational centres and visitors, including local historians and theatre groups. The school's provision for extra curricular activities is good including art, athletics, chess, choir, cricket, computers, drama, football, gardening, hockey, netball, rugby, skipping, ball games, short tennis and swimming. The school participates in local events such as art competitions and choral productions and there is good support from Wycombe Wanderers Football Club for football coaching. The extra-curricular swimming is well supported particularly by Asian girls. Many of these

clubs take place at lunchtime to enable pupils to take part in cultural activities in the community immediately after school. The school has submitted a bid for 'out of hours' funding for extra support for after-school activities and homework clubs.

36. The curriculum provides equal opportunities for all. Pupils needing help are very well supported to ensure they have equal access to the curriculum. The school makes good use of classroom assistants who are well trained and experienced. They help to ensure work is matched to pupils' needs, particularly those who have been identified as having special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language and are at an early stage of language acquisition. A range of cultures and religions is celebrated including Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity within the agreed syllabus for religious education. To extend pupils' experience, visitors to the school include, for example, the police, and staff from the local education authority to support drugs awareness within the planned personal, social and health education programme. The planned programme for collective worship meets statutory requirements.
37. The school's links with the local community contribute well to pupils' learning. Pupils visit museums and take part in local art competitions. Theatre groups and historians visit the school. The pupils receive coaching from Wycombe Wanderers Football Club for boys and girls football teams. These links add to pupils' learning and their understanding of the wider world.
38. The school has established productive links with the local secondary schools through an 'Excellence in Cities' cluster. There are appropriate links for transferring pupils and accepting students on work experience. The school makes students from Oxford Brooks University, who are on initial teacher training, welcome in the school.
39. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound and makes a satisfactory contribution to their personal and social development.
40. Assemblies make a satisfactory contribution to most pupils' spiritual awareness. The linked weekly theme allows for issues to be revisited and extended, for example, in one assembly pupils learned about the early life of Nobel and were encouraged to find out his later experiences and the impact on society. Opportunities to reflect are provided in assemblies. Religious education also provides good opportunities for pupils to develop in spirituality. As well as learning about the teachings and traditions of faiths, such as Christianity and Islam, pupils are encouraged to develop their own ideas, opinions and beliefs. Other occasions for pupils to develop their imagination, self-awareness and expression are limited.
41. Pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school demonstrates their satisfactory understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They help draw up classroom rules for behaviour. These are clearly understood by the pupils and help provide an atmosphere that supports teaching and learning. The school's policies on behaviour, discipline and bullying provide a framework within which pupils can develop, and all staff work consistently within these guidelines. This has had a positive effect of pupils' behaviour across the school.

42. The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision and circle time<sup>3</sup>, provide opportunities for matters of behaviour and relationships to be discussed and developed. The school also provides time for the consideration of wider moral issues such as those related to the environment.
43. Teachers provide good role models in their dealings with pupils and each other. There are opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in lessons such as art and music. They also compete in sports such as netball and football. Pupils are beginning to gain an understanding of citizenship and to appreciate their own work by helping in the daily routines of school life. Generally, pupils are helpful, tidying up after lessons. Some older pupils prepare the hall for assembly and others assist with younger children in the reception and nursery classes at lunchtimes.
44. The curriculum, enhanced by visits to places of historical interest, provides pupils with an awareness of their own local history and culture. The syllabus for religious education supports the study of a wide range of religions and offers pupils the opportunity to develop appreciation of their own and other cultures. In an assembly, the headteacher and a bilingual teaching assistant read a dual text story in Urdu and English. This allowed for shared experiences whilst celebrating diversity.
45. The school aims to provide equality of opportunity for all pupils and observations suggest that it is very successful in meeting this aim. The school places a high priority upon including and enabling all pupils to take part in all curricular activities, and to participate as fully as possible in school life. In class, teachers commonly seek to extend discussion to try and involve all pupils. Since September there has been a review of pupils' achievements and an analysis made to check if there are significant differences in achievements on the basis of gender and of ethnic grouping. The assessments made of pupils' performance are used well to support the progress of pupils with special educational needs. For older pupils, performance in mathematics is examined to identify those pupils who might benefit from 'booster' classes. The school has joined the 'Excellence in Cities' cluster to provide for gifted and talented pupils. Where possible, interpreters, such as a Russian speaker, are used to strengthen links with families and individual pupils, and to develop teaching programmes. However, in correspondence from school to home there has been little use of translations into the other main languages used within the school community.

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

46. The school is a caring community where pupils work together harmoniously for the most part. The teachers know their pupils well and value them as individuals. Although some pupils have individual targets to support their personal development, for example, as seen displayed in Year 1 and 2 classrooms or written in their workbooks, this good practice is not used consistently throughout the school.
47. The school promotes good behaviour and monitors it well. There is an effective behaviour policy that is applied consistently by the majority of staff. Pupils are aware of the school's rewards and sanctions which are regularly discussed in class and assemblies. Incidents relating to bullying and unacceptable behaviour are monitored

---

<sup>3</sup> During circle time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

carefully through the anti-bullying policy, which is currently being reviewed, and circle time. Staff deal with any reported incidents swiftly and effectively.

48. Procedures for checking attendance are good. Registers are marked accurately at the beginning of each session and any absence is followed up daily. Certificates are presented termly for 100 per cent attendance. The education welfare officer visits school regularly and works closely with staff where there is perceived to be a problem with attendance or punctuality.
49. The school has an appropriate child protection policy. Procedures comply with local guidelines and staff are fully aware of them. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessment is carried out. The arrangements for first aid, including the recording of accidents and informing parents, are good. First-aid boxes and the medical room are appropriately sited and equipped. Lessons on sex education and drug awareness form part of the school's programme for personal, social and health education. This is well supported by outside agencies.
50. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage. Initial assessments are made of children's attainment when they enter the nursery and the reception class. Good use is made of these assessments in the nursery to plan suitable activities to meet the needs of children. Staff make regular evaluations of how well children have responded to the work they have completed and make good use of this to plan future work. Improvements in children's attainment are recorded in individual attainment records. The use made of assessments in the reception class is unsatisfactory. Informal oral assessments are made of individual children's attainment but work planned often varies little for all pupils. Children's records are disorganised and often do not record their attainment gains in English.
51. In the rest of the school assessment procedures are good in mathematics and English. This is as a result of the appointment of a new assessment co-ordinator who has radically revised the assessment procedures. These are now beginning to have an impact in raising standards, particularly in mathematics, through more accurate matching of pupils' work to their specific needs. This is less effective in the remaining subjects including science and information and communication technology. Targets are set for all pupils in English and mathematics and pupils' progress is monitored against them. The national tests in mathematics and English in Year 2 are used to monitor progress and set targets for pupils in subsequent years. The school analyses the tests in English and mathematics very carefully to identify weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding to ensure future teaching addresses any issues raised. There is good monitoring of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. However, insufficient use is made of their assessments by classroom teachers to ensure work is accurately targeted to pupils' individual needs. In science and the remaining subjects, the systematic monitoring of pupils' development of the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills is not so well developed. Consequently, work in these subjects is not always appropriate to the age and ability of pupils, for example, the use of a hydrometer to measure density of liquids in science. There are some examples where teachers' marking clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work. However, overall, pupils are not given sufficiently clear instructions on how their work could be improved. Assessment and record keeping are priorities being addressed through the current school improvement plan and are likely to improve further.

