

INSPECTION REPORT

HAREFIELD INFANT SCHOOL

Harefield, Middlesex

LEA area: London Borough of Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102382

Headteacher: Mrs M Pain

Reporting inspector: Mr John William Paull
22028

Dates of inspection: 9 - 12 July 2001

Inspection number: 191696

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant with nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Street
Harefield
Middlesex

Postcode: UB9 6BT

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Evans

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22028	John William Paull	Registered inspector	Science Music The Foundation Stage (what is provided for children in nursery and reception classes)	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8992	Julian Vischer	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
30677	Peggy Waterston	Team inspector	English Geography Religious education Special educational needs	
25340	Robert Franks	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15023	Ali Haouas	Team inspector	Information and communication technology History Equal opportunities English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Harefield Infant School caters for boys and girls of three to seven years old. It is a community school in the village of Harefield in Middlesex, which is situated in the London Borough of Hillingdon. The village includes the world-renowned Harefield Hospital. The school has a roll of 232, which is similar to most other schools of its type. Currently, there are 74 children who are under five in the nursery, attending part-time for a morning or afternoon. Nearly all pupils at the school are white, although other ethnic groups are represented. Around three per cent speak English as an additional language, which is above average. Currently around nine per cent of pupils are known to qualify for free school meals, which is broadly average. Around 28 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is above average. Most of these are pupils with learning difficulty, or impaired speech, although a few have emotional or behavioural difficulty. Four have a statement of need maintained by the local authority, which is about average. The overall attainment of pupils entering the school is below average. Socio-economic circumstances in the area are about average, although some signs of deprivation are present.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Harefield is a good school. Its strengths clearly outweigh its weaknesses. Teaching is good. Bearing in mind pupils' knowledge and skills when they begin at the school, their achievement is good. At the age of seven, standards in mathematics, for example, are above the national average, and in science, pupils' knowledge of life and living processes is also above average for their age. Many also achieve standards in art, and design and technology that are above what is normally expected. However, National Curriculum test results in 2000 were below average in reading. The school is well led and managed by its headteacher and deputy, who have the confidence of staff and parents. Governors and staff alike share ideas for the future development of the school. The school has recently been presented with a national Achievement Award to mark improvements in its test results. Taking pupils' generally good behaviour into account, the good quality of teaching and learning that occurs, and pupils' achievement compared with their starting points, value for money is good.

What the school does well

- Overall standards in mathematics, art, design and technology, and pupils' knowledge of life and living processes are above average. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests in mathematics were well above average.
- The nursery and reception classes give children a good start, and progress through them is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and relationships between pupils and between pupils and their teachers are very good in the nursery, reception and all through the school.
- The overall quality of teaching is good and contains a significant amount that is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are also well taught and supported. Because of this good teaching, the quality of pupils' learning is good through the school.
- Arrangements for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral and social development, are very good; cultural development is good, including in reception classes. Planning for personal, social and emotional development is strong in the nursery.
- The school looks after its pupils well and examples of excellent information for parents were found.

What could be improved

- Attainment in reading and information and communication technology is below average.
- Arrangements for assessing, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school sometimes lack consistency across subjects and age groups.
- Attendance is below average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In its last inspection of February 1997, Harefield Infant was judged to be providing an increasingly good quality of education. Since then it has improved further in a good number of important respects. For example, the results of National Curriculum writing tests are better now and, in mathematics, they are much better. Reading test results are better than those of 1997. The school has struggled to

keep pace with expected changes in information and communication technology. However, it is aware of this and this subject is a priority in its developmental plans. The proportion of very good teaching has increased. Literacy and numeracy hours have been introduced effectively and are contributing to the improvement. The headteacher, governors and key staff have tackled issues from the last inspection effectively. A particularly strong example is the improvements in how children are admitted to the nursery, which are providing younger children with better opportunities to observe and learn from older ones, and older children with better opportunities to lead and help others, raising standards in personal, social and emotional development. Systems of assessment have been introduced in the main subject areas and pupils through the school are now participating in setting learning targets.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
reading	E	D	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
writing	C	C	C	C	
mathematics	E	E	A	A	

The table shows that, based on *average points score*, pupils' National Curriculum test results in reading have improved from well below average in 1998 to simply below average in 1999 and 2000. In writing, results are average, whereas in mathematics they have improved considerably from well below average to well above average. *Average points score* is a system that is used nationally to compare the results of schools. It takes into account the numbers of pupils who attain results at higher and lower levels as well as those normally expected. In comparison with schools with similar numbers that qualify for free school meals, the 2000 results are below average in reading; average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Based on teachers' assessments, standards were generally average in science. Baseline tests suggest that overall attainment amongst five-year-olds is below what is normally found in language and literacy, although it is closer to average in mathematics. Inspectors agree with this, and find that it also reflects children's skills on entry to the nursery. Achievement by the time pupils leave the school is therefore good. Achievement at higher levels is often above national expectations especially in mathematics. Generally trends are upwards, and inspectors' findings are that current standards are reflected in the tests, with reading lagging a little behind writing and science, while mathematics is a real strength. Further strengths occur in art, and design and technology, and in science pupils' understanding of life and living processes is above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good – pupils nearly always work well and try hard for their teachers. In the nursery and reception, children settle well and show confidence in adults.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good – pupils respect their teachers' wishes and behave well in lessons. They listen carefully when asked and are orderly around the school. In the 'Lifebus', they were very good for the visiting teacher. Reception children were obedient and sensible on their outing to Burnham Beeches.
Personal development and relationships	Good – pupils are considerate of each other. Relationships are very good and pupils get on well with each other and with their teachers. Even younger children in the nursery and reception take turns well.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – the annual rate is below average. However, punctuality was good during the week of the inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to five years	aged five to seven years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good across all age groups and stages. In the inspection, 98 per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better, including over three-quarters that were good. Of these, more than one in five were very good and included three that were excellent. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred in numeracy, but other evidence suggested that this was not typical. In fact, the teaching of both literacy and numeracy was generally good, helping pupils to acquire basic skills so that learning was secure and progress over time was good. Very good and excellent teaching occurred particularly in the reception and Year 2 classes, although good teaching was spread throughout the school, including the nursery and across a range of subjects and areas of learning. This high quality of teaching helps pupils to concentrate and make a good effort, and therefore contributes to good overall learning. Pupils with special educational needs are consistently identified. For example, pupils whose needs lead to behavioural difficulty are assessed accurately and their classroom assistants are skilful and supportive, ensuring that their behaviour does not have an undue impact on the learning of others. Currently, only a few pupils come from minority ethnic groups. However, good teaching ensures that these pupils achieve well, making their progress at least as fast as other pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good – the National Curriculum is fully taught and the new Foundation Stage (national recommendations for children under five) is well planned. Opportunities to extend understanding through visits to places of interest and for visitors to add to pupils' experiences are also used well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good – individual plans for pupils with special needs are clearly written. Teachers and classroom assistants know these pupils well and help them to understand and make progress
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good – although only very few children at an early stage of English acquisition attend the school, teachers are aware of requirements and seek training, advice and support from the relevant agency.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good – arrangements for spiritual, social and cultural development are all strong. The personal and emotional needs of children under five are also met well. Opportunities for children to sit in a circle on the floor and to talk about matters that are important to them are also provided. Opportunities for children to learn about right and wrong and how to relate to others are very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good – procedures for the protection and safety of pupils are very good. The school also checks attendance very well and draws its importance to the attention of parents and pupils. Personal guidance is also good. Teachers all use assessment information in their planning. However, elements of this process are inconsistent, sometimes lacking formal procedure.

Parents' views of the school are very supportive of what it does for their children. Information about what is being taught in class is excellent. It is provided frequently and before themes and topics begin. Parents support the school strongly through fund-raising activity organised by a committed parents' association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
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Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good – a clear vision that the school should be a place where pupils feel safe and can learn, making progress with the involvement of parents is both shared, and communicated and achieved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory – governors are involved with the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. The chair particularly understands its strengths and weaknesses and future direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good – the school's priorities for future improvements are sensible, including information technology, attendance and reading. Past action to improve performance has been effective and the commitment to succeed is strong.
The strategic use of resources	Good – financial management is good and governors are properly involved in spending decisions. Although the School's Development Plan does not always explain the cost of improvements, the processes that are used are effective and serve the school well.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally good, except in information and communication technology. This lack is partly because the school has only recently received funding to link with the National Grid for Learning (a national development of this subject in schools). New computers are expected to arrive towards the end of term. Senior staff and governors are very aware of how to achieve best value and are already applying some of the nationally recommended principles of best value to their current spending.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
• Their children like school and progress is good. • The school helps their children to be mature and behaviour at school is good. • Teaching is good and children are expected to do their best and work hard. • The school works closely with them and keeps them informed about their children's work. • The school is well led and managed and it is easy to talk to the headteacher and staff about concerns. • Most feel that amounts of homework are about right.	• The range of activities outside lessons. • A few parents wrote on their questionnaires that too much homework is sometimes set. However, those at the meeting did not confirm this view.

Very few negative comments were received from parents, whose overall views were very positive about what the school offers. Inspectors largely agree with parents. Inspectors agreed with the large majority of parents who stated that homework is about right, and felt that what the school offers outside lessons is not very different from what is usual in schools for this age group. A few parents suggested that a breakfast club might be provided for their children before lessons start.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entering the nursery, although most children have levels of skill that are normally found amongst their age group, a higher proportion than is usually the case display skills, levels of knowledge and understanding that are below what is usual. For this reason, overall attainment at this point is judged as below what is normally found. In language, communication and literacy, for example, several children have a limited vocabulary and often express themselves with one word answers or in short, colloquial sentences. However, teaching in the nursery is consistently good. As a result, pupils' learning is solid and basic skills are acquired well. Good teaching and learning continue in the reception classes. Nevertheless, when children begin the National Curriculum, the overall standard is still below what is usually found. Although progress is good, time in the nursery and reception is not enough for children to catch up fully. Children's vocabulary, although improved, remains restricted, and reduces their overall attainment compared with the early learning goals for five-year-olds (nationally recommended targets for the attainment of the age group). Mathematical understanding is, however, better than in language and is much closer to what is normally expected. Baseline assessments (tests to check up on the skills of children as they begin the National Curriculum) support these findings. Arrangements for moral and social development at the school are especially good. Teaching of personal, social and emotional development reflects this fact. As a result, nearly all five-year-olds meet the national goals for this area of learning. In other areas of learning, most children meet the goals, although in knowledge and understanding of the world, several display a limited knowledge of places and facts beyond their own environment. The use of information and communication technology is generally in line with what is expected at the end of the reception year.
2. The 2000 National Curriculum tests of seven-year-olds show that in reading, standards were below the national average; in writing, they were average, and in mathematics, well above average. On the basis of assessments made by teachers, pupils' attainment in science is average. In comparison with similar schools, the same patterns emerge, with mathematics remaining well above average. Results for 2001 also demonstrate particularly good attainment in mathematics. It is not yet possible to compare the 2001 results with other schools, as the national figures are not yet available. However, owing to differences in the numbers of pupils with identified learning difficulties, the actual proportions attaining the expected levels or above in the three subjects are not quite as high. Nevertheless, bearing in mind, pupils' attainments when they start the National Curriculum, these results represent good achievement. The proportion of seven-year-olds who attain above what is normally expected supports this judgement further. In 2000 in mathematics, for example, this figure was 46 per cent, compared with only 25 per cent nationally, which means that the school's performance was well above average. In writing, although not quite as strong, it was still above average. Even in reading, the percentage that reaches the higher than expected Level 3 is close to the national figure.
3. Generally, test results are reflected in the work that was seen during the inspection. Pupils at the school generally achieve well compared with what they knew at a younger age. The adoption of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on standards. Currently pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing as they move through the school. The attainment of seven-year-olds, the age at which pupils leave the school, is generally about average.
4. In general, speaking and listening skills are about average. As pupils move through the school, opportunities to speak in front of their class or to a larger audience in assemblies help them to increase their confidence. They listen well to adults and to each other, and follow instructions, achieving skills that are in line with national expectations in these respects. However, pupils' choice and use of words is often rather limited, which restricts the proportion of pupils that reach higher than expected levels of attainment. Pupils work effectively in pairs and in groups, showing courtesy and consideration for others, as was seen in a drama lesson. Classroom assistants encourage pupils with learning difficulty well, helping them to develop the confidence to talk about their work in front of others, either in small groups or sometimes the whole class.

5. In reading, most pupils are reaching levels that are expected for their age. The proportion that reads particularly fluently, attaining at a level higher than expected, is about what is usually found in other schools. However, a few elements of teaching and learning result in slower progress than in writing. Even some of the more able pupils in Year 2, for example, found it quite difficult to discuss what they had read or to predict what might happen next in a story. This feature suggests insufficient opportunities for pupils to talk about books.
6. Standards in writing are average. Seven-year-olds write coherent passages and are beginning to punctuate accurately with full stops and capital letters. The spelling of common words is either correct or phonetically accurate. More able pupils often write at length, enjoying what they do and showing it to adults. All pupils write for a range of purposes. However, handwriting prevents overall standards from being even higher. The particular style taught at the school is difficult to teach and learn and this factor slows the rate at which less able and some pupils of average attainment can work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported during literacy hours, which helps them to progress well. They often achieve very well compared with their previous knowledge and understanding.
7. Literacy is often included well in other subject areas. For example, in mathematics, a poem was used to identify the frequency with which different letters occur. Pupils did this well, understanding some of the implications for spelling. They know the difference between texts that tell stories, and books that contain information. They use writing in a range of styles in subjects across the curriculum to record findings and what they have learnt.
8. In Year 2, the current attainment of pupils in mathematics is above that expected for their age. In number, shape, space and measures, and in practical and investigative work, a higher proportion than is usually the case attain at a level higher than is normally expected. Nearly all pupils understand place value, ordering numbers up to a hundred and a few are beginning to go further than this. They calculate accurately for their age, using whole numbers up to a hundred. They name many two- and three-dimensional shapes and are beginning to understand some of their properties. Standards of numeracy are also generally good, although the subject co-ordinator has identified that pupils are slow with some addition and multiplication facts that she expects them to know by heart. However, pupils work out simple problems in their heads and understand the need for accuracy when they measure.
9. Individual targets are set for pupils in English. By combining these into targets of attainment for whole classes and year groups, the school is able to set itself realistic targets for overall attainment in the subject. Targets are also set for groups of pupils in mathematics.
10. In science, nearly all seven-year-olds currently attain what is expected for their age in their experiments and observational work, in materials and their properties and physical processes. For example, a group explained very accurately and in considerable detail to an inspector what they had seen when they connected bulbs to an electrical power cell. They showed clear understanding of the need for a complete circuit for a bulb to light, and demonstrated that they had observed what happened carefully, trying several different methods of wiring. They knew that 'pushes' and 'pulls' were simple examples of forces. Work in life and living processes is above average. Pupils could name and explain several important internal and external organs of the human body and had some ideas about their functions.
11. Attainment in art, and design and technology is often above national expectations. For example, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated good skills in their painting. They carefully chose colours, textures and tones to match the styles and materials that they observed on buildings. Models that were on display during the lead-inspector's first visit to the school were of a very high standard, showing that pupils design and make products and artefacts with a wide range of techniques and materials. Standards in geography, history, music, physical education and religious education are about what is normally expected. Information and communication technology, however, is below national expectations. This finding represents an apparent decline since the last inspection when attainment was broadly in line with expectations. However, it is mainly due to changes since then, which require a higher standard in this rapidly developing subject.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when learning support assistants work alongside them. Individual education plans for all pupils on the school's register of special needs, including those with statements, have very clear targets. As a result, what needs to be done to help them make progress can be readily assessed and targets

modified to take their learning further. Throughout the school learning support assistants are effective in promoting interest and attention to planned work. A few pupils whose disruptive behaviour makes their learning difficulties worse are well managed by teachers and support staff alike. This good management of behaviour means that the work of others is not unduly affected.

13. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress across the curriculum. Only very few are at an early stage of learning English. Nearly all therefore are able to understand what is set and to follow instructions and lessons. When pupils whose English is at an early stage join the school, advice from relevant agencies is sought and used effectively. These pupils settle well, owing to the good relationships at the school and soon make progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development and general behaviour are good across all year groups. This finding endorses the view of parents, of whom 92 per cent who returned questionnaires agreed that behaviour in the school is good. Pupils take pride in being members of a caring school community. Their self-esteem is generally high. They understand that the staff values them and not simply for their work. This is reflected in the high level of good behaviour seen in the school and in the very positive relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. These high standards have been well maintained since the last inspection.
15. Pupils settle quickly at the beginning of the day and are ready to start work. They enjoy hearing their names when the register is called and often these occasions are used creatively by teachers. For example, five-year-olds in reception quickly generated high levels of concentration calling out their dates of birth in answer to their names. During lessons, pupils generally take tasks seriously and enjoy learning. For example, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, despite finding it hard to understand parts of the parable of the sower, they made a good effort at joining in the discussion. Boys and girls are generally comfortable with school routines and know the rules that their classrooms follow. They know about the range of activities that are available for them, such as extra music, and look forward to them. They enjoy representing their class in school events. They happily show what they have learnt. Girls and boys take responsibilities seriously. Those Year 2 pupils who have additional responsibilities helping in the playground, looking after others are especially keen and conscientious.
16. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school and in lessons is good. As they go to and from classrooms or assemblies, or queue up to go in and out, they show good standards of self-control. Behaviour during assemblies was very good. In the classroom they behave sensibly. Girls and boys are attentive and responsive to teachers' questions even when replies are wide of the mark. Pupils play well together and respect each other's space. For example, four boys voluntarily lined up at the drinking fountain without the intervention of an adult. Nevertheless, playground collisions did occur during the inspection. These were dealt with promptly and other pupils showed concern and helped those in difficulty, escorting them to the medical room. One exclusion, which was for a fixed amount of time occurred last year. However, no bullying, sexist or racist behaviour was noted during the inspection. Indeed, from the nursery on, children mix well together. Boys and girls of different ethnic backgrounds work and play very harmoniously throughout the school.
17. Relationships are very positive between pupils and between staff and pupils. From the nursery on, children are offered praise and encouragement. They respond with self-esteem and respect for one another's work. Because of these positive relationships pupils are self-confident and generally responsible. They accept lunchtime duties willingly, tidying-up and helping to move furniture on the basis of a rota of older boys and girls. Owing to the very strong lead given by teachers, pupils display a genuine desire to include everyone. For example, in a reception class, pupils were invited to select others for demonstrations of what to do. Pupils with special needs were included immediately and without prompting.
18. Levels of attendance are below the national average and are unsatisfactory. This is the only negative aspect of attitudes, behaviour and personal development. Although unauthorised absences have improved since the last inspection and are now about average, absences generally are still higher than the national figure. Punctuality, however, was a good feature during the week of the inspection. Pupils came to school on time and lessons began and ended on time and pupils responded quickly when the bell rang to end playtimes.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good, which agrees with the views of parents, of whom 97 per cent of those who returned questionnaires felt this to be so. This quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning, which is nearly always good. Pupils concentrate well and thereby learn basic skills thoroughly. In the inspection, around 98 per cent of lessons were at least satisfactory, including over three-quarters that were at least good. More than one in five were very good and three were excellent. Teaching was judged to be good in the last inspection, but these proportions suggest that it has nonetheless improved since then. The amount of very good and excellent teaching especially is higher. A very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurred in numeracy, but the quality of planning, previous work and other teaching that was seen in the relevant class suggest that this was not typical. Co-operation and getting on well with others are emphasised to a considerable extent in the nursery. As pupils move into reception classes and through the school, teachers build on this well, using effective systems to reward good attitudes towards others and towards work. As a result, pupils make a good effort.
20. Teaching of children in nursery and reception classes is good. The areas of learning for these age groups are being adapted well to meet the requirements of the new curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The inspection took place very near the end of the school year, and this fact was reflected well in the planning in reception classes. For example, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development occurred in lessons that followed the pattern of literacy and numeracy hours. This teaching prepared children well for starting the National Curriculum in the next term, contributing to the quality of their learning by offering a smooth transition.
21. Teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum and the age groups that they teach is good. This feature results in effective overall planning, matching pupils' previous levels of knowledge and understanding to current tasks. Throughout the school, including the nursery, the range of appropriate teaching methods that are employed is good. For example, direct instruction, good question and answer sessions, suitable exercises and activities to consolidate understanding, and role-play or drama were all seen in use. However, except in art, little evidence of information and communication technology was seen to enhance learning in other subjects. This variety helps pupils to acquire planned learning more successfully, keeping their interest on what is to be learnt. As a result, time and resources are used well, although pupils' uses of written work to record and consolidate what they know are often rather limited by the difficulty that several experience with the school's handwriting scheme. In the nursery, the use of assessments by the teacher, nursery nurse and learning support assistant is a strong feature that results in good adaptations of the areas of learning to match individuals' needs.
22. The marking of pupils' work is invariably accurate and up-to-date. Teachers are conscientious about this aspect of their work. As a result, pupils put in good efforts for them, usually tackling tasks to the best of their ability. Written comments are fairly brief, but this reflects the age group of the pupils well. However, when they are made, comments contain encouragement, notes about the quality of the work and what to do next to improve.
23. Teachers understand how to plan and teach literacy and numeracy hours, following closely the recommended patterns for lessons in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These lessons have contributed well to improvements in the school's results and pupils' achievements in English and mathematics and especially in National Curriculum tests in mathematics.
24. The teaching of English is generally good. Pupils respond well to teachers' explanations of what is to be taught, listening well during sessions when they share a text together or concentrate on the sounds of letters and letter patterns. However, variations were found in different classes and year groups about what should happen when groups of pupils read together. For example, insufficient opportunities were sometimes given to pupils to talk about books. Nevertheless, methods are chosen carefully, employing relevant resources that help pupils to understand and to acquire knowledge and skills successfully. Books and collections of worksheets are kept neatly, setting a good example for them to follow. Very good liaison takes place between teachers and learning support staff, all of whom have been well trained and

know pupils well. Teachers assess reading and writing regularly so that individual progress can be checked and extra help planned for those pupils who need it.