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

52. The school is working hard to establish a positive relationship with parents and the majority of parents indicate that they are satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. The information provided by the school is useful. The regular termly newsletters and year group letters keep parents well informed about developments and the topics to be covered each term. Nevertheless, insufficient care is given to writing in easily understood language avoiding educational jargon. The school needs to ensure that parents are aware that oral translations are available even though at present printed translations are not. Curriculum meetings are held for parents and parent-teacher consultation meetings are held each term where parents have an opportunity to view and discuss their children's work. Pupils' annual progress reports contain information on the standards reached, areas covered and broad targets for improvement. The prospectus is detailed and provides parents with a useful practical guide to the school. However, it is only printed in English at present. The school has consulted parents regarding their expectations of the school and the feedback is being evaluated by staff. The headteacher circulates with parents at the beginning and end of each school day and staff are willing to talk with parents at any reasonable time.
53. Parental involvement in the work of the school is developing but is still limited. A revised home-school agreement has recently been sent to parents reminding them of the school's expectations for behaviour, attendance, punctuality and homework, encouraging parental support in these aspects of school life. Parents are invited to attend sports days, open days, school productions and special assemblies and an increasing number do so. Recently, a Parents and Friends Association has been formed and from this a steering committee has assisted with a bid for after-school activities and a homework club.

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

54. The school is led and managed well. Much has been done to improve management structures and procedures in the short time the headteacher has been at the school. This is despite the large number of changes in teaching and non-teaching staff that the school has experienced in the last 12 months. These arrangements are still new and will take time for their impact to be fully appreciated.
55. The headteacher has given a clear educational direction to the work of the school and a shared sense of purpose and optimism that is acknowledged by members of staff and governors. The setting out of this educational direction has been identified by establishing a whole-school view of what it is the school aims to achieve. The headteacher, together with staff and governors, has made a careful and thorough analysis of the work of the school and identified key areas that require attention. These appropriate areas for development have been drawn up in an interim school improvement plan. Initial targets for development have been achieved. The learning environment has been improved by the bringing together of all parts of the school on to one site and improving the learning resources available to staff within the tight budget constraints available to the headteacher. A new senior management team, that includes the co-ordinators for special educational needs and English as an additional language, has been established. New co-ordinators for all subjects, except literacy, have been appointed. A more consistent approach to behaviour management has been introduced; one which demands of children that they take responsibility for their own actions rather than only being disciplined by 'management'.

Clearer pupil assessment and tracking procedures have been introduced. The headteacher knows that much more needs to be done and there are clear plans to address all the key issues raised by the inspection team, in the school improvement plan.

56. The headteacher is effective in monitoring teaching and learning through a programme of formal and informal visits. She has also used the expertise of a number of outside agencies to monitor the quality of teaching in various subjects. Through the reaffirmation of the school's performance management policy, staff have had their strengths recognised and training and support has been provided or will be forthcoming in addressing any areas for development. The headteacher is supportive of staff, making clear her high expectations and developing a consistent approach to how pupils are treated.
57. The headteacher is ably assisted by the senior management team. The team now have clear whole-school management roles rather than just responsibility for their particular area of the school. They are fully and effectively involved in decision making and feel empowered to carry out their duties. Some frustrations are evident, such as delays in the building work necessary to fully integrate Foundation Stage provision in the nursery and the reception class. All team members are given release time from their teaching commitments to develop their roles and achieve the targets set for them individually or in the school improvement plan.
58. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is newly in post. She is enthusiastic and most diligent in her co-ordinating role and has been instrumental in many improvements in provision since joining the school in September, for example, in organising the assessment of all pupils on School Action + by a primary learning support teacher, and in a work pack for all pupils at School Action +. The co-ordinator ensures that all pupils have access to any necessary support and assists them well both in class and when withdrawn for individual tuition. She liaises well with fellow teachers and is in regular contact with external agencies such as the Learning Support Service, Educational Psychology Service, Social Services and relevant medical practices. Early contact is made with all parents as soon as concerns are noted about their children and there is evidence of parental involvement in all stages of the Code of Practice. A speech and language therapist will soon visit the school to explore ways of enriching the pupils' language environment.
59. The role of subject co-ordinators is at an early stage and is in need of further development. Many teachers are new to their roles. Co-ordinators have had little time yet to influence the development of their subject but most are enthusiastic. All co-ordinators have drawn up an action plan for the future development of their subjects. However, most co-ordinators do not have a secure grasp of the standards pupils' attain in their subjects or how pupils' skills are developed progressively as they move through the school. The school is aware of this and the development of the role of subject co-ordinators is a target in the school development plan. The school has yet to make an appointment for the literacy co-ordinator but plans to do so in the near future.
60. School development planning is good. The headteacher has developed a more open, consensus-based approach to development planning. Targets are relevant and good progress is being made towards meeting them.



61. Many members of the governing body are new to their roles. They have been fully involved in recent improvements at the school and those who have been governors since before the appointment of the present headteacher feel better informed and more involved than previously. Those governors who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector fully support the headteacher in her endeavours to raise the attainment of pupils and the quality of education the school provides. The governors' committee structure has been reviewed; there are written terms of reference, and meetings are minuted and presented to full governor meetings. Governors expressed great satisfaction at the sense of purpose about the work that needed to be done, and the sense of optimism the headteacher had given the school in achieving these ambitions. They are enthusiastic and supportive. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are becoming more directly involved in monitoring the work of the school.
62. The school has had difficulty recruiting staff but now has an adequate number of teachers whose experience broadly matches the demands of the National Curriculum. The headteacher is active in ensuring that the best available teachers are deployed to lead subjects but currently the school lacks co-ordinators for literacy, design and technology and music.
63. The headteacher and assistant headteachers plan professional development which takes into account the individual needs of teachers, as well as overarching targets for school improvement. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator has identified that teachers require additional strategies for use with pupils with speech and communication difficulties, and training has been arranged for next term.
64. The procedures for inducting new teachers to the school are good and ensure that all have a sound understanding of the principles and ethos of the school. The mentoring arrangements for the newly qualified teachers are also good and provide a programme of monitoring and non-contact time for professional development.
65. The school occupies a large and spacious site. The accommodation is generous for the number of pupils it serves. It includes two halls, a dining room, a computer suite, a sports hall, long corridors and adequate classrooms, although there is limited class storage space. The library is attractive and easily accessible and provides good resources for learning. There is good provision for the nursery, which has recently moved to the site and plans are in place to move reception to make a discrete Foundation Stage Unit.
66. The overall range, quality and accessibility of resources are satisfactory, although the quality of the large gymnastic apparatus is unsatisfactory. Music resources are plentiful, although of varying quality. The teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy are well provided for in classrooms and centrally in the library.
67. The budget is well planned and appropriately linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Money is spent wisely to benefit pupils and all funds delegated for specific purpose are spent appropriately. The school has been well supported by the local education authority to address issues raised in the last audit. The school now has a suitable surplus rather than the deficit it had when the schools combined to become Millbrook Combined School and Nursery. The headteacher and governors are well informed of the school's financial status through efficient well run administrative systems which ensure that day-to-day administration is smooth and effective. The school has procedures to ensure the school gets good value for money when it makes purchases but there are no formal procedures incorporating the

concept of 'best value'<sup>4</sup>. New technology is used appropriately for school administration and a new system is being introduced to analyse the information gained from pupils' assessment.

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

68. The governors, headteacher and staff, with the support of outside agencies as appropriate, should:
- (1) Improve pupils' standards of attainment in English by:
    - i. planning more consistent opportunities for all pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and to extend their spoken vocabulary by having more frequent opportunities to express their opinions and explain their ideas; (Paragraph 89)
    - ii. providing more opportunities for pupils to write extensively in English and other curriculum subjects. (Paragraph 92)
  - (2) Improve pupils' standards of attainment in mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in practical problem solving situations and open-ended mathematical investigations. (Paragraph 105)
  - (3) Improve pupils' standards of attainment in science by:
    - i. reviewing the curriculum to better meet the needs of the pupils; (Paragraph 111)
    - ii. providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of scientific enquiry. (Paragraph 111)
  - (4) Improve the consistency with which assessment information is used to plan class-based work that is closely matched to meeting the needs of individual pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. (Paragraph 51)
  - (5) Develop the role of co-ordinators in monitoring the curriculum in their subjects and the standards pupils attain. (Paragraph 59)
  - (6) Improve the consistency of provision for children in the Foundation Stage by:
    - i. all staff planning together to improve the continuity of children's experiences; (Paragraph 31)
    - ii. matching learning tasks more closely to the children's needs in the reception class by making better use of assessment information; (Paragraph 50)
    - iii. providing more opportunities for reception children to take part in structured play activities which develop their linguistic skills and use their imaginations. (Paragraph 76)

---

<sup>4</sup> Best value incorporates the principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition to ensure it is doing at least as well as similar schools by comparing its performance, management and planning processes.