25. The teaching of mathematics is good and as a consequence pupils learn well. As a result of the strong implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers have improved the planning of work since the last inspection. This planning includes clear notes about how lessons will meet the needs of pupils with different levels of prior understanding. Good mathematical vocabulary is a feature of nearly all teaching and it is explained clearly, ensuring that understanding and basic skills are learnt well. Teachers have high expectations of attainment and set suitably difficult tasks that motivate and sustain interest. In turn, pupils behave well and learning occurs securely.
26. The teaching of science is good. In the lessons that were seen, teachers' knowledge of the subject was strong. All aspects of the National Curriculum are taught effectively, but life and living processes is a particular strength. Evidence of very good planning of this part of the subject was found in all age groups from the nursery on. As a result, pupils' basic knowledge of plants, animals and the human body is good for their ages. Organisation of resources and choices of methods are good and pupils are clearly given opportunities to observe, experiment and find out for themselves.
27. In art, design and technology, history, music and physical education, the teaching that was observed was good. Teachers' knowledge was good and lessons proceeded at a good pace, so that pupils remained interested, and therefore made a good effort to learn. In geography and religious education, satisfactory lessons were observed.
28. Teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory. Although skilful questioning is evident and used well to enable acquisition of skills, pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to keep practising what they have been taught.
29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a learning difficulty or impairments to speech, is usually good. It is at its best when tasks are strongly adapted for all pupils to build upon their previous learning. Pupils with a statement of special educational need are well supported. These pupils are mainly taught alongside all others in the classrooms. However, on occasions when they are taken out of normal lessons, individually or in small groups, this arrangement is appropriate and relates to targets in their individual education plans. Learning support staff are good at assisting class teachers in providing strong teaching for these pupils. They know pupils and their requirements well and thus have a positive impact on learning.
30. Teachers respect pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and beliefs and ensure that they are included fully in learning tasks. Pupils follow this lead well and involve each other in learning groups of different sizes. Very few pupils whose English is at an early stage of acquisition come to the school, but records show that, when they do, teachers seek the relevant help and advice from relevant agencies and work hard to involve parents. As a result, these pupils quickly acquire sufficient English to be included adequately in learning.

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

31. At the time of the last inspection, what was taught at the school fully met the legal requirement to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The governors' policy for sex education also met requirements. The nationally recommended areas of learning for children under five were also planned adequately. The curriculum was judged as broad and balanced. The curriculum continues to be well planned. It is broad and balanced with appropriate amounts of time being spent on all subjects. However, what is taught in information and communication technology has not kept pace with recent changes in this rapidly developing subject. Insufficient opportunities are available to use and control programs, applying them across the curriculum. Not enough opportunities to practise the skills that are taught are made available. Since the last inspection, more time has been allocated to music to offer pupils greater opportunity to develop their singing and instrumental skills and this has worked well. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced well and have had a good effect on raising standards, especially in mathematics. The governors meet legal requirements in their sex education policy, and good provision is made for personal and

health education at times when pupils sit in a circle and are encouraged to talk about issues that interest or concern them.

32. The areas of learning continue to be well planned for children in the Foundation Stage (children of nursery and reception ages), taking account of new national recommendations that have been published since the last inspection. Arrangements for admitting children to the nursery have also been improved, so that weaknesses in what could be offered in personal, social and emotional development have been corrected (a key issue in the last inspection).
33. Pupils have equal access to the full curriculum, including activities organised outside the school day. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout in the nursery and reception and then through the school, and meets statutory requirements. Pupils with special needs, including those with a statement of need, have full access and entitlement to the National Curriculum. Pupils' individual learning plans have well focused targets. Nearly all pupils with English as an additional language are sufficiently fluent to understand lessons in English, except in the nursery. In this case, needs are appropriately addressed. A number of elements in the curriculum are used to develop insights into other cultures, notably in religious education, geography and history. The school appropriately draws on resources in the community, where parents contribute their cultural knowledge. Recently, for example, a parent spoke about Muslim weddings, sharing experience, artefacts and personal knowledge. However, some opportunities are missed in lessons to raise awareness of pupils' own cultural and linguistic backgrounds, thereby exploring a rich diversity.
34. Planning of what is taught is good overall and based on relevant national guidance for each subject area. Good links have been maintained and established with the local authority's advisory teachers in many subjects, ensuring that the school's planned curriculum pays due regard to local and national policy and guidance. A few of the school's documents that outline policy, such as physical education, refer to old schemes of work. In such cases, the overall content does not fully reflect the school's current good practice. However, where this is the case, co-ordinators are aware of it and reviews of policy are part of their action plans for the future.
35. Bearing in mind the ages of its pupils, inspectors felt that the school has a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons, although some parents in answer to the questionnaires disagreed with this. Links with the local community are good. The school took an active part in the *Harefield Village Millennium Celebration* and has regular contact with local shopkeepers, farmers and ministers of religion who are actively involved in school life. During holidays, the local churches host activities for pupils that include organised play in the *Groundbreakers' Holiday Club*. The school makes good use of visiting artists who work hard with pupils to create a stimulating and attractive environment, and visiting teachers who add to pupils' academic and personal opportunities. For example, *The Hillingdon Lifebus* was present during the week of inspection and very good lessons in science linked to health education occurred as a result. The headteacher has established strong links with the area health visitor and talks are arranged for newcomers, well before their children begin school. Very good communication exists between the school and the local churches. During the inspection, the local Baptist minister and the vicar led a very good assembly, contributing strongly to personal and spiritual development. The headteacher has regular planned meetings with the adjacent junior school headteacher and children from the junior school perform orchestral pieces for the infants. Effective links exist with the local high school, which sends students for work-experience within the school. The school's homework policy is consistently implemented by the staff and is successful in developing children's learning in several subject areas.
36. At the time of the last inspection, overall provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was good. This good quality has been improved further. Arrangements for these aspects of personal development are now very good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are all very good and cultural development remains good. All staff act as good role models; demonstrate high expectations of behaviour and attainment, and use praise well to foster pupils' self-esteem and motivation to put in a good effort to learn.
37. Very good opportunities for spiritual development include assemblies with acts of collective worship that offer prayers and time for quiet thoughts. These acts of worship fully comply with current legal requirements. Themes such as *Opposites* are studied in a religious setting, and consider how words such as "lost" and "found" might relate to school life. Pupils make very

good use of the school's new *Magic Garden* – a landscaped area in the playground. Several pupils explained to inspectors how at playtimes they sit on the benches in this attractive setting and talk to friends, and how "...sometimes they just think about how pretty it all is". Appropriate opportunities are provided to explore and reflect upon the wonders of the world in subjects such as art, science and geography. Teachers' good control of pupils and the attractive environment around the school support this aspect of pupils' development. In registration periods, teachers use good methods to calm pupils for the work ahead, such as breathing in and out deeply, settling them quickly and putting them in the right frame of mind to do well in lessons. A variety of plants have been well positioned inside the school's central quadrangle to allow the effect of a living foreground to a mural that portrays a traditional country scene. Pupils are encouraged to notice and to wonder as these plants grow on a daily basis. Parents appreciate the trouble that the school takes in developing this spiritual aspect of its work. The celebration of *Anzac Day*, during which the school takes their children to a local commonwealth servicemen's cemetery to offer thanks, was particularly mentioned.

38. Moral development is very good. Pupils are taught right from wrong and most are given responsibility for their own actions. Through assemblies and personal and social education lessons, pupils are frequently encouraged to think about moral issues and how their actions might affect others. Nearly all pupils know the eight main rules of the school very well. The school has a clear code of conduct that is displayed in every class and implemented consistently by all adults. Good deeds and kind actions are encouraged and positively praised and rewarded. A system of stickers, certificates and entries in the *Good as Gold Book* are used to reinforce and celebrate pupils' goodness. All adults in the school provide good role models through their co-operation with each other and by showing respect for pupils, listening to what they say. As a result of this very good provision, most children respond by paying attention, taking turns, and trying hard to carry out instructions to the best of their abilities.
39. Opportunities for pupils' social development are very good. In the nursery and reception classes, it is appropriately planned and taught well in the area of personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 and 2, many opportunities are provided in most subjects for collaborative work in pairs or small groups. All pupils are encouraged to share equipment and to treat it with respect, so that it remains in good condition and available for others' use. Good classroom organisation helps pupils to develop independence in getting out and clearing away apparatus. For example, in an art lesson in Year 1, pupils were expected to tidy the cutting and sticking materials that they had used. One of the school's key aims involves helping pupils to take responsibility for their own actions and to show respect to others. In an excellent lesson in Year 2, rules for class discussion were made clear: pupils were to sit in a circle; value and respect the views and opinions of others, and above all listen and await their turn. During this session, pupils were required to speak about each other in positive ways, naming strengths. In this way, pupils made each person feel good and accepted by the whole group. Opportunities to develop social responsibility are provided in a variety of ways, including fund-raising and charitable events. All children from an early age are given the chance to take registers and to act as classroom monitors and helpers.
40. The provision for cultural development is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to study their own and other peoples' cultures. Older pupils recently went on a trip to London where they visited places of historical and cultural interest, including Big Ben and the Central Mosque. The local environment enables them to study features of village life. For example, nursery children are taken on local walks. In history and geography, older pupils compare their own environment with other parts of the world. They are introduced to music from other cultures and learn about the major religious festivals of other countries in religious education. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds attend the school and opportunities are taken to celebrate their customs. Examples are when parents have come into the school to tell pupils about Divali or, on another occasion, the differences between Muslim and Christian weddings.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school takes very good care of its pupils' welfare. This finding represents an improvement since the last inspection. Records of pupils' behaviour are kept, with a well-balanced approach to personal needs. Procedures are consistently applied and thoroughly understood by all members of staff. Parents are kept closely informed. Similarly, procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Information about pupils in difficulty is passed to the headteacher, who monitors the situation and intervenes as necessary. Procedures for child

protection are well known by all staff. Good links with the local authority's Education Welfare Officer exist.

42. Very good procedures for monitoring attendance have been introduced since the last inspection, including weekly checking of the registers by the school administration officer. This procedure is further supported when the headteacher carries out an analysis every half term. Although attendance has remained below average, signs exist that it is improving as a result of this work. The school draws attention to the importance of good attendance through offering prizes and rewards to pupils, and by drawing attention to it in newsletters. Punctuality has also been targeted and the strict use of a Late Book for pupils who miss registration by ten minutes has been introduced. Registers are taken efficiently and often creatively becoming a tool to increase the opportunities for learning and social interaction in all classes in both morning and afternoon. A well-established use of the telephone is in place to make contact with parents and guardians if reasons for absence are not given.
43. Supervisory assistants are at the centre of an excellent team that covers incidents, accidents and general supervision at lunchtimes and in the playground. This efficient and well-organised team meets to discuss issues and raise new proposals regularly in meetings at which minutes are taken. Health and safety and first-aid procedures are of good quality, up-to-date and well-known. First-aid boxes and fire extinguishers are positioned in accessible places throughout the school. All incidents and accidents are recorded. All staff are aware of safe classroom practice. Routines for moving around the school and going to and from lessons and the playground are well thought out and safe. The site is secure with self-locking doors, a buzzer-entry system and a recently installed time-locked gate. The long-serving caretaker, employed jointly with the nearby junior school, carries out minor repairs. The school is clean and the caretaker and governor responsible for health and safety regularly check its condition and assess risk and safety.
44. The monitoring of how well pupils are included in what the school offers, and how different groups receive equal opportunity are a strong feature. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs effectively and organises appropriate support. Liaison with outside agencies is well established. However, the school does not always receive the support it needs as quickly as it would like. The register of pupils with special needs is kept up-to-date and the provision that is required in pupils' statements of need is properly in place. Assessment of the progress of pupils at the various stages on the register is very well managed and enables pupils to make good progress. Checking up on how new children are settling in and the monitoring of pupils' attitudes and values as they progress through the school are well established. Both are relayed to parents in annual school reports. In its analyses of assessment results and pupils' achievements, the school has found variations in the performances of boys and girls. Investigation of these differences has become a priority of the school's developmental plans. It is seeking to find out whether reasons other than in the pupils themselves exist for it. The school approaches cultural differences positively and sensitively. Pupils from travelling families are well integrated and their needs are met. Parents from this background wrote to inspectors in praise of the school's attempts to check that they and their children felt welcome. The school's policy statement and aims for equal opportunities are sensible and achievable. However, its procedures for monitoring and dealing with racist and sexist incidents, although good in practice, are not yet sufficiently explicit across the full range of other policy documents.
45. Procedures for monitoring attainment and progress and the use made of this information are generally satisfactory. Monitoring procedures are in place and improvements have been introduced in those areas identified as weaker at the time of the last inspection. The nursery has introduced a very effective and simple colour-coded system that works well because it not only records development, but enables a child's progress to be seen at a glance. In classes for older pupils, procedures for making assessments in mathematics are good and inform lesson planning in some detail. In both English and science, assessment is satisfactory. In English, standardised tests for reading and a running record track pupils' progress, but group records for reading are not explicit about what needs to be planned next for the group to improve. Writing assessments are carried out meticulously and regularly. However, variations are found in different classes in how they are used to plan future work for groups with different levels of knowledge and understanding. In science, a new sheet on which to record pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding has been prepared, which will go a long way to providing a more formalised and consistent approach. In other subjects, including information and communication technology, and across classes, procedures and use of assessment are

inconsistent. However, co-ordinators are already aware of this and it has been identified as an area for improvement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. At the time of the last inspection, parents' views of the school were positive. This remains the case now. In fact, many parents expressed very positive views about the school when responding to the inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting. At the latter parents were appreciative of the way that they are encouraged to play a full part in the life of the school from their very first approach. They also appreciated the way that the headteacher and staff listen to parents' concerns, taking them seriously and responding with answers, even if they do not always agree. Analysis of inspection questionnaires shows an overwhelming support for the school, with only one area showing a mixed result: "the range of activities outside lessons" – and only one other where just a few parents expressed concerns: "the right amount of homework". Inspectors agree fully with parents' very positive views of the school. They judged the amount of homework to be about right, which was also the view of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting. Further discussions with a group of parents about what is available outside lessons took place. Parents in this group felt that they did not really know what to expect as the school is for infant-aged children only. Two parents suggested that a breakfast club would be a useful addition to the school's provision. Inspectors judge that the range of activities offered outside school is about what is usual in a school for this age group.
47. The school has very effective links with parents and provides an excellent quality of information for them. This finding marks an improvement since the last inspection. Even the few weaknesses noted then have now been corrected. Parents are given clear details about school issues and events in the headteacher's weekly newsletters, which are clear and informative. Parents know that they can expect a weekly letter and, owing to this frequency, know what it says will be relevant immediately. The nursery also issues a friendly and informative newsletter once or twice a fortnight and these contain information about what the children will be doing next. In this way, parents can help their children with relevant experiences at home. Half-termly curricular newsletters are issued in the main school, which serve a similar purpose. *Home-school diaries* also offer a useful channel of communication between parents and staff. These show that most parents are involved in helping their children to read at home. However, a significant minority of these diaries had few entries, which is a pity, since pupils themselves are generally well motivated and enjoy opportunities to read to adults. Annual school reports are very well written. They include what has been learnt in reasonable detail in a frank and open style, referring parents to what their child needs to do next. They also report on pupils' personal development. Parents' evenings are held regularly. Twice yearly meetings about progress and what needs to be done next are supplemented by a third "optional" meeting after school reports have been issued in the summer term. These meetings are recorded through the very good practice of preparing a signed review, stating the main points that were discussed. The school also holds regular open evenings to see the work of the school and open afternoons, when parents can visit the school during a working day. A crèche is provided for these activities, which increases opportunities for parents to attend. In these ways, the school operates a very effective policy of openness to parents. Curricular evenings about English and mathematics are well established and the school has recently worked with the local Adult Education Service to run a six-week *Keeping up with the Children* course. This programme was designed to help parents to understand how their children are taught to read and write at school. The school has also balloted parents' views with questionnaires of its own, independently of OfSTED. Most recently, for example, it sought parents' views about the *School Development Plan*. This survey was straightforward and clear in its intentions.
48. Teachers maintain good contacts with parents whose children have special educational needs. All parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. They receive early notification of their children's needs and are kept fully informed. Parents do not always take advantage of the opportunities they are given to be involved in formal review meetings.
49. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. A small body of very committed parents makes a very strong contribution. They come into school regularly to hear pupils read; help with the organisation of resources, and support teachers in lessons. Others are involved in helping with work on the Internet. The school encourages parents to contribute to their children's learning at home, providing useful prompts on how parents might assist with

learning. The Friends of Harefield School's fund-raising events are well supported. Considerable sums of money are raised. The programme of events is usefully planned in conjunction with the junior school's diary. Funds are spent on improving facilities, such as the very successful adaptation of existing trees and grass in the playground to the *Magic Garden*, of which nearly all pupils are thoroughly proud and appreciative.

50. This recently created facility symbolises the school's positive and caring approach to pupils' wellbeing. It provides them with a very imaginative quiet area in the playground.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. At the time of the last inspection, leadership and management were good. The headteacher provided leadership of high quality and communicated a vision of high standards of achievement and behaviour. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources were generally good and the school's financial efficiency was also strong. These qualities remain the case now and the school has maintained its strengths in these areas. Action taken to make improvements, meet targets and to resolve issues has been good since the last inspection. For example, improving provision for children in the nursery has been tackled effectively. Procedures for assessment are better now than they were, although practice is sometimes inconsistent. Teaching and learning have improved well and the governors' annual report is more informative.
52. The headteacher, deputy head and governors share a clear vision for the school's future direction. They communicate it to pupils and parents well. This vision is based on aims that seek an environment where pupils are confident, so that they can learn and make good progress, and in which parents are involved in their children's education. Such aims are reflected very well in the work of the school. The school also acknowledges the importance of equal opportunities for all pupils and this is to a large extent well reflected in its practice. The school has begun to focus on potential variations in achievement between boys and girls, and of bilingual learners. Appropriate training for teachers has been provided for addressing the needs of the few bilingual learners who enter the school. The monitoring of equalities is defined mainly in terms of the analysis of outcomes. Good examples are seen in the school's resources of positive images of women and black people, and of books reflecting cultural diversity.
53. Delegation of different responsibilities amongst the staff is generally sound. Teachers understand what it is to be a co-ordinator, and they carry out their duties conscientiously. However, in several subjects, opportunities for them to work alongside colleagues in each other's classrooms are limited. This restriction prevents them from gaining direct insights into what works best in their subjects and to promote it across classes and age groups. The co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have made good contributions to the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies into the work of the school. The deputy head teacher is the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Her leadership of this aspect of the school's provision is very good. She manages administrative arrangements well, monitoring the work of teachers and learning support assistants. She ensures that pupils with special needs make appropriate gains in their learning. A special needs committee of the governing body has been established and makes a good contribution. It is also attended by the headteacher of the adjoining junior school, facilitating continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
54. Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities well. An annual meeting and report for parents are held, and explanations of how governors carry out their duties are included. They are conscientious about their role in helping to shape the school's priorities. Committees to monitor spending, the curriculum and maintenance of the premises are well established and effective. The chair of governors is knowledgeable about what the school does well and where it can improve. Link governors for important areas of the curriculum, including special educational needs are in place. The governor for special needs works in the school and is well placed to monitor and report on provision. She is very well informed about developments and progress in this aspect of the school's work.
55. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning regularly and makes recommendations and suggestions to staff about how lessons might be improved. She is supported well by the deputy head, who places an emphasis on how the teaching of pupils with special needs can be

improved. When the relevant national projects were introduced, the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy carried out monitoring and made suggestions for improvements. Advisory teachers from the local authority have also assisted in further monitoring of teaching. The school has sound procedures for appraisal and performance management and opportunities for staff to undertake further training are good. A policy for managing and improving performance has been drawn up and agreed with staff and governors. Teaching staff have targets for improvement that are often linked with their responsibilities for co-ordinating a subject. A very strong commitment exists to provide what is best for pupils and spreads throughout the school's personnel. For example, lunchtime supervisory staff hold meetings to review their own practice and make recommendations to the headteacher about how it can be improved. Newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the staff feel accepted and are supported well. Advice and information are provided verbally and in documents.

56. Financial management is generally good and where aspects of the school are identified for improvement, appropriate funding is made available from the budget. The governors' chair of finance understands the processes of setting a budget well. Accounts are provided regularly so that governors can check spending and question any areas where it does not seem to match the original intention. Although the school does not make a lot of use of new technology for administration, financial control is an exception. The budget is maintained on computer, and the efficient Administration Officer keeps all the separate budget headings fully up-to-date, contributing much to the smooth running of the school. As a result, it can be demonstrated clearly that funds provided for particular purposes are spent in intended ways. Senior staff and governors are well aware of the need to seek best value for public funds. They compare prices and seek quotations for capital spending. The governors have effective guidelines about how this should be applied. Public funding is fairly generous compared with other schools nationally. However, the school makes good use of its income. Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils learn well; behaviour is good and the provision for personal development is very good. Good value for money is therefore achieved.
57. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally good. For example, the school made a positive decision to employ good numbers of learning support staff. It has achieved and maintained this position and the outcome has been good for standards, making a very positive impact on special educational needs and on the work of particular groups within classes. Accommodation is good, containing specialist rooms, such as a music room and library, and airy secure classrooms that support pupils' learning. Outside, different spaces support pupils' play, physical education, science, personal development, creative and other needs. Planted spaces and areas such as *The Magic Garden* are good examples. Learning resources are also good in many subjects, although a lack of computers hampers opportunities to practise skills in information and communication technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. The headteacher, staff and governors are strongly committed to improving standards and results, including attainment in the National Curriculum tests of seven-year-olds, and especially in reading. They have also identified that information and communication technology, and pupils' attendance are below the levels that they desire. All three of these aspects of the school's work are included as priorities in the School's Development Plan.

A. The headteacher, staff and governors should raise standards in:

1. Reading, by:

- i) monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their current methods of teaching the subject, thereby establishing which practices work the best with pupils at the school (see paragraphs 73, 75 and 80)
- ii) spreading what works more rigorously and evenly through the school (see paragraphs 75 and 80)
- iii) improving the effectiveness of sessions when groups of children read together (see paragraphs 24 and 75)
- iv) continuing to try to enlist the support of those parents who do not share books with their children at home (see paragraphs 47 and 75)
- v) increasing opportunities for pupils to talk about what they read (see paragraphs 5, 24 and 75).

2. Information and communication technology, by:

- i) offering more opportunities for pupils to practise skills that they acquire (see paragraphs 28, 31, 57 and 110)
- ii) reviewing and reorganising resources and accommodation in order to make better use of the time that is allocated to the subject (see paragraph 57, 110 and 112)
- iii) broadening what pupils do to match developments in the subject, including more opportunities to use and control programs and applications in other subjects (see paragraphs 11, 21, 31, 84, 100 and 109)

B. The headteacher, staff and governors should improve:

1. The use of monitoring, evaluating and assessing the work of the school, by:

- i) establishing where its practice is most manageable and at its best (see paragraphs 53, 85, 112, 120 and 123)
- ii) then formalising what is working well into a systematic, whole-school approach for all ages and subjects (see paragraphs 45, 53, 85, 104, 112, 120 and 123).

2. The annual rate of attendance, by:

- i) continuing to make it clear to parents that their children can only take full advantage of what the school offers if they are present (see paragraphs 18 and 42).