69. In addition to the key issues above, the following more minor weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
- Improve parental involvement in the work of the school and their children's education by strengthening the school's links with parents and their knowledge of their children's achievements and what is needed to improve standards of attainment. (Paragraph 53)
  - Improve pupils' attendance at school and their punctuality when arriving for the start of the school day by continuing to reinforce the importance of regular attendance, punctuality and the positive impact these have on their children's attainment and progress. (Paragraph 21)

## **THE PROVISION MADE FOR AND THE STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

70. The school offers good provision for pupils with English as an additional language. They make up about three-quarters of the total school population. A significant number of these pupils, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, are new to English language. The school's strategies for assessing and supporting pupils for targeted work are beginning to have an impact on their progress. They make good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Where pupils have developed good speaking and listening skills in English in both key stages, this is reflected in their writing and recording skills in other subjects. For example, in a literacy lesson observed in Year 2, pupils are beginning to use descriptive and interesting words to record what they learned about the life cycle of a butterfly. Although they make satisfactory progress, their standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are below those expected nationally of their age but are in line with their monolingual peers. Many of these pupils attain well.
71. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides a good role model for teaching English as an additional language. She uses her understanding of how pupils learn by providing good symbolic and graphic prompts to actively involve pupils in the acquisition of language skills. The teaching overall is satisfactory throughout school. Some good teaching was also observed in both key stages and in the Foundation Stage which included the teaching of English and other subjects. In the good teaching, teachers use their knowledge about pupils' language development skills to scaffold their learning. They offer pupils appropriate levels of support and challenge to develop their critical thinking. For example, in the lesson observed in Year 6, the teacher used his knowledge about pupils' level of language skills by skilfully questioning the pupils to use their prior knowledge about sentences to create their own limerick as a group. In most lessons, teachers use appropriate questioning strategies to gauge pupils' understanding of what has been covered in other lessons. However, there is very little evidence of the use of assessment information being used at classroom level to develop pupils' language skills along side their knowledge about the subject matter. There is little evidence in teachers' planning about the short-term targets for pupils who receive targeted work or how they are shared with the support staff. The support staff, who are very new to their post, provide good support to pupils in lessons. They skilfully use their knowledge about pupils' home languages to build pupils' confidence in speaking and listening.
72. The school has recently reviewed its English as an additional language provision. As a result, the school has identified this as a key area for development. The commitment from the headteacher, the governing body and the senior management

in improving the standards and provision for English as an additional language pupils is clearly evident in the strategies identified by the school in the school improvement plan and in the co-ordinators' action plan. The school has used the specific grants for these pupils effectively to give additional support at class level as well as more targeted work for groups who are new learners of English. The recently appointed co-ordinator has achieved considerable progress in addressing the issues identified in the plan. The assessment and identification procedures in place are good and the school has plans to further develop them by using more refined assessment material to set specific short-term targets to improve pupils' language skills. The special educational needs and assessment co-ordinators work collaboratively with the METAS co-ordinator to offer a cohesive approach to the identification and support of pupils' specific needs. The school has identified staff training needs for which training is already arranged. The strategies in place to offer support are good, as is the monitoring of the impact of these on the quality of teaching. The school has plans to further develop the monitoring role of the co-ordinator. The resources to support English as an additional language are satisfactory.

73. The school is well on its way in attaining the targets identified in the school improvement plan of self-evaluation. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language has improved considerably since September and there is a good capacity for continued improvement.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	102
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	5	35	54	8	0	0
Percentage	0	5	34	53	8	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	32	332
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	103

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	113

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	261

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	80
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	23	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	11	18
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	26	24	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (65)	57 (58)	76 (72)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	18	16
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	26	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (56)	76 (67)	71 (60)
	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	43	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	24	36
	Girls	31	21	34
	Total	56	45	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (52)	49 (53)	77 (74)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	28	31
	Girls	29	31	34
	Total	52	59	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (47)	65 (60)	71 (49)
	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	1
Black – other	6
Indian	5
Pakistani	193
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	78
Any other minority ethnic group	13

*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)	16.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	23.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	252

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.4

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.8

### **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	1	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	972,720
Total expenditure	980,293
Expenditure per pupil	2,118
Balance brought forward from previous year	19,912
Balance carried forward to next year	12,339



Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
--	---

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	364
Number of questionnaires returned	117

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	36	9	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	52	12	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	42	4	12	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	44	19	5	4
The teaching is good.	41	46	8	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	50	11	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	39	8	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	44	4	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	30	48	15	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	35	49	3	8	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	53	5	3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	37	13	9	12

## **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**

74. Children are admitted into the nursery classes on a part-time basis from the age of three. They transfer to the reception class when they are rising five. At present because the reception class is already 30 in number, five children of a similar age are still in the nursery. This is because of the delays to the completion of the building programme for Foundation Stage children. Carefully planned admissions procedures ensure that children settle quickly into the routines of morning or afternoon nursery sessions. Children are assessed on entry to school to find out what they can do. The results of these assessments show a wide range of attainment, but overall it is well below the expected levels for pupils of this age.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

75. A significant number of children, have immature skills in this area when they start in the nursery. All adults provide very good role models. Expectations are high, and relationships are good. Teaching is often good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception class. Overall, children make at least satisfactory progress. Children settle quickly into nursery routines. They feel safe and secure and display a good level of trust by the way they arrive at each session, confidently leaving their parents and carers. Children are provided with a wide range of experiences that engage their curiosity and give them the confidence to explore a range of materials, such as sand and water. The nursery teacher and teaching assistants interact well with the children providing freedom for them to make choices and encouraging them to use all their senses when involved in free choice activities. Nursery staff provide good support and make careful evaluations of the children's development in order to plan future work. Children at an early stage in learning English are given good support by the bilingual teaching assistant who successfully encourages the children to develop their English as they enjoy the activities they are involved in. By the time they leave the nursery, most children show increasing confidence in selecting and carrying out their own activities and interact well with staff in more teacher-focused work. They share equipment well and generally take turns when, for example, using the wheeled toys in the outside play area. However, many children still lack confidence when interacting with others and tend to play alongside others but rarely discuss with them what they are doing.
76. In the reception class, learning opportunities aimed at developing children's skills and understanding in this area are not always fully pursued. For example, the use of playtimes and role-play situations are insufficiently explored. Staff rarely take an active part in play activities and planning does not identify what activities will be provided or what it is hoped they will achieve. Overall, children behave satisfactorily. Most children are on track to achieve some of the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of their reception year. Children concentrate for appropriate periods of time and respond positively to activities, particularly when the activities are relevant and interesting. Through the use of construction materials they learn to take turns and share. Some are developing the skills to allow them to work purposefully in small groups. However, many children are at the early stages of developing the skills of co-operation and often play alongside but not with others. They require significant input from adults to ensure their play is purposeful.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

77. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is satisfactory overall, but in the nursery it is good. Many children start from a low base but make good progress in their nursery year and move to the reception classes with below average levels of attainment. Reception children make satisfactory progress. Most of the children are on track to reach the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning. Others are at an early stage in the development of the skills of communication, for example, they rarely initiate conversation or respond appropriately when asked a question.
78. In the nursery there are good opportunities to develop children's spoken language skills. Activities such as kite making are used to encourage children to listen to and follow instructions. Staff explain clearly what they are doing and make appropriate use of key words, such as 'kite', 'blow', 'wind' and 'tail', to increase children's spoken vocabulary. Opportunities to talk about shape and number are used well to increase children's mathematical development. For those at an early stage in the acquisition of English, good use is made of children's home language to support their developing use of English. In the reception class, role play, where children play independently and imaginatively within a small group, is less well developed. The role-play areas lack the necessary resources and opportunities and use of these areas is less frequent.
79. The nursery and reception children enjoy stories. For example, nursery children listen attentively to stories enthusiastically read by staff, who probe children's understanding of the story by asking questions and encouraging them to predict what might happen next. In both the nursery and reception classes, stories are often read in English and Punjabi so that all children can enjoy them and take a full part in class discussions about them. In the reception classes most children are on track to reach the expected standards in their reading. A few higher attaining pupils have made a good start in learning to read. They read simple texts accurately but need considerable adult support when tackling unfamiliar texts. Most children have some knowledge of initial letter sounds but make little use of picture clues when 'reading' simple caption books. The library area in the new nursery is attractive, well organised and the books displayed are of good quality. The books in the reception class are not displayed well and do not encourage children to choose books for themselves. However, appropriate use is made of the school library where reception children can borrow books on a weekly basis for their parents to read to them. Literacy sessions in the reception class are inappropriate in length for some children because they are unable to concentrate for this length of time.
80. In the nursery, children are provided with good opportunities to practise their 'writing', for example, as they make good attempts to write their own name, or copy over printed letters and words on worksheets. In the reception classes, children practise their handwriting in a variety of focused activities. Most children form letters of the alphabet correctly and hold their pencils effectively. However, just over a half of the children can write their own name unaided and only a few make plausible attempts at writing simple regular words for themselves. Some children apply their knowledge of phonics well to their spellings and copy their teacher's writing effectively. However, there is less opportunity for them to write informally for a variety of purposes, such as lists and letters.

## **Mathematical development**

81. Children are provided with a range of activities to support their learning in this area. Teaching overall is satisfactory and all children make satisfactory progress. In the

nursery, children are encouraged to explore the concept of measuring as they use a variety of containers to find out which is 'smaller' or 'larger' and use these terms in their play with sand and water. They count the number of ribbons on their kites and state whether they feel that a 'longer' or 'shorter' piece of string will help their kites to fly better. Many children recognise and name common two-dimensional shapes, such as 'circle', 'triangle' and 'square'. In the reception class, the work planned covers all areas of mathematical development but many children will not achieve the expected Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year. Activities are appropriate but are not always sufficiently practical and variable in nature. In addition, few opportunities are planned outside sessions with a specific mathematical focus, to allow children to practise their mathematical skills. As a result of their immature speaking and listening skills, many children need significant adult support to ensure that they learn effectively from the activities that are planned. Most children are confident in the use of numbers to five. Some children use larger numbers and can add two single digit numbers to find the correct total. However, few children are able to use their developing number skills to solve practical problems. Some children are beginning to use appropriate mathematical language, such as 'add' and 'equals' when recording their work. Children respond well to mathematical activities, and with help, are able to complete them successfully.

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

82. Few children reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of their reception year. Teaching is satisfactory but in the reception class it relies heavily on children listening to the information their teacher gives them rather than finding out for themselves. In the nursery, children are encouraged to use all their senses to investigate materials to learn about their properties and to describe them. When playing with sand, children are asked where they would normally find it. Those who had visited the seaside were asked about what it was like or what they did there. In the reception class, the teacher encouraged children to look at pictures and models of houses and state which were old and which was new and how they could tell this. Children who were more confident in their oral communication skills were able to explain what they thought. For example, one child perceptively guessed that a house was old because the photograph of it was black and white and not in colour as the other photographs. Most pupils did not have the opportunity to look at the pictures while working in groups and the activity, to draw a picture of a house lacked challenge. There were many missed opportunities to extend children's knowledge by identifying similarities as well as differences. The teacher's planning identified key words to be promoted in the lesson. While these were used well by the language teaching assistant working with her group, little reference was made to them by the teacher. Some children made use of the wooden construction apparatus to build houses. They worked diligently to achieve this but were not questioned by the teacher to describe them or make use of the vocabulary listed in her planning.
83. Children in the nursery have regular access to a computer which they use to support their learning. Adults or volunteer helpers support the children to make use of a variety of computer programs. In the reception class, although some children can talk about using the computer, in the lessons observed during the inspection they were not used.

### **Physical development**

84. Most children reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of their reception year. Teaching is satisfactory in structured indoor sessions in the reception

class and in the use of the newly open outdoor play area in the nursery. Children make satisfactory progress.

85. They use a range of small and large equipment with satisfactory control. For example, they use paintbrushes and coloured pencils to good effect in drawing and painting. Nursery children use a range of wheeled vehicles safely and show control as they negotiate the large climbing apparatus. A few children show good hand-eye co-ordination when striking a ball. In physical education lessons, reception children run, jump and skip showing sound co-ordination and an awareness of others. However, many still find difficulty holding a simple balance. Generally, those who work bare footed show better control and co-ordination in gymnastic lessons than those who wear training shoes. Nursery children have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills through use of the well-equipped outside play area. At present, reception children do not have access to this resource. However, it is planned that they will do so when the reception class relocates to their newly decorated classroom in the Foundation Stage area.

### **Creative development**

86. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress and most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. However, nursery children have more frequent opportunities to promote these skills than the reception class children. Opportunities to learn about colour and choose from a range of materials are promoted appropriately. Children paint freely and confidently using their imagination and own experiences. Opportunities for children to use and develop their imaginative skills through role play are provided. However, these sessions, unless supported by an adult, are not always productive because of some children's immature social and communication skills.

### **ENGLISH**

87. Results in the 2001 national tests show that when compared to all schools, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing were very low for pupils aged seven and well below average for pupils aged 11. The school's performance in the English tests at the end of Year 6 was below average for similar schools. A significant number of pupils in Year 6 are attaining above average standards in reading and writing but the proportion of pupils who achieve average levels is well below expectations. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils' standards in English are below average at the age of seven and well below average at the age of 11. This is because over a half of the pupils in the current Year 6 are on the special educational needs register, and well over a third of pupils have both English as an additional language and special educational needs. Although test results are below national averages the school did well to exceed its target in English for 2001. To achieve these results the school targeted certain groups in Year 6 for additional support. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in both key stages. However, a lack of suitably challenging tasks restricts the good progress that many pupils might make.
88. A high proportion of pupils enters the school with very poor speaking and listening skills. They have a very limited vocabulary and lack confidence when talking to each other and with teachers. Many make good progress but still the attainment of a large number of pupils is well below average by the age of seven.

89. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy effectively, and as a result there have been satisfactory gains in standards in English. However, the lack of consistent, planned opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills throughout the school restricts the extension of pupils' vocabulary. Similarly their chances of expressing opinions and explaining ideas in lessons are limited. Some teachers encourage careful listening and give pupils the time to get their ideas across. As in a Year 6 class when pupils are encouraged to discuss the words used in the non-standard English poem of 'The Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll and in a Year 3 lesson when pupils are encouraged to explain different words in the texts of fables. Pupils explain that a swamp 'must be wet.' And that a metaphor of 'silver lake' refers to 'the reflection of the moon on the water.' However, too often there are insufficient chances for pupils to put forward their own views and as a result many pupils are hesitant and lack confidence when explaining their thoughts or reading to an audience. Some teachers accept single word answers without asking the pupils to expand their ideas or to elaborate their contributions to the discussions. The school has recognised the need to develop teachers' competence in promoting language skills and arrangements are underway for a speech therapist to provide in service training in this area. Progress overall is satisfactory across the school with many ten and 11 year olds particularly, achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress towards meeting their individual targets.
90. The school is raising attainment in reading by encouraging pupils to read regularly at school and at home and supporting them with a variety of strategies designed to improve their phonic skills. As a result, although attainment in reading falls short of national expectations at the end of Year 2 and 6, most pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. During Years 1 and 2 pupils develop their reading skills with a strong emphasis on the sounds words make and word building. Throughout Years 1 and 2, as a result of the literacy strategy, pupils are introduced to a range of texts through which their reading skills are systematically developed and reinforced. The guided reading sessions are used well in this regard. A number of pupils in Year 2 understand terms such as 'title', 'author' and 'illustrator'. More able younger pupils can read simple books with fluency and are able to draw upon their recognition of words, and knowledge of letter sounds to make sense of unknown words. However, a significant number of pupils in Year 2 are still at an early stage of development; they do not yet have a firm understanding of letter sounds and blends and often make inappropriate guesses at words.
91. Although pupils have a much firmer knowledge of basic skills by the end of Year 6, standards remain below national expectations. Pupils read words more accurately but without expression or inflection. Despite well-focused questions by class teachers, limited language restricts pupils' comprehension skills and consequently their ability to use inference and deduction. Many pupils understand the library organisation and can describe the processes of locating and retrieving information from books. Weekly library sessions are eagerly awaited and the librarian gives good support to pupils in their search for fiction and non-fiction information.
92. Standards in writing are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, a number of seven year olds can write simple sentences, spell some words correctly and use capital letters and full stops with increasing accuracy. Spelling is taught through structured phonic work, which emphasises links between reading and writing. When pupils mis-spell words they often do so in a way that is phonetically sound but a significant number of pupils do not yet understand how words are built up from individual letter sounds and blends and consequently their spelling is erratic. Some

pupils make sound use of adverbs and adjectives to improve the content of their writing. Too many pupils, however, make elementary spelling errors and often work is only marked for content and is not addressing the weaknesses in grammar and spelling. Progress in writing is restricted by the use of many low level work sheets which do not encourage pupils to express themselves or develop an individual writing style. Lesson observations and the analysis of pupils' work indicate that they have few opportunities to write creatively or to any length. There are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to develop skills in writing in other subjects such as history and geography or to write about their findings in science and design and technology. Handwriting and careful presentation are emphasised in some classes at the upper end of the school but overall the quality of handwriting is below average. Many pupils have poor pen and pencil grips that result in inconsistent letter formation.

93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and in approximately a third of the lessons observed it is good. It was good in most Year 6 classes. A small number of unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This was mainly due to a lack of challenge in the activities provided, particularly for the more able, or because the teachers' insecure control of the pupils meant that little was achieved in the lesson. Generally, teachers have a secure knowledge of the content and requirements of the English curriculum, and of the National Literacy Strategy. Most make good use of questioning to develop understanding and extend learning. Teachers pay good attention to using subject specific vocabulary such as 'phonemes', 'root words', 'suffixes', 'pre-fixes', 'connectives', 'consonants' and 'vowels'. In poetry lessons they stress the use of 'adjectives', 'rhymes' and 'syllables', when considering limericks and haikus. In the better lessons, teachers show enthusiasm for English which has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and interest. Other characteristics of the good teaching are well-planned lessons and good management of pupils and support staff. Teachers use praise well to reward pupils' efforts and to encourage pupils to achieve as well as they are able. This has a positive impact upon learning and progress.
94. Most teachers follow the planning guidance of the National Literacy Strategy and set out their daily plans clearly linked to the themes to be covered. Nevertheless, insufficient use is made of information gained from assessing pupils' progress, and the use of assessment to plan for appropriately challenging tasks is not well established. There are examples of supportive and analytical marking. However, the marking process is not used consistently and systematically to inform pupils of their learning or how they might progress.
95. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English are assessed regularly and given good support when withdrawn from the classroom. However, few teachers include details of individual targets into their planning, and whilst, overall, pupils make satisfactory gains in learning in English their progress is restricted. Learning support assistants are diligent and experienced but there are many instances where they are insufficiently briefed on the work to be covered by individuals and are, therefore, limited in the contribution they can make to pupils' learning. When teaching is good, pupils are challenged and make good progress. Satisfactory use is made of homework to consolidate what pupils have learned in lessons.
96. Currently the management of English is satisfactory. Whilst the temporary co-ordinators have ensured that the subject is suitably resourced, their teaching commitments and other responsibilities do not allow for the monitoring of teaching and planning across the key stages. The school has begun to make analyses of periodic standard and national tests but the results have yet to be used effectively to



inform the long and medium-term planning. Individual targets are set and booster groups are planned for the spring term. There are good assessment procedures in place. The school is committed to raising standards in English and the priorities included in the school improvement plan indicate that it is in a good position to move forward.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001 for seven year olds, pupils' attainment was well below average for all schools and schools who admit their pupils from similar backgrounds. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. For 11 year olds, pupils' attainment was well below average for all schools and below average for similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was broadly in line with the average for schools in similar contexts.
98. The average points scored per pupil for the two years 2000 and 2001 shows an improvement at the end of both key stages. The gap between the average school scores and the national average scores has also narrowed, and this is particularly marked in the Key Stage 1 results.
99. Current inspection evidence indicates that standards overall are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. However, there is a significant minority of seven year olds who are achieving standards in line with national expectations especially in relation to number. There are also higher attaining 11 year olds producing some work above the expected level.
100. Pupils enter the school with mathematical skills well below average. In Key Stage 1 teaching often concentrates upon number, and developing essential skills in using mathematical language. Since the setting up of the combined school, pupils have made and are continuing to make satisfactory progress according to their individual abilities in both key stages. Pupils with English as an additional language, and pupils with special educational needs, are well supported and make satisfactory progress
101. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced, with the three part structure strongly adhered in most lessons. The school makes good use of the analysis of tests results to identify pupils' needs. Pupils have individual mathematics targets set for them.
102. By the age of seven many pupils have made sound progress in acquiring basic number skills. Most Year 1 pupils can write numbers up to ten, and sort three-dimensional shapes into groups. In Year 2, many higher and medium attaining pupils appreciate number bonds to ten, and can compare and order two-digit numbers. Many are able to double and halve numbers totalling up to 20. They are also starting to appreciate the meaning of fractions such as a half and a quarter. Many Year 2 pupils can name the most common two- and three-dimensional shapes, but are less secure considering properties such as edges, faces, and corners. Year 1 pupils develop their language of length by comparing lines suggesting which is longest, shorter, or shortest. Some higher attaining pupils in Year 2 measure the length of lines in centimetres.
103. By age of 11 many pupils are quicker at working out calculations mentally. They become more proficient in the use of the four number operations to solve calculations

as they pass through the juniors, although many are less confident in using division. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of fractions but other pupils are not so strong in their understanding of equivalent fractions and percentages. Year 3 pupils use their two, five, and ten times tables well. Their understanding of place value is increasing, and higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of values in a three-digit number. Year 4 pupils, in analysing and presenting data, make good use of computer programs to generate bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts. Year 5 pupils respond quickly and enthusiastically to oral questions involving rounding numbers to the nearest ten, 100 and 1,000. Linked to their work on decimals, they measure strips of fabric in metres, centimetres and millimetres. However, many have not developed a clear understanding of the function of the decimal point. Many Year 6 pupils can use a formula to find the area of a rectangle, and some to find the area of a triangle and a circle. Year 6 pupils use a calculator accurately to check their results. However, progress is variable through the juniors. Pupils in some years get limited experiences of graphs and data handling, and in other years there are gaps in 'properties of shape' and of 'position'. The school review of planning and work sampling is underway. The school recognises the need to build upon the use of information and communication technology in mathematics. Mathematics makes a sound contribution to literacy. From the early years, teachers place emphasis upon using the appropriate mathematical language, encouraging pupils to become familiar with, and to use, this vocabulary. Currently, there are too few opportunities for data handling to enable them to engage in more practical and investigative work. Generally, pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. In most lessons they are conscientious and work well. Many are confident and ready to share their responses using a whiteboard. There are occasional instances, however, where the poor attitudes and behaviour of a small group can cause distractions and hinder progress.

104. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, particularly at Key Stage 2. Teaching quality ranged from unsatisfactory to very good but it was at least good in almost two thirds of the lessons. In the best lessons, teachers show very good subject knowledge, maintain a good pace to hold pupils' concentration, and make clear their high expectations and challenge for the pupils. Good planning is usually linked to the very clear explanation of learning objectives to pupils. Using the plenary to get pupils to consider how successful their learning has been is less consistent. Generally, teachers work very closely with teaching assistants to support the work of pupils. In many lessons, the active participation of all pupils is ensured by methods including careful questioning and by drawing in contributions from different groups.
105. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils' standards have also been helped by the in-service training for many staff. There is an emphasis upon teacher directed work, and the use of commercial workbooks, and this can restrict time for practical work. Similarly, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in more open-ended and independent investigations. The co-ordinator and the local education authority mathematics consultant have worked together and identified investigative activities for each year group to remedy this weakness. This work is to be introduced to staff during the summer term. Satisfactory use is made of homework to consolidate and extend what pupils have learned at school.

## SCIENCE

106. Teacher assessments in science for seven year olds in 2001 was well below the national average. However, the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3, was

close to the national average and an improvement over the results in 2000. Pupils enter the school well below the level of attainment found in the vast majority of schools. Pupils' achievement in science at Key Stage 1 is good and by Year 2 they have improved. Pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 was well below the national average and similar to the results in 2000. Achievement in the juniors is satisfactory with the improvement in the infants being maintained. The standard of work found in the school during the inspection was below expectations overall and well below in pupils' ability to carry out science investigations. When compared with similar schools, attainment was below average at both key stages.

107. There are no marked differences between boys' and girls' attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make up the significant majority of pupils in the school and therefore make similar progress to the school as a whole. A few pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language find difficulty using some scientific terms, for example, when creating electrical circuits non-conductors meaning the same as insulators.
108. By age seven, pupils know that we need food and exercise in order to stay healthy. They identify appliances which use electricity, such as computers, television and toasters. They complete simple circuits in order to make a nose light up on a clown. However, pupils do not recognise that a working circuit requires continuous conducting material and creating a gap in the circuit acts as a switch. Pupils need a great deal of support in order to complete any tasks that require independent working in science investigations.
109. By age 11 pupils investigate materials to find out how easily they dissolve, how much material is needed to saturate the solvent, and what effect temperature has on the time taken for materials to dissolve. Pupils understand that materials change from solids, to liquids, to gases on heating and use terms such as evaporation and condensation correctly. Higher attaining pupils know that evaporation is required to retrieve a dissolved substance. However, pupils do not know enough to enable them to carry out investigations independently. Science supports numeracy through measuring temperature changes in degrees celsius and forces in newtons in Year 4, and the graphing of temperature changes when heating a pan of water using thermometers and electronic sensors. Literacy is supported through the recording of investigations, completion of worksheets and copying of factual information.
110. The quality of teaching and learning through the school is satisfactory. Overall, teachers have sound science knowledge and understanding. Where teachers' knowledge and understanding are used well, pupils are challenged. For example, in a Year 6 lesson when investigating burning the teachers' very good questioning led pupils to identify the difference between heating and burning and whether each demonstration represented a reversible or irreversible reaction. In a Year 4 lesson, teaching assistants were used well to support pupils with special educational needs to match diagrams of incomplete circuits to the appropriate written explanations. However, a scrutiny of junior pupils' work showed that some of the work set was inappropriate, for example, details of the digestive system, the use of prisms to split light and the use of a hydrometer to measure density of liquids. Opportunities are sometimes missed to involve pupils sufficiently in investigations, for example, 'Does it matter which way up a bean is planted in order for it to germinate?'. Teachers' control is good overall, and with sound pace and interesting lessons, ensures pupils' involvement, good behaviour and positive attitudes. This was seen in the Year 6 lesson on burning where the very good use of resources, challenging questioning and

the good pace of the lesson held pupils' attention and challenged their thinking and understanding. Overall, teachers give insufficient emphasis to planning work to meet the range of needs of pupils in their classes.

111. The science curriculum is satisfactory for infant pupils, although there is insufficient emphasis on the development of the skills required for scientific enquiry. The curriculum for junior pupils is unsatisfactory. There are too many examples of work which, while challenging, do not meet the needs of the vast majority of pupils in the school. There is also insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' skills for carrying out science investigations independently. However, the co-ordinator has identified where class teachers can include a wide range of investigative work in lessons. It is planned to work with the local education authority science advisor in the autumn term to strengthen this aspect of the teaching of the subject. In order to improve standards in science, the curriculum should be reviewed to ensure that the progression of knowledge, understanding and skills required by the National Curriculum are built on systematically from one year to the next and are appropriate to the age, needs and abilities of all pupils. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear view of what is required to improve the subject. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory as she has insufficient opportunities to monitor lessons and review pupils' work. Developing the role of subject managers has been identified as needing improvement in the school improvement plan.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

112. Pupils' standards are those expected nationally for seven and 11 year old pupils. All pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and reach the expected standards they should.
113. The attractively displayed art work on the classroom walls and in the corridors shows how pupils have used a wide range of media such as paints, pastels, textiles and clay. Displays reveal good links between art and other subjects, for example, the illuminated letters in Year 3 classes links with their current history project, the clown paintings and masks link with Year 6 work on celebrations. There are also satisfactory links with literacy and numeracy. The Islamic patterns show symmetrical patterns and a Year 5 textile collage depicts traditional tales, mythology and contemporary fiction.
114. Pupils in the infants have opportunities to use pencils to make simple sketches. They use different materials to make a repeated printed pattern and use paper to weave patterns. They are also engaged in making clay houses. Pupils make satisfactory progress. In the juniors, pupils have opportunities to use water colour and brushes to paint landscapes, they use pastels to create colourful pictures in the style of Picasso, from both his blue and rose periods. By Years 5 and 6 pupils produce self portraits from photographs, showing a growing feeling for tone, shade and perspective. Pupils across the school have used sketchbooks to record their ideas. These tend to be used as a means of practising work they are about to undertake in lessons. Currently, they do not have enough unrestricted opportunities to use them on a more adventurous basis.
115. Pupils usually show a keen interest and enthusiasm in their work. They work together sharing resources and treat equipment sensibly and carefully. Occasionally attitudes are less good; this is a result of too little guidance being given regarding the nature of the task they are engaged with.

116. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Generally, teachers share lesson objectives with pupils and lessons have appropriate pace. Planning for art lacks detail and some class teachers do not have the knowledge and understanding to identify and develop particular techniques and aspects of the subject. Sometimes classrooms are cramped for some practical aspects of art work. However, older pupils have the opportunity of working in a larger practical room.
117. The collected art work in the co-ordinator's classroom provides a useful start to monitoring standards and progression through the school. The co-ordinator intends to develop a portfolio of work, although currently only a few examples are represented. There are as yet, only limited assessment opportunities built into the planning, delivery and monitoring of art and design.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

118. Standards of attainment in design and technology are at expected levels for pupils aged seven and 11. Inspection evidence is taken from observations of lessons, analysis of pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils in design and technology lessons.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils use a range of materials to construct simple models based on plans they have drawn. For example, Year 1 pupils use gluing, cutting and joining skills to make models of playground equipment. Year 2 pupils make effective use of templates to cut out fabrics and then sew these together in the shape of Joseph's Coat. With support, pupils show appropriate skills in evaluation when they examine their results and develop specific vocabulary when suggesting improvements, for example, flattening, hinge, template, seam and thread.
120. In the juniors, younger pupils show developing accuracy when making flexi puppets from stiff paper. They take great pride when showing off the finished articles and use appropriate language to describe the materials, for example, flexible, stiff, rigid and straight. Similar good attention is paid to increasing vocabulary when Year 4 pupils talk about zips, velcro, buttons and poppers as ways of closing a purse they have designed. Some talk knowledgeably about side stitches, running stitches and cross-stitches. Year 5 pupils demonstrate ingenuity and good design skills when creating new garments from old to be shown off in an end of term 'fashion parade.' (Who would have thought an old pillowcase could have been converted into an attractive pair of slacks?!) Year 6 pupils show that they understand designing for a purpose when creating their own templates and a number of well-constructed models result. Despite the best efforts of the class teacher the quality of the final evaluations are restricted by the limited vocabulary of some pupils.
121. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. However, the attention to design skills and the consideration of function, safety and reliability at the design stage are underdeveloped, as are investigations into the functioning of certain mechanical and electrical products. Pupils have limited experience of using information and computer technology to refine and extend design ideas. With patient support, pupils with special educational needs take a full part in design and technology lessons and make satisfactory progress.
122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan and prepare thoughtfully and use a good range of resources to support the lessons and help pupils' achievement.

Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and most lessons are structured to provide opportunities for pupils to share ideas and work individually and collaboratively.

123. Overall, resources are adequate and plans are in place to provide a designated practical area and improve the provision for food technology. Currently, the headteacher is acting as caretaker co-ordinator for design and technology. She has a good understanding of the subject, manages it appropriately and views its practical nature as being motivational to pupils who have difficulties in reading and writing.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

124. Standards for seven year olds and 11 year olds are average compared to those nationally. In both key stages pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of people and places. Boys and girls make progress at a similar rate and all pupils are fully included in the subject.
125. In their work on the school area, Year 1 pupils develop their ideas of place. They also start to make their own maps recording what they see on their way to school. Year 2 pupils extend their mapping skills, and their understanding of distant places, with their study of the Isle of Struay and work on the Isle of Coll. Many can answer questions about places using selected information from photographs, and suggest differences between those places and High Wycombe.
126. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to extend their knowledge of places and their ability to recognise similarities and differences between their own locality and distant places. Year 6 pupils on the topic of rivers, have an understanding of the role of running water in developing landscape features such as meanders, waterfalls, and deltas. They demonstrate their awareness of how environmental issues can arise when discussing the development of the island of St Lucia. Year 4 pupils develop knowledge of contrasting environments when studying how animals adapt to the habitats found in tropical rain forests and in polar regions. The school courtyard is used very effectively for developing fieldwork skills of observation and recording. Pupils respond well to this practical work and are able to offer reasons for their views and suggestions for improving this environment.
127. Pupils use basic skills taught in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in their studies. Skills of literacy are drawn upon in many topics, sometimes to find information, and sometimes to present work. Year 5 pupils use graphs to present results of fieldwork observations of land use they recorded on their journey to Shortenhills. Year 2 pupils use e-mail and maps from the Internet in their study of people on the Isle of Coll. However the opportunities for using information and communication technology are not fully exploited in geography.
128. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good, and is satisfactory overall. Features of the best lessons include the good organisation of pupils and of resources; ensuring that pupils know clearly what is required of them; and using time well so that pupils are kept involved. Sometimes there is a lack of challenge for pupils, and opportunities for independent work are missed, such as when the information for research is too readily provided.

129. In planning the geography curriculum, the school is in the process of adapting units from national guidelines alongside school based topics. The need to develop the system for assessing and recording pupils' progress is recognised by the school. There are good cross subject links, for example, with science, history and mathematics, and activities using information and communication technology are being extended.
130. Fieldwork and visits are a strength of the subject, contributing strongly to pupils' interest and to the standards they achieve. Opportunities for practical work and investigation are not fully exploited. Topics such as 'rivers', and 'weather', can involve pupils making more first-hand observations and enquiries. The subject is managed well.

## **HISTORY**

131. Overall, standards for seven year olds and 11 year olds are average compared to those nationally. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of people and events in the past.
132. By the age of seven pupils can place events and objects in chronological order. In their work with timelines on days of the week, on seasons, and in observing photographs of pupils ages since a baby, Year 1 pupils extend their historical vocabulary and sense of change over time. Pupils in Year 2 learn about Florence Nightingale and the Great Fire of London. They increase their knowledge of people and events, and also begin to appreciate some of the ways in which we can find out about the past.
133. Junior pupils continue to build their chronological understanding and their knowledge of features characteristic of the periods and societies they have studied. Year 6 pupils, as part of their work on the Victorians, study the benefits of the railway coming to High Wycombe. They use a variety of sources to gain information about the period including census data, old maps, photographs and documents. They can communicate their findings in a variety of ways using writing, drawing and speaking. Many pupils can distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Pupils in lower juniors, in their work on the 'Invaders' such as the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons (Year 3), and of Tudor times and society (Year 4), develop their knowledge of periods in the past and of how living conditions varied in different sections of society. Year 5 pupils extend their understanding of European history in studying the ancient Greeks. They select information from pictures and prepared texts to find out reasons for the start of the Olympic Games.
134. Pupils enjoy history and work well. Most apply themselves conscientiously to activities including those involving the completion of work sheets. They respond very well to visits such as that to the Sulgrave Manor (Year 4). This was reflected in informed classroom discussion, and in some good extended writing describing kitchens and other rooms in the Manor. Pupils use basic skills taught in literacy and numeracy in their studies, but less use is made of information and communication technology.
135. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Features of the good quality teaching include the good levels of subject knowledge, and the successful methods of classroom management to ensure the inclusion of all

pupils. Good teaching offers a good pace and the use of varied resources to maintain pupils' concentration. The encouragement of enquiry approaches and using different sources of information was seen to good effect in Year 6. In other years there is often a much stronger reliance upon a teacher-led approach, and upon the use of worksheets which pupils complete. Usually these worksheets are prepared at three levels of challenge to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Some worksheets are more successful in helping pupils appreciate history as 'interpreting evidence', such as the work on Sutton Hoo (Year 3). There is little work promoting understanding of the differences in ways in which facets of the past are represented and interpreted.

136. The subject is managed well. Other strengths include field visits, and cross subject links with other subjects such as geography. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. The school recognises the need to extend the monitoring, assessment and recording of pupils' progress.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

137. Pupils reach a satisfactory standard by the ages of seven and 11. The school has adopted the nationally approved scheme of work and this has resulted in full coverage of the National Curriculum. However, the skills learnt in information and communication technology lessons are not sufficiently applied in other subjects. Although teachers were involved in a significant amount of training in the past, many have now left, and while the current teacher's knowledge and understanding are adequate overall, it is not always sufficient to challenge higher attaining pupils who complete tasks more quickly than the rest.
138. Pupils at the age of seven load a graphics program enabling them to draw a symmetrical house using the mouse confidently to select the most appropriate drawing tool and its size. This supported a numeracy lesson where children learnt the difference between halves and quarters. They use a word processor to write simple sentences, for example, to describe their own house and program a 'floor turtle' to find 'treasure' using commands such as forwards, backwards and turn. However, pupils do not make sufficient use of graphs to present their work or talk about their experiences of information and communication technology inside and outside school.
139. Pupils at the age of 11 use basic word-processing skills changing font, size and colour. They understand the use of underline, italic and bold and cut and paste text from one document to another. They use these skills to support literacy by word processing stories and poems. However, pupils cannot use 'headers' and 'footers' in documents. They use spreadsheets to plan a Christmas party identifying, for example, how many packets of crisps and bottles of drink will be needed, costing these individually and then summing the total. They interrogated this spreadsheet to adjust either the cost or number to meet a given budget. They use sensors to monitor temperature changes when heating water to boiling point and use the Internet to identify information about St Lucia to support their geography work. There are limited examples of the use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
140. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have good control and organise their lessons well, for example, in a Year 1 lesson higher attaining pupils worked with other pupils and as a result the interest and concentration of all pupils were sustained. Sound use



is made of the computer suite and teachers' planning ensures pupils are clear about what they have to do. Good use is made of time at the end lessons to emphasise what they have learnt, for example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils entered basic information about themselves into a database. The teacher then emphasised this by grouping pupils by boys and girls and those who had brown hair or not. However, although teachers and classroom assistants ensure that an appropriate range of opportunities are provided for pupils, there are times when the work in is not sufficiently different between groups of pupils to ensure all are challenged sufficiently. Work does not always build on what they already know, for example, the work seen on spreadsheets in a Year 6 lesson was not as challenging as the work illustrated above. In all discussions with, and observations of pupils they were enthusiastic and keen to learn.

141. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory but management is unsatisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is aware of what the subject requires to develop but has insufficient or appropriate time through which she can observe lessons to ensure teachers' knowledge, understanding and skills are sufficient to challenge all pupils appropriately. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory as they are not use sufficiently to plan worked based on pupils' prior achievement.

## **MUSIC**

142. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils achieve the expected standards of work. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress.
143. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a broad knowledge of songs, rhymes and musical games. In Year 1 pupils are becoming aware of long and short sounds and pupils in Year 2 clap a steady beat and imitate simple rhythms accurately.
144. In the juniors, pupils learn a range of songs which they perform with good rhythm and volume, as in the lesson in Year 3 where half the pupils sang the melody and half maintain a steady beat on their knees as an accompaniment. Year 4 pupils also play untuned percussion instruments to assist in their understanding of rhythm to accompany their singing as they practise for a performance in assembly.
145. Pupils enter and leave assemblies to the appreciation of music and generally sing with enthusiasm and gusto. Some teachers sing with their pupils as in Year 4 when everyone enjoyed the opportunity to sing 'I am the Music Man'. The choir is preparing for a performance at the Royal Albert Hall. This will provide a good chance for pupils to share their talents and develop their enjoyment of music.
146. Pupils enjoy their music. They try hard to succeed in the activities that are offered to them. They treat instruments with respect. Though anxious to play the instruments, usually they take turns and listen to each other's ideas and performance with appreciation. Very occasionally, when lessons are not planned sufficiently well, pupils become over enthusiastic and do not listen to their peers or to their teacher.
147. Teaching was at least satisfactory in most of the lessons observed and lessons had sufficient pace and balance. It was unsatisfactory in one lesson when the teacher's knowledge and understanding were insecure, expectations of pupils' attainment were low and behaviour management strategies inconsistently applied.

148. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to discuss each other's compositions during lessons and pupils' knowledge and understanding of famous composers are limited.
149. There is no co-ordinator for music in post at present. Specialist teaching is limited to Year 6 pupils with class teachers taking responsibility for their own classes. However, the school makes good use of expertise available from The Music Centre, which is located in the building. This enables older pupils to improve their attainment and progress in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

150. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected at the age of seven and 11. Most pupils reach the standard in swimming expected of pupils at the age of 11. Swimming is given a high priority and its provision together with that of a wide range of extra-curricular activities is a strength of the physical education programme.
151. Pupils make expected progress in developing control and co-ordination in gymnastic skills, and when running jumping and balancing. They are broadening their experiences of dance activities in response to musical stimuli and are acquiring competence in a range of swimming and games activities. Many pupils attend swimming and various games clubs and as a result of well-informed coaching make good progress and show skills well above those expected, for example, in netball, soccer and cricket. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and often achieve good results that enhance their self-esteem.
152. Seven year olds demonstrate sound co-ordination and show imagination when creating sequences of jumps, rolls and steps using simple apparatus. Movements are considered and controlled and pupils are aware of the image they are creating. They use space well and their sequences include twists, turns, effective use of hands and arms and movements through different levels.
153. In a gymnastic lesson, Year 4 pupils are attentive and follow instructions well when creating sequences of movements linking balances. They are clearly aware of good body positions and pay particular attention to starting and finishing the sequences well. The overall quality of the movements shown at the end of the lesson is average, with some pupils creating very good sequences. Year 5 pupils show average attainment in a games lesson developing soccer skills.
154. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Sometimes it is very good, as in Year 6 when pupils are highly challenged in a lesson developing hockey skills. The pace is very brisk, good attention is paid to correct techniques and praise is used well to motivate pupils to even greater efforts. Most of the teachers observed have satisfactory subject knowledge and place due emphasis on pupils achieving good standards. However, there are occasions, as in a Year 4 lesson, when pupils are merely occupied in a number of self-chosen 'games'. They make only limited progress expected from simply engaging in the activities rather than the good progress possible with informed instruction.
155. The subject is managed and led particularly well. The co-ordinator is unusually well qualified and most convinced of the value of physical education within the school. Together with a few similarly enthusiastic teachers he has been instrumental in establishing high participation levels in physical education and in sport related extra-

curricular activities. The enthusiasm for swimming and the interest in soccer, netball and cricket are most unusual amongst a largely Asian school population. Much credit for this very good involvement must go to the teachers and other adults who help organise and coach the activities.

156. The accommodation for teaching physical education is spacious, with an old gymnasium and two other large hall spaces available. Resources for the teaching of swimming, dance and games are good overall. However, much of the gymnastic equipment currently available is dreadful! It is very old, of poor quality and originally provided for secondary aged pupils. This lack of suitable apparatus limits pupils' experiences in gymnastics and consequently restricts their progress in this aspect of the subject. The upgrading of the hall accommodation and the provision of appropriate primary gymnastic apparatus have been prioritised in the school improvement plan.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

157. At the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. At the end of Year 6 pupils reach standards above those expected by the locally agreed syllabus.
158. Year 2 pupils are aware of special events in other people's lives and are beginning to be familiar with biblical and other stories which enable them to talk about their experiences and ideas. They have a satisfactory knowledge of what festivals Christians, Sikhs and Muslims celebrate. They are able to make comparisons about places of worship. They know that a church has pews or chairs and that a mosque has no furniture, that a church can have stained glass windows and that a mosque is decorated with symmetrical patterns. They understand that Christians worship together and that Muslim men and women pray separately.
159. Year 6 pupils describe the key features of the world's major faiths and they understand the importance of belief and how it affects their lives. Pupils consider the need for rules and acknowledge that communities such as class or school need a code, by which they relate to one another. There is a sound contribution to pupils' social and moral awareness. This is apparent in their written work which contains sections on Christianity, Islam and Judaism and plays a significant factor in their understanding of spirituality and their own and other cultures.
160. Pupils' interest in religious education is genuine. They concentrate well in lessons. They contribute to discussion and offer thoughtful and personal ideas and opinions. They make connections with the stories heard and share their own experiences in class discussion. This results in good practice in speaking and listening. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 6 lesson when a lively discussion ensued after an Islamic story 'The Robber' was read.
161. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory overall, and sometimes it is good. Teachers are adapting to the revisions in the curriculum, brought about by the changes in the local syllabus. Teachers introduce the sessions well. They use questioning sympathetically to draw out pupils' personal ideas and beliefs. The planning and pace of lessons are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are not yet in place and at the moment insufficient guidance is provided on the progressive development of concepts and skills.

162. The subject co-ordinator has limited time to manage the subject but has made a good start at identifying priorities for development. Resources for the subject are good and a collection of religious artefacts have been purchased recently. Visits have been made to local places of worship.