Minor issues that governors may wish to include in an action plan

Review the handwriting scheme to see whether it can be adapted to pupils' needs more easily (especially younger pupils, lower attaining pupils and those who find it difficult to co-ordinate hand and eye), (see paragraphs 6, 21, 63, 76 and 77).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	16	56	21	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	37	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	66

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	30	26	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	28
	Girls	24	23	25
	Total	48	48	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (80)	86 (85)	95 (85)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	28	26
	Girls	23	23	24
	Total	47	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (79)	91 (84)	89 (81)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	124
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	24.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	298

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	37

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.3
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-1
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	£
Total income	562,139
Total expenditure	564,213
Expenditure per pupil	2,496
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,168
Balance carried forward to next year	27,094

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	232
Number of questionnaires returned	131

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	31	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	41	2	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	53	5	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	52	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	70	27	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	42	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	32	0	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	51	40	5	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	63	34	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	28	21	3	26

Parents' views were very positive about what the school offers and inspectors largely agree. A few parents suggested that a breakfast club might be provided for their children before lessons start. Inspectors agreed with the large majority of parents who stated that homework is about right.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Improvements in provision for children aged three, four and five have been introduced since the last inspection. The most important of these concerns an issue of personal and social development in the nursery. Three-year-olds at that time were too dependent on adults to show them what to do, and had little understanding of what they might decide for themselves. Older children in the nursery had little opportunity to develop responsibility towards others by acting as role models, helping younger ones and organising resources for them. Children were admitted to the nursery in a group, which then stayed together as it got older, never mixing with children of a different age. This arrangement has been rectified, and children of different ages in the nursery now mix together well. These aspects of personal, social and emotional development have improved as a result.
60. The quality of teaching in nursery and reception classes is good overall across the areas of learning. As a result, children acquire skills well and make good progress at the school through this whole stage of their education. Teachers assess pupils' learning well and use the information to help them plan what should be done next. Teachers plan the work of the reception classes together, whenever appropriate and possible. This planning ensures that children receive equal access to what is taught, irrespective of the class in which they are placed. Arrangements for children with special educational needs are good in both nursery and reception. Children with statements of need receive the full support to which their statement entitles them. Children with English as an additional language are few in number, but are also well catered for.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Children's personal and social development is fairly undeveloped when they enter the nursery. Adults have to work hard to ensure that children understand the need to sit still and listen, or to take turns when speaking and using resources. By the time they leave the reception classes, nearly all are close to achieving the early learning goals and many have succeeded in doing so in this area of learning. This represents a good rate of progress through the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception together). This evidence of good learning is based on good teaching. Teachers praise and encourage children when they help each other and when they show respect and good attitudes towards work. For example, in a very good lesson in a reception class, children shared an opportunity to tell each other about their models. These were based on what they had seen on a visit to Bekonskot. They were enthusiastic about each other's efforts and their teacher praised their kindness and sensitive attitudes towards others' achievements. In the nursery and reception classes, children usually co-operate well with teachers and show interest in what they do. For example, in the nursery a small group concentrated well together in a corner that had been set up as a shoe shop. In the reception classes, they listened to teachers well during the periods of time that are required for talking to the whole class at the beginnings and ends of standard literacy and numeracy hours.
62. Teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants in all classes provide good examples for the children. They co-operate with each other, and consistently speak with respect to the children. This good provision sets the tone for personal development. The children learn well from it. In the nursery, they settle quickly and acquire good habits. In reception classes, they listen and concentrate well for their age and follow routines sensibly.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Many children enter the nursery with fairly low communication skills, often using one word answers to questions or short, colloquial statements. For example, when sitting in a circle, several answered simply "good" or "it's nice", in response to questions about what had been read to them and their vocabulary appeared rather limited. Often adults asked further questions to help children to elaborate their ideas with richer uses of words. However, this fairly limited use of language is also reflected when writing emerges. Nevertheless, teachers and other adults are skilled in questioning and usually persevere in helping to build up confidence. Good teaching is found in all classes. Considerable progress occurs, and the introduction of literacy hours in the reception classes helps children to improve their uses of language, both

spoken and written. Writing is hampered by the handwriting scheme that is currently in use in reception classes. Many children find this quite laborious and it slows them down. However, by the time they come to the end of the reception year, most of them reach the early learning goals, although another sizeable group does not. The results of baseline tests confirm this finding. Thus, when children begin the National Curriculum in Year 1, overall attainment is below what is usually found.

64. The pattern for lessons that is recommended in the National Literacy Strategy is used well by teachers in the reception classes. For example, in a lesson that used *The Little Red Hen* as a text, the teacher worked on a series of words that children had found difficult. Methods of whole word recognition and phonic sounds were employed to help them. The teaching of letters and their related sounds (phonics) is understood well by teachers and other adults, and continues from the nursery throughout the reception year. From an early age in the nursery, children are taught to respect books and to handle them correctly. A small group showed an inspector how to turn books the correct way, and knew the differences between text and pictures. Older children in the reception were able to recognise simple text and read some of it fluently to another inspector.

Mathematical development

65. This area of learning is taught well and sometimes very well across the Foundation Stage. As a result, children learn well and make good progress and by the time they leave the reception, nearly all of them demonstrate understanding that closely matches the early learning goals. In the nursery, opportunities to count; match numbers to objects; name shapes and measure objects, and to talk about numbers and measurements are taken all the time. For example, during the inspection, children were comparing each other's feet; measuring shoes and taking part in role-play in their shoe shop. They put examples of types of shoes into groups and took the opportunity to count the pairs and put them together. These sessions were well taught in small groups, so that children could concentrate well on the required skills. The order in which skills are taught relates well to the recommended stepping stones in the relevant national guidelines (*The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage*).
66. The inspection took place near the end of the educational year and this was reflected in the numeracy hours that were taught in reception classes. These closely followed the recommended pattern for lessons in the National Numeracy Strategy, which helps to prepare children for what will follow in Year 1. Two lessons of this type were seen – one was good and the other was very good. They were characterised by teachers' very good knowledge of the subject and of how to encourage the best out of children in their classes. For example, children showed a lot of concentration and knowledge when one of these teachers asked them to place number lines inside their heads to help them work mentally. In the other lesson, good questioning resulted in children showing that they had learnt the names of many shapes. By asking for descriptions of these shapes, teaching built further on children's knowledge, helping to begin ideas of the properties of shape. This evidence, which is supported by the results of baseline tests, suggests that in mathematical development nearly all children are reaching the early learning goals and that a few are exceeding them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Most children enter the nursery class with a very basic general knowledge. However, good teaching helps them to build on it well. They learn about the village of Harefield and the area around the school. By the time they go into reception classes, they are beginning to understand ideas such as "their own country" and other places "a long way away." They use toys that help them to understand different means of transport, such as roads, rail and air. In reception classes, simple ideas about maps and plans are introduced and related to journeys and trips on which they are taken, such as that to Beaconsfield during the inspection. Children in the reception made a three-dimensional plan of the school and used pictures and photographs of a walk in the school grounds with Barnaby Bear. This work is developed well, when older pupils begin to take Barnaby on holidays and days out, sending post cards from places that they visit, raising awareness of connections between home and other places.
68. A lot of good planning goes into developing children's interest in plants and animals. Plants that children had sown earlier in the year were growing outside during the inspection. This feature of work in both nursery and reception classes is built on well through the main school. It contributes strongly to high standards in related elements of science by the time pupils leave the school. A visiting teacher taught a reception class very well in the *Hillingdon Lifebus*.

Children showed good knowledge of the human body for their age, naming many major organs and explaining some of their functions. Children also learn about famous people and historical events. Most children reach the early goals by the time they enter Year 1.

69. Children in the Foundation Stage are encouraged to choose relevant tools, resources, equipment and materials to extend their knowledge of the world and how things work. Although computers were not seen in use to any great extent, work from earlier in the year contained examples of word processing, art and presentation of data that are in line with the early learning goals.

Physical development

70. Children in the nursery have access to a good number of wheeled toys, as well as apparatus for climbing and crawling through. When they use this equipment their teacher, nursery nurse or an assistant supervises well, encouraging them to use it creatively. Teaching is good. Attention is drawn to awareness of others and the need for safety and space. For this reason, such skills develop well. Reception classes have access to a good range of small games equipment, including bats and balls. They also have timetabled use of the school's hall and the physical education apparatus that it contains. During a lesson in the hall, reception-aged children showed the necessary co-ordination to move a ball around a hoop, controlling it by hand or foot. Children in both age groups receive a range of opportunities to run, balance and jump. For example, a nursery sports day was held during the inspection. Children also use a range of small hand-tools, such as scissors, pencils, crayons, rollers and brushes, which help them to develop fine movements of their fingers and hands. By the time children begin the National Curriculum, nearly all attain the learning goals for physical development.

Creative development

71. In this area of learning, by the time they enter Year 1, most children reach what is expected in the early learning goals. In the nursery, good teaching supported well by the nursery nurse and learning assistant provides a range of opportunities to paint, draw and explore texture and shade. Children also have opportunities for three-dimensional art. For example, they made a variety of different footwear, using card, fabric and other materials, decorating their work creatively. Children also act out ideas dramatically during role-play and drama. Adults in the nursery also employ a range of rhymes, rhythms, songs and chants, helping children to acquire the early skills of making music. During refreshment time, Chopin was played and the opportunity was taken to name the composer. Teaching of this area is also good in reception. Skills are developed well. In a music lesson taught by the school's specialist, for example, children used percussion instruments to keep and repeat a rhythm. They also represented characters from *The Three Bears* convincingly – tambourines for baby bear, but drums for mummy bear. In the reception classes, children also use a range of artistic techniques successfully, drawing and colouring fruit in a bowl from still-life, making prints and using a variety of papers and fabrics for colourful collage.

ENGLISH

72. At the time of the last inspection, standards in English were broadly average. This remains largely the case now. However, in the year 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, standards in reading were below the national average while writing standards were broadly average. When the school's results are compared with those for similar schools the same picture emerges. However, 86 per cent of pupils reached expected levels, whereas in 1996, only 75 per cent did so. On this basis, standards have improved. Unpublished results for 2001 are similar to the previous year, but no comparisons with other schools are yet available. Unusually, compared with the national context, boys do better than girls in both reading and writing. The school's results for reading are better now than in 1997 and writing results are improving in line with those achieved nationally.
73. Currently pupils are making good progress in writing as they move through the school. Attainment on entry to the school is below average and pupils achieve well to attain the results that they do, by the time they are seven. The adoption of the National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on standards. However, in reading especially, monitoring and evaluation

of how it is taught in different ages and groups of pupils are not establishing what should be tackled to raise standards further.

74. Several four- and five-year-olds display speaking and listening skills below those normally found nationally. However, learning in this area is good. As pupils move through the school their confidence grows; they listen well to adults and to each other, and follow instructions well, achieving skills that are in line with national averages. However, pupils' vocabulary is often rather limited, which restricts reading and writing. Some teachers, through good questioning, challenge pupils to think hard and to use more varied language as they get older. Pupils are nearly always courteous and show consideration to others when they speak or perform.
75. Overall, standards in reading are currently a little below average. Nevertheless, the number that read particularly fluently is similar to what is found in other schools. Nearly all pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. However, a few elements of teaching and learning result in slower progress than occurs in writing. Pupils are encouraged to take books home from the time that they are in reception and this habit is extended well through the school. In the light of this, most parents are clearly contributing to pupils' learning well, listening to them read at home. However, records suggest that this is not always the case, and that a small, but significant, proportion of pupils are not well supported in this way. This is a pity, as nearly all of them have positive attitudes to reading. They enjoy sharing a book with an adult or with friends in their class during the literacy hour, and enjoy group and guided reading. In addition to understanding text, pupils learn about letter sounds and grammatical rules. More able pupils in Year 2 read their books confidently and with understanding during the inspection. However, in common with other pupils, they found it quite difficult to discuss what they had read or to predict what might happen next in the story. This feature suggests insufficient opportunities for pupils to talk about books. Variations were found in different classes and year groups about what should happen when groups of pupils read from a set of books together. Such differences in teaching methods indicate that the school has rightly identified reading for further development and training.
76. Standards in writing are in line with the national average. By the time they are seven pupils are able to write sustained, coherent passages, often with full-stops and capitals. The spelling of common words is generally either accurate or phonetically sound. However, less able pupils and those with learning difficulty receive considerable good quality help from learning assistants to achieve this. Pupils are given opportunities to write at length. On these occasions, their productivity is good, and they write for a range of purposes. When pupils use worksheets these have usually been designed to serve a particular purpose. Literacy skills are often employed in other subject areas. For example, a poem was used to identify letter frequency in mathematics. Much work in subjects across the curriculum involves discussion. This oral approach helps to tackle pupils' restricted vocabulary, promoting speaking and listening well in, for example, history, geography and religious education. However, it also means that some opportunities for writing are missed. Handwriting is often not as neat when pupils record other work as it is in handwriting exercises. This weakness is partly because the style that is being taught is very difficult. Pupils find it hard to learn the "double flicks" required to start and finish letters and to master the form of some of the letters themselves.
77. Teaching is nearly always good through the school. Six out of seven lessons were of this quality, including one that was very good and another that was excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching occurred. Teachers have high expectations to which their pupils respond. Lessons are planned thoroughly and include information about what pupils should know by the end. This information is given to pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. Teachers generate interest and enthusiasm well during parts of lessons that are aimed at the whole class. For example, when they share a story, or concentrate on words, letters or sounds. These sessions help pupils to make good gains in their learning. Drama was seen being used well in Year 1. The teacher developed pupils' confidence, emphasising clarity in speaking, and encouraging all pupils to listen well. What set apart the very good and excellent teaching from the rest was that activities during independent and group work were tightly matched to pupils' previous achievements. As a result, pupils were easily able to understand what was expected and yet tasks were hard enough to make them concentrate all the time. Under these circumstances, class teachers and learning support assistants can focus on their groups with minimum amounts of interruption from pupils at other tables. Less successful group activities occurred in some lessons because teachers were unable to focus on group reading. Pupils at other tables demanded their time, and consistency of practice within reading groups suffered as a result. Good liaison takes place between teachers and the well trained support staff, who

know pupils well. This good briefing results in good support for pupils with special educational needs. Handwriting is taught regularly to establish fluency with the complex script; it is particularly difficult for less able pupils to copy from a whiteboard. Marking is thorough and often includes advice about how to improve. Work often carries a teacher's note about its context so that attainment and progress can be seen as pupils work through their books.

78. Standards in literacy are satisfactory. Basic skills such as phonics, spelling and punctuation are promoted across the curriculum. Attractive displays that include written work appear throughout the school. Poems have been written after a visit to the beach and words related to old houses and holidays in the past demonstrate further cross-curricular links. In the Foundation Stage bold paintings and collages of nursery rhymes brighten the walls and are labelled to develop sight vocabulary, which is built on well in Year 1.
79. Assessments of reading and writing are carried out regularly so that individual progress can be tracked and predictions made about results at the end of the Year 2. Standardised reading tests are undertaken in reception and Year 1 in order to check pupils' rates of progress and to identify pupils in need of extra help. Teachers keep a termly record of pupils' progress in reading. A piece of unaided writing is collected each term, which teachers grade according to its match with the levels of work in the National Curriculum. However, these grades are only moderated occasionally; which may lead to inconsistent understanding of levels from class to class. Setting targets, as opposed to making predictions, is in the early stages of development, although pupils are clearly being involved in the process.
80. The co-ordinator manages provision and organisation of resources efficiently. She monitors teachers' planning and inconsistencies in time that is allocated to reading have been found, although not yet tackled. However, she has not had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in classrooms or to work alongside other teachers recently. Evaluation of current practice is therefore now due. The school is well stocked with books for shared and group reading but would benefit from an increase in non-fiction. Consideration is being given to the development of a library to consolidate research and retrieval skills.

MATHEMATICS

81. The current attainment of seven-year-olds is above average. In the year 2000 National Curriculum tests, the attainment of seven-year-olds was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. Unpublished test results for 2001 indicate that standards are not quite as good as last year's, but many pupils have still attained higher than the expected level for their age. This represents a significant achievement as nearly all pupils have made satisfactory progress, including many whose progress has been good, compared with their baseline results of two years ago. The school recognizes that recent results show that boys are attaining slightly better than girls, especially at levels above that expected for the age group. It is currently seeking reasons for this and intends to monitor and track girls' attainment from the moment they join the school to ensure that they achieve their best. Pupils' strong attainment in test results in 2000 contributed to its success in winning an Achievement Award to mark improvements. The particularly effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is clearly a contributory factor. Another is the good overall quality of teaching at the school, which is characterised by enthusiasm for the subject and a quick pace of learning.
82. Levels of attainment are improving in problem solving, numeracy, shape, space and measures. Very good co-ordination is contributing strongly to this. For example, monitoring and assessment have identified that several children continue to experience difficulty with rapid recall of simple number facts and relevant multiplication tables for their ages. Therefore the co-ordinator is seeking a variety of ways to develop greater skills and recall in this area. The general pace of lessons has improved as a direct result of the faithful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. This feature has resulted in greater commitment and enjoyment amongst pupils. It is bearing fruit in lessons with good concentration and more solid learning. As a result, getting on for half of pupils are attaining at higher than expected levels and several others are towards the top end of the expected level, which is reflected in the test results of the past couple of years. Nearly all pupils understand place value up to a hundred and use it to order numbers correctly and add and subtract successfully. Many go beyond this, displaying fascination with larger numbers, and multiplying and dividing quickly with pencil and paper. In a lesson in Year 1, a teacher made good use of Carroll Diagrams to provide an

activity that involved pupils in sorting numbers using two criteria. It challenged their thinking well and good learning resulted.

83. By the end of Year 2, pupils approach mathematical ideas well. For example, they worked together to answer the question, "What is the most common number of letters in mathematical words?" They understood that a logical approach was necessary. First, they selected words such as 'total', 'add', 'subtraction', 'multiplication' and 'fewer'. Next, they counted the letters and then sorted the words accordingly, putting the data on to a chart. Finally, they demonstrated good skills of data handling by interpreting the results convincingly. Children receive a good start on mathematical development from the nursery and reception onwards, and this is build up well through the school. Young children make an early start on describing, rather than just naming shapes, which helps them to focus on the properties of shape. As a result, by Year 2, pupils are picking out right angles and numbers of sides or surfaces with ease. Scrutiny of pupils' past work reveals that in Years 1 and 2, they experience a wide range of activities that develop and consolidate skills and understanding. By the end of Year 2, nearly all are competent at least as far as the expected levels in totalling money; working out and giving change; measuring using appropriate standard or non-standard units; using and telling time, and giving spatial directions.
84. Overall the quality of teaching is good, which enables pupils to learn well. In fact, two-thirds of lessons were good during the inspection, including a third that were very good. One lesson was unsatisfactory, but it later emerged that unusual circumstances had clearly contributed to this. Other evidence also confirmed that it was not typical. Teachers plan their lessons well and base their methods successfully on the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy. This planning includes clear notes about how activities will be tailored to meet the needs of pupils with different prior learning. In all the very good lessons and some of the good ones, teachers use opportunities to assess learning well. The information is used to match work closely to the needs of individuals. Appropriate subject vocabulary is used effectively. Good questioning ensures that pupils have a good understanding of the mathematical processes that are taught. Teachers set high expectations of attainment and behaviour, providing work that is hard enough to sustain interest. However, teachers made little use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. In two very good lessons in Year 2, teachers explained what they expected pupils to learn by the end of the lesson. One of these involved the use of the five-times table to solve problems. During the mental mathematics session at the start, the teacher warmed pupils up well with several quick-fire questions from this table. It worked very well. Later on, when pupils were faced with problems such as how many litres of water were in five watering-cans, they realised immediately what sort of sum it was, and the mathematics that was required. Similarly, in the other lesson, rapid questioning of number facts helped to support pupils in what followed. This time, the task involved the addition of columns of two-digit numbers. In both lessons, activities were planned for pupils of different prior attainments, including those with special educational needs. All pupils were supported well and learning of basic skills was rapid. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. Pupils' respect for their teachers makes them want to please teachers by working hard and doing their best. Teachers set homework regularly and use it well to consolidate learning that has begun in class. Pupils are involved in the setting of personal targets, evaluating their own progress.
85. Good leadership has resulted in effective ways of supporting the teaching of mathematics. For example, the co-ordinator scrutinises pupils' work, reviews plans and observes teaching across the whole school. The subject policy does not do justice to present practice, in that much of this work is not fully described, nor are statements included about appropriate links with other subjects. Assessment procedures for the subject are generally satisfactory. Procedures for analysing pupils' achievements thoroughly are available. However, differences in the way that it is used were found, and a whole school agreement about this, including target setting and a common approach would increase its usefulness through the school. The co-ordinator acknowledges a need for teachers to improve assessment skills further. Resources are good overall and are used well to consolidate learning and improve understanding.

SCIENCE

86. At the time of the last inspection, seven-year-olds' knowledge and understanding of science generally matched national expectations in observational and experimental science, life and

living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. Teaching of the subject was generally good. Standards are now similar in most respects, except in life and living processes, where they are now above average. The results of Statutory Teachers' Assessments for 2000 and 2001 largely confirm these findings. National comparisons are not yet available for the latest tests, but those of 2000 demonstrate that attainment of seven-year-olds is in line with averages for both all schools up and down the country and with those for similar schools, but that life and living processes is above average. This improvement owes much to the environment that the school offers as a resource for looking at the growth of plants and wildlife. Teaching remains good, and teachers use this environment well. All around the building from nursery and reception classes onwards, evidence is strong that pupils plant seeds; study growth; experiment with the effects of water, light and soil, and explore an interest in animal life.

87. During the week of the inspection, the *Hillingdon Lifebus* visited the school and provided most of the science for that week. What was taught focused on the human body and offered good cross-curricular links with aspects of growing up healthily and eating sensibly. The quality of lessons was very good, sometimes excellent, taking account of different age groups in the school particularly well. The visiting teacher quickly assessed the standard of answers that he received from pupils and adapted promptly to their responses. As a result, learning was of good quality, based well on present knowledge and building on it. It also demonstrated that pupils' understanding of organs of the body and their functions is above what is usually found at this age. This finding represents further confirmation of the good standard attained in life and living processes.
88. Pupils' work through the school contained good examples of all aspects of the subject that generally met expected levels. A group of pupils in Year 2 explained how they used "torch bulbs" to test what made them "...light up". They knew that wires had to be attached in a circle that started at one end of a battery and finished at the other. They understood good scientific vocabulary, such as "power source", "good connection" and "complete circuit". They knew that tests and experiments had to be fair, agreeing with a girl who said that "...things had to be done the same. You couldn't have one big and one small, or it had to be done for the same time, otherwise it wouldn't work". Work in books showed that pupils could make decisions about materials and categorise them, using simple properties, such as, for example, "rough" and "smooth", or "opaque" and "transparent". They knew that "pushes" and "pulls" are types of forces. More able pupils demonstrate that they are beginning to make simple generalisations of their own. For example, one of these pupils explained correctly that a "...big kick" on a football "...is a type of large push if you're the ball. It makes you roll along just the same, so it's a force." In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils gave very good definitions of "science" for their age. They identified it as "about experiments"; "living and not living things", and "finding out about the world around us". These pupils showed that they could relate everyday experience to the ideas that they study. For example, they equated climbing up a ladder with a pulling force, when arms are used to pull upwards, and that a push can be used to make a roundabout go faster. A parent was used to support pupils with special educational needs during group activities. This support worked well, as pupils were able to check their reasoning with her before moving to the next task. In this way, the teacher ensured that they were not basing new ideas on wrong ones. Basic skills were thus acquired well.
89. It is not possible to make an overall judgement of teaching, as what occurred in the *Hillingdon Lifebus* during the week of inspection could not be taken as a typical sample. However, teachers' planning is good, and the National Curriculum is clearly taught well and to satisfactory standards overall. Particular strengths in teachers' expectations within life and living processes were apparent. Teaching that was observed directly was good. It went at a good pace and involved pupils well with good questioning. As a result pupils showed interest and their attitudes and behaviour were good. This finding confirms what pupils told inspectors. They enjoy science; like watching things grow, and believe that their teachers like science too – an interesting factor that doubtless helps to motivate pupils to work hard.
90. Co-ordination is good, and a new sheet for monitoring what is taught and assessing pupils' understanding has recently been devised. This approach has the potential to rectify some of the inconsistencies that the school had itself identified in this area.

ART AND DESIGN

91. At the time of the last inspection, standards in art were judged as in line with national expectations at the age of seven. Pupils enjoyed art lessons and made good progress. Evidence gathered from discussions with pupils and staff, and displays of work indicate that standards are now often above what is expected. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the week of inspection, so a complete judgement of teaching has not been made. Nevertheless, it was good in this lesson and overall planning in the subject is good. Since the last inspection clear improvements have occurred. Plans of what is taught now include a section that asks teachers to evaluate lessons, assessing how successful pupils were in their learning. This planning also pays due regard to the national guidelines for the subject, providing pupils experiences that build steadily on what has gone before.
92. Teachers provide pupils with a variety of experiences that develop imagination through exploration of what they observe. For example, in the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils made abstract sculptures and designed collages based on the work of Michael Brennand-Wood. They discussed themes such as 'garden and jungle', choosing materials such as cloth and other fabric to represent trees and natural objects. More able pupils managed to capture the spirit of dense jungle well through their careful choices of colour and texture. A dark and mysterious effect was achieved, mixing coarse and fine fabrics of brown and green shades. Those pupils working on sculptures built a solid triangular frame of strong card or wood, which they tied together skilfully and decorated imaginatively. Pupils demonstrated good cutting, gluing and weaving skills, making reasoned choices about what would go where on their designs. Learning support assistants were deployed effectively, ensuring that pupils with special educational needs achieved results of which they could be proud.
93. Younger pupils acquire basic skills, creating, for example, woven table-mats decorated with an attractive chequered elephant. Pupils in Year 2 show good development in observational and painting skills. For example, they clearly looked very carefully at how buildings in the locality are made, picking out stone, tile, and wood. They then represented these materials with closely matched colours, textures and tones, developing previously acquired skills well. They had observed the outline shape of these buildings and used mixed paint and newsprint to make attractive silhouettes on landscapes. Pupils in Year 2 also use clay and make brightly coloured reliefs on tiles, representing animals, people and geometric patterns.
94. Displays throughout the school are of a good standard and are also used to show pupils' work to advantage in other subjects. Examples of very good collaborative work are also evident, involving large-scale compositions and visiting artists. Pupils' silk-screen wall hangings are excellent. These pieces of art work represent the elements of earth and water. Such work has clearly provided pupils with a good grounding in the relevant artistic techniques. Virtually every wall in the school is carefully decorated with a display, often involving animals or different scenes. These create a stimulating and reflective environment for children to work in. Classroom displays also show strong links with other subjects. For example in Year 1, figures of Joseph and his colourful coat are evident. Tight mosaic patterns using gummed paper of different colours achieve a strikingly effective result. In the school hall, every pupil in the school is represented by a composition of well-executed self-portraits and the caption *We always try to do our best*, linking with personal and social development.
95. Good co-ordination has clearly succeeded in maintaining both the place of art in what is taught and a good level of achievement. However, the school's policy does not fully reflect its strong practice. This document is unclear about links with other subjects, notably including information and communication technology. Furthermore, it contains insufficient details on assessment, monitoring and evaluation to explain what records of progress are considered important to keep. Although the school possesses insufficient software to develop a range of skills and opportunities in the use of new technology, resources are generally well maintained and are accessible. These resources are used well by teachers, who show a clear understanding of what to use to help pupils acquire and develop further skills and knowledge.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. During the inspection, two lessons in design and technology were observed. Both lessons had the same teaching focus. Examples of good work were available for scrutiny and work of a very high standard was seen on display during the lead-inspector's first visit to the school. Ideas and knowledge of the subject were also discussed with pupils and staff. At the time of the last inspection, the attainment of seven-year-olds was above national expectations and

progress was good. Attainment remains above national expectations. Pupils' good achievement has therefore been maintained. Planning of what is taught and how to teach it has improved with a more direct emphasis on evaluation. This section allows teachers to say how successful pupils have been in increasing skills and knowledge. It pays due regard to the national guidelines for the subject. Construction kits are a feature of the school's good resources, which have been improved to meet findings of the last report.

97. Pupils are taught a balanced curriculum that helps them to learn how to think imaginatively and to explain their likes and dislikes when designing and making. Basic skills are therefore acquired well; for example, seven-year-olds investigated winding mechanisms. They used their imaginations well and demonstrated good skills when they designed and made interesting and realistic models. Pupils understand the need to select and use appropriate materials during this process. For example, they chose sensibly between flexible, stiff and coloured types of card, choosing colours to represent the sky, sea and sand, but other types to support the mechanisms. Pupils demonstrated good cutting, measuring and making skills in placing their mechanisms and choices of fixings. Other evidence of high standards was seen in products such as sturdy trucks and buggies with moving parts. Pupils found successful solutions for attaching wheels and axles of different sizes to different types of bodies and chassis. Teachers' records show that pupils through the school have equal access to a very well equipped food technology room. This accommodates activities such as working out the ingredients and making a sandwich.
98. Opportunities to involve parents in the school's work are a strong feature of the subject. For example, pupils of all ages, including nursery and reception, and their parents are periodically invited to share a *home-school project*. These consist of a technological challenge, such as making models or products out of recycled materials. Finished products are of the highest quality, including, for example, papier-mâché aeroplanes with cockpits made of plastic aerosol tops, and life-like robots made from materials such as tin-cans, foil and cellophane. Such ventures contribute strongly to what pupils learn, showing them how different materials can be combined to create particular effects, and what needs to be done to make joins hold together firmly. The importance of neat finishing is also apparent in this work.
99. Two lessons in Year 2 were observed. The quality of teaching in one lesson was good and it was excellent in the other. Several features contributed to this high quality. For example, teachers were very good at supporting pupils through the planning stage of making a model. This support raised pupils' confidence to think inventively and imaginatively, providing help with solutions for ideas that might otherwise have been rejected as too hard. An instance occurred when a teacher suggested that a pupil employed a strong, but simple flap on the front of a base. This device allowed a pupil to succeed with his idea of an upright object in the foreground. Teachers had good subject knowledge and gave clear and simple explanations about how mechanisms and linkages could be joined. They stressed key language at regular intervals to ensure understanding of tasks.
100. The subject is well co-ordinated. Staff receive good support with ideas and how to teach techniques. Nevertheless, the school's policy requires a review to include current good practice in the school, especially for new staff, updating it to reflect the new National Curriculum for 2000. Little use of information and communication technology was found during the inspection. For example, opportunities to use a simple 'paint' program to draw clouds on to card to achieve a professional finish to products in Year 2 were missed. Resources for the subject are generally good. Teachers use them well, allowing pupils to make guided choices from a range of materials, thus supporting their learning well.

GEOGRAPHY

101. The previous inspection found that seven-year-olds' attainment was in line with national expectations. Evidence in this inspection suggests that this finding still holds. Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding mostly meet expected standards by the age of seven. For example, they recently identified similarities and differences between two contrasting localities. They used photographs and firsthand knowledge of both their own locality and Littlehampton – a seaside town that they had visited. In a lesson in Year 2, more able pupils had a lively discussion about whether the local children's playground represents the same use of land as an amusement park at the seaside. They were able to make valid points about whether the two were inside a building or open-air. They compared the types of ride and facilities; whether entry

was free or cost money, and demonstrated good observational skills, showing that they had recognised contrasts between the two.

102. Wall displays in reception classes and in Year 2 demonstrated how pupils were making good progress – learning in the older age group was a clear development of the earlier work, increasing skills and understanding. Both displays provided visual aids to learning. A very attractive display, related to a trip to Littlehampton in Year 2, identified features of the local and contrasting landscapes. Teachers at the school are particularly aware of the strong impact on learning that comes from firsthand and direct experience. It makes very good use of opportunities to provide such experience. For example, an Australian, who is a former resident of Harefield, came into the school and spoke about the importance of *Anzac Day* to his countrymen. Close to the school is an Anzac memorial and cemetery, which pupils visit annually to place flowers. A class wrote letters to a pupil's Australian relative to explain about their visit to the cemetery. Writing letters in this way is a very good example of cross-curricular teaching, promoting links between literacy, history and the whereabouts and customs of other countries.
103. Teaching is generally good. Two lessons were observed and teaching was good in one and satisfactory in the other. Overall, planning shows that teachers know the requirements of the National Curriculum very well and this finding was confirmed in both lessons. Expectations of what pupils should know at different ages are sound. Half-termly plans for the subject identify clearly what is to be taught through the school. For example, in Year 1, pupils' lessons revolve around the environment of the school itself and the local area. In Year 2, studies move further afield and in doing so build well on the skills that have previously been acquired. For example, stories about Katy Morag stimulate learning about life in an island home off Scotland, and pupils experience a field trip to the seaside. In the lessons that were seen, teachers used appropriate methods so that pupils acquired basic skills well, using what they had found out on their trip. Photographs are also used to introduce pupils to the very contrasting locality of Chembakoli in South India. These photographs help to raise awareness of another culture, set in a very different climate. Care is taken to ensure that key geographical skills are introduced steadily through these studies. In this way pupils acquire them at the rate needed to understand and use new knowledge and ideas.
104. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has not had long enough to review practice in the subject. She has, however, clearly made a good start, involving herself in lesson planning in each year group. In this way, she is familiarising herself with the school's methods and beginning to monitor what is taught. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to work alongside colleagues in their classrooms or to monitor teaching and learning directly. Resources are adequate at the moment, but some expansion has been identified as necessary in the near future. This is to meet the requirements of the school's new policy and scheme of work.

HISTORY

105. Pupils' achievements are good in the subject and seven-year-olds reach standards similar to other pupils of their age. Overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In a lesson, pupils in Year 1 demonstrated an understanding of the passage of time. They discussed domestic items from the past and compared them with items in use for similar purposes today. They formulated questions based on their teacher's and found out about how such items were used, and what functions might have been served. Work in pupils' books and on display shows that seven-year-olds have a good understanding and knowledge of timelines, putting events and historical figures in order. Examples included the times of Florence Nightingale and the Fire of London. Work on seaside resorts showed pupils' developing skills of gathering information. Many had used their parents' memories of holidays in England with other information presented in a variety of ways, including bar charts that offered good links with interpreting mathematical data.
106. Pupils including those with special educational needs achieve well. This is reflected in their increasing use of historical evidence to record their findings and the use of different sources of information. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute to their progress. They show interest and curiosity, for instance when observing and handling artefacts. Those in the lesson that was observed were attentive to the teacher and keen to contribute answers to her good

questioning. They concentrated well when working individually and collaborated spontaneously when given the opportunity, such as when conferring on the use of artefacts.

107. As only one lesson was observed, an overall judgement of teaching has not been made. However, teachers' planning is generally good. Activities and resources are well linked, so that pupils' learning is consolidated well. Previous learning and good questioning was employed in the lesson that was observed, confirming this finding. Good use was made of artefacts to bring history alive. It worked well, enabling pupils to have a genuine connection with the periods being studied.
108. What is taught in history lessons is supported through visits to Gunnersbury Park museum, where pupils recreate the times of Florence Nightingale, and to landmarks connected with the Great Fire of London. The curriculum is further enriched through the use of visitors and professional actors. The latter recreate particular aspects of the past. Assessment procedures are informal and mainly linked to statements of what pupils are expected to know at the end of individual lessons. The curriculum is well planned and artefacts and resources are available that fit well with what is taught.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Attainment in information and communication technology is below what is expected of seven-year-olds. This finding represents an apparent decline in standards since the last inspection when they were broadly in line with what was expected. However, it is mainly due to changes in national expectations, which require a higher standard in this rapidly developing area. Furthermore, the school has not yet received national funding and guidance associated with the National Grid for Learning (a government initiative to improve standards in the subject). Against their prior attainments, the majority of pupils make reasonable progress, but from a fairly low starting point. Their achievement is therefore satisfactory.
110. By the age of seven, higher attaining pupils are familiar with the use of a keyboard and mouse, and use basic word processing to write texts of their own. However, many are not sufficiently confident in using basic operations and the use of function keys to control or change the applications of programs. During the inspection, the skills acquired in information and communication technology sessions were not used enough across the curriculum. Nevertheless, evidence from work shows some competence in the use of specific programs, and work linked to art is often good. The main reason that progress is not quicker is that pupils do not get sufficient and frequent experience of practising directly on computers. Although each classroom has a computer of its own, the school lacks a space where a number of computers are gathered. It is not therefore possible to instruct larger groups of pupils together and then let them practise what has been taught. Consolidation of what they learn is thereby restricted.
111. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons that include direct instruction about programs consist of short sessions, lasting approximately twenty minutes. In these sessions, what pupils should know by the end is clear and used well to focus attention on the skills to be acquired. Skilful questioning is used to enable pupils to acquire these skills as they take turns on the computer to demonstrate a particular use.
112. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and committed to developing the subject and has benefited from training. As a result of this, assessment and recording of attainment is now being developed. However, the co-ordinator has had little opportunity to monitor development of the subject in order to identify what is working well and what needs improving. However, she is well aware of the lack of resources and sees the need to improve the quality and range of equipment as a priority. For this reason, much of the recent focus has been on technical aspects. For example, at present only one computer is connected to the Internet. During the inspection, information and communication technology skills are not frequently used across the curriculum. Planning based on guidance of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is being implemented effectively, but the time allocated to the subject is inadequate to enable pupils to reach the expected standards.

MUSIC

113. The last inspection report states that the attainment of seven-year-olds was "...matched to the level expected for the age group". Pupils had sound skills of performance and experimented in the creation of their own compositions. However, progress was sometimes erratic, largely because class teachers were insufficiently involved in what was taught. Responsibility for teaching was almost wholly in the hands of a specialist. Time spent on the subject was not enough. These shortcomings have been rectified. Class teachers now attend lessons that are taught by the school's specialist, which allows them to see exactly which skills have been introduced. Later in the week, they consolidate pupils' learning, reminding them of what they did and providing the time for practice. This extra time on the subject means that classes are better placed to move on in the specialist's lessons than they were previously. The system was seen working effectively in Year 2. Nearly all seven-year-olds attain national expectations. Pupils sing accurately; play instruments confidently, and enjoy opportunities to work out their own tunes and rhythms. However, little evidence of the use of new technology, such as computers to generate electronic music was found.
114. Music contributes well to various aspects of school life. In assembly, for example, singing of hymns is generally tuneful and helps to create a respectful climate for reflection. For example, in a very good assembly, the local Baptist minister and the vicar told the *Parable of the Builders*. Pupils' singing of *The Man who built his House upon the Rock* was in tune and the rhythms were maintained accurately. This finding was confirmed in other assemblies when pupils demonstrated good dynamic control, raising and lowering the volume of their singing to match the meaning of the words. Singing is well taught. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils used a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They demonstrated an awareness of other performers, keeping time together when they practised different parts of their composition. This music was based on what they had heard on their visit to Littlehampton. Teaching was good. It used pupils' own ideas well, which resulted in good concentration and commitment from them. As a result, skills of performing were acquired well. They used instruments creatively to represent waves, relating to each other very well as they practised together. They represented sea breezes and similar sounds of the seaside, putting the parts together to complete their piece of music.
115. The quality of teaching is good. Planning and preparation of lessons is thorough. It is based on the guidance of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (a government agency that advises what should be taught and when). A specialist leads the teaching of all ages and her knowledge of the subject is very good. As a result, pupils' learning follows on from what has previously been taught. Class teachers are also involved, which is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, in another lesson in Year 2, a class teacher organised pupils' learning well, consolidating skills that the specialist had introduced. In this way, full advantage is taken of the specialist's expertise. This good use of time is therefore helping to promote learning well.
116. Although the specialist teacher is in school for only a part of the week, she takes responsibility for organising what is taught. This use of her expertise in a co-ordinating role is ensuring that pupils are taught the National Curriculum fully. She also provides opportunities for talented pupils, teaching a small group outside normal lessons. Pupils identified as possessing a musical aptitude are taught to sight-read the treble stave. The particular aim is that when they move on to the junior school, their acquisition of this skill will help them to learn an instrument or to join the recorder club. Little evidence of a formal system for monitoring teaching and progress was found. However, the co-ordinator clearly knows pupils well and their strengths and weaknesses.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. In the last inspection, the majority of pupils attained standards that were in line with those expected nationally and children made good progress. On the basis of limited evidence in this inspection, this attainment has been maintained. However, important developments have occurred in the subject. For example, the school is implementing a recently produced scheme of work that was developed by the local authority, with the help and co-operation of its schools. This scheme contains clear practical advice; statements about skills that should be acquired during lessons, and criteria to assess the progress that pupils make. Teachers have received training in how to teach dance and records show that more emphasis is being placed on this

important aspect of the subject than was previously the case. The co-ordinator confirms this in her assessment that teachers are now more confident.

118. Pupils in Year 1 had acquired good basic skills for their age. They worked co-operatively with partners when playing simple batting games. They threw a ball accurately into a hoop and used a bat to move their own ball in the direction that they wanted. They demonstrated good ball-control. Pupils respect the equipment that they use. In the lesson seen, the teacher was clear about sensible uses of space and safety. As a result, pupils moved about safely, using available space well, with recognition of the needs of others. Planning and records show that in dance, seven-year-olds are beginning to move expressively, using ideas such as contrast between different speeds of movement and stillness. In gymnastics, they acquire skills of balance and exercise, as expected for their age. These are based on jumps and rolls, refining and controlling body movements with ideas such as flight and shape. Pupils explained that they enjoy physical education, and understand the need to repeat the same exercises and sequences in order to refine and improve their performance. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good in the lesson seen, confirming this finding. Their teacher's straightforward guidance and control of pupils contributed strongly.
119. It was possible to observe only one lesson, so a judgement of the overall quality of teaching in the subject has not been made. However, planning is generally good and includes criteria for deciding how successful pupils have been in acquiring skills. Furthermore, the inspected lesson was of good quality. It proceeded at a brisk pace and the teacher displayed very good knowledge of what she was teaching. She conveyed this in a businesslike way, which helped pupils to listen and concentrate. As a result, they were clear about what was expected of them; carried out the activities diligently, and therefore learnt well. These activities were presented logically and built successively on what pupils had just achieved. High expectations of attainment and behaviour, promoting good behaviour and attitudes, were evident. Lower attaining pupils were supported well by a learning support assistant, who was deployed effectively. It is the school's policy that support assistants accompany pupils with special needs, including learning difficulty or physical need, into physical education lessons enabling them to benefit.
120. The subject is well managed by an experienced and committed co-ordinator. She is keen to develop the school's effective provision even further. The new scheme of work pays due regard to the requirements of the National Curriculum, ensuring that what is taught is broad and balanced. However, the co-ordinator has little opportunity to monitor teaching and what is taught by working directly alongside colleagues in the hall or outside. The school's present policy statement is also in need of review as it does not do justice to what occurs. For example, no mention is made of the new scheme of work. Resources are generally good and are sufficient to support the learning that is planned.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. During the last inspection pupils were judged to be attaining at the standards suggested in the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. General resources and provision were good. Provision for religious education remains good and standards are at least in line with expectations of seven-year-olds. Discussion opportunities in religious education are used well as a means to develop speaking and listening. Nevertheless, wall displays incorporate written and other forms of recorded work. These displays are well thought out, informative and attractive, which helps to motivate pupils' willingness to work hard, and thereby supports their learning. It also demonstrates to pupils that their teachers value what they think and believe. For example, a good display in the entrance corridor described some of the rituals associated with Islamic customs. It carried learning forward, encouraging pupils to look at photographs, artefacts, books and a model of a mosque. In a related display in a Year 2 classroom, a comparison was made between Islam and Christianity, highlighting similarities and differences between the two religions and confirming that pupils' understanding matches the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Pupils in Year 1 learn about important religious characters, festivals and events. For example, these pupils knew the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours and had pictured him imaginatively in work that linked with art.
122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and includes elements of good teaching. Methods are matched well to pupils' stages of development and help them to understand and learn. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher used drama well to tell the parable of the sower.

Pupils understood that Jesus was a teacher and that he often used stories to explain what he wanted his followers to learn. In a Year 2 lesson, good links with the community allowed pupils to hear from a local churchwarden. She explained that being a Christian affects the way people live. Good planning meant that pupils already knew what they wanted to ask. In this way, time was used well, as questions flowed without breaks or pauses. The class teacher joined in well to extend the visitor's answers. She referred back to earlier lessons, helping pupils to understand the significance of what they heard, and linking it to what they already knew. Learning was therefore good, and occurred at a fast pace. Pupils demonstrated good recall of why a cross is a Christian symbol and of what happened on Palm Sunday. The visitor referred to the friends that she has from other faiths, developing respect for others' beliefs well. By the end of the lesson, pupils had begun to recognise that people do not have to be Christians to help others, but that Christians must carry out certain things as part of their belief. They knew that Christians go to church, pray, and work for Jesus. Teachers plan thoroughly using the locally agreed syllabus and detailed guidelines of the local authority. These guidelines offer good advice about what it is intended that pupils should learn; activities that support skills and understanding; essential artefacts and resources to support learning, and opportunities that arise for assessing progress. The use of this guidance is contributing to standards well. It ensures that learning builds steadily on what has gone before. Pupils make visits to local churches and welcome many visitors to the school well.

123. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively, making sure that resources are available and accessible. She is knowledgeable and committed to improving provision further. Owing to the time that has been devoted to the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, practice in the subject has not been reviewed formally for a few years. However, developments are introduced through continuing staff discussion. The introduction of a procedure for assessment that can be easily used by all teachers is recognised as an area for future development. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator has had a positive impact on teaching and learning through assisting all year groups with their future planning taking account of their evaluations of previous learning.