

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLMLEIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hackney

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100257

Headteacher: Kevin Ward

Reporting inspector: John Lilly
12487

Dates of inspection: 31 March – 3 April 2003

Inspection number: 246048

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior with nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Susan Brocklebank
Date of previous inspection:	30 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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			Religious education	
			English as an additional language	
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22058	Christine Richardson	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
			Mathematics	
			Science	
			Design and technology	
			Information and communication technology	
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7-11
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12-15
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15-17
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17-19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19-20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20-21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21-23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23-24
ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	24-25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26-30
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31-49

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holmleigh is a primary school of average size, with 229 girls and boys on roll between the ages of three and 11. It serves a community with very significant social and economic deprivation, and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. A much greater than average proportion of pupils has English as an additional language and many are at an early stage in learning English. The range of languages spoken by the pupils at home is very wide but the commonest languages are Turkish and Yoruba. The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs is high, and a greater than average proportion of pupils have emotional and behavioural problems. A much greater than average number of pupils join and leave the school other than at reception or Year 6, and many of those joining the school come from other countries. The school works in partnership with an Education Action Zone (EAZ). Most pupils join the school with very low attainment. The school has won a national Achievement Award.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Holmleigh is a good school, improving rapidly towards becoming a very good school. It is a very caring, orderly and purposeful community with very strong values. Relationships are excellent and all pupils develop very well as balanced, happy and thinking young people. The headteacher provides excellent leadership for his colleagues and the pupils. Staff respond as a close-knit and effective team, determined to do even better. Teaching is good and improving and, consequently, all pupils make at least satisfactory and often very good progress, joining the school with extremely low attainment and leaving at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is much higher, although still below levels nationally expected by that time. This picture of rapidly improving standards has many reasons but owes much to the school's excellent and very productive partnership with the Education Action Zone, the local education authority and businesses that support the school. A further factor is the school's very positive partnership with parents. The school is highly inclusive and offers good value for money.

What the school does well

Standards are rapidly improving because:

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership backed effectively and with full commitment by staff and governors.
- Teaching is good and especially good for music and information and communication technology.
- Provision for personal development is excellent.
- Provision in the nursery and reception classes is very good.
- The school builds excellent and productive partnerships with other people who can help the school.
- Provision for learning outside lessons is excellent
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported.

What could be improved

To improve standards further, the school needs to rectify the following:

- Pupils in the nursery and reception classes need more support with learning English as an additional language.
- The school needs to make better use of assessment to find ways to improve further learning and teaching.
- The school needs to improve the pupils' ability to use writing to show what they learn.
- The pupils who join the school other than at reception need more systematic support.
- Attendance needs to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since that time, the school has changed considerably in terms of staff and the types of pupil. It is more sensible to make judgements on current sustained improvement. Standards are rapidly improving, especially since the current headteacher took up post. Standards of attainment are rising, the school has much better management policies and procedures, and provision for personal development is much better. The school now has a clear sense of direction and knows what is still to be done. The use of assessment and information about attendance still needs to improve, as does the quality of the pupils' writing.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children join the nursery with extremely low attainment and quickly make very good progress. They continue to make good or very good progress throughout the school. However, many pupils join the school other than at the nursery stage with very low attainment, and the attainment of these pupils depresses results in National Curriculum tests and assessments. Similarly, many pupils are learning English as an additional language and this takes time and hinders their progress in all years, and especially the lower years. Consequently, results in these national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were well below the national average. Standards remain too low in writing throughout the school. Even so, standards by the end of Year 6 are rising rapidly and the school sets challenging targets for further improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very eager to come to school and take full advantage of all it has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good and bullying is very rare. There is no racist behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop very well as balanced, caring and thoughtful young people. Relationships are excellent between adults and pupils, and amongst pupils.
Attendance	Attendance of a minority of pupils is unsatisfactory but most attend well.

Pupils respect their teachers and each other, and revel in the many cultures present in the school. Most take part in the many activities after school and at other times – sometimes alongside their parents.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is at least satisfactory and usually good throughout most of the school and in all subjects. When occasionally it is not, this is because the teacher lacks experience. The school now has a stable teaching team eager to improve further, although changes in teachers has damaged the progress of pupils in the past. Literacy and numeracy are taught well, although standards in writing are still too low due to weak teaching in the past. Teachers are skilled at helping all pupils achieve, although the school needs to become even better at understanding the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and very relevant to the pupils' present and future lives. The range and variety of activities outside lessons are excellent.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good for Years 1 to 6, but insufficient for children in the nursery and reception classes.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development is excellent overall, and this makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning. For spiritual and social development it is very good and for moral and cultural development excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of the welfare of the pupils.

The school works in full and productive partnership with parents. They value and support their children's school. The school works in very closely with the EAZ, the Local Education Authority and businesses, and these partnerships make a major contribution to the richness and range of learning, and the precision with which each pupil's learning needs are met.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership for staff and pupils. Staff follow his lead and are determined to improve further, working as a close-knit team. Management is effective and efficient.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and provide a strong foundation for the school's success.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance rigorously and honestly, and this leads to improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are invested wisely and prudently.

There are sufficient qualified staff to meet the needs of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6, although there is insufficient specialised staff to meet the language needs of children learning English as an additional language in the nursery and reception classes. Learning resources are good and the accommodation provides a safe, stimulating and good place in which to learn. The school works closely with others to ensure that it gains good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are happy at school and make good progress. • Their children are well taught and grow in maturity. • There is a strong and productive partnership between home and school. • The activities outside lessons enrich their children's learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several parents feel that there should be more homework and that it be should be better matched to the needs of each child. • Some parents from one cultural heritage felt they wanted a better relationship with the school.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents. Although provision for homework is satisfactory, there is room for improvement in both the areas raised by parents. Although the

school welcomes families from all cultures and celebrates the achievements of all the cultures represented in the school, it needs to understand better why the group raising the concern might feel excluded.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children join the nursery with very low attainment and most are learning English as an additional language. They quickly begin to make very good progress and this continues in the reception class. Even so, only a few pupils will meet the national early learning goals in full by the time they move on to Year 1. The key weakness that remains is the children's ability to speak English not only confidently but also, more essentially, in a structured way. This restricts their ability to think through their learning using spoken language. In turn, this hinders their progress in reading and writing, and their ability to access the learning at the Foundation Stage and later within the National Curriculum.
2. Although the support for pupils learning English as an additional language improves for Years 1 to 6, it is still patchy and, therefore, the pupils' lack of sufficient progress in the acquisition of English at the Foundation Stage tends to remain a problem for them as they move up the school. It is a significant reason for low results in National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 and to some extent in these tests at the end of Year 6. There are other factors that depress results when compared with the averages of all schools nationally. These include the high number of pupils joining the school in all years; many of these pupils have very low attainment and, in some cases, very little English. In addition, the higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs and those with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties depress results, even though teaching is good.
3. Despite these problems, almost all pupils make at least good progress between Years 1 and 6 because they are well taught and are keen to do well. Consequently, there is a clear improving trend in standards over time. This improvement would be more rapid if the school used assessment even more precisely to identify and rectify those areas that hinder the pupils' learning. Overall, girls and boys of all abilities and backgrounds make equally good progress. Very good progress is common, but could become the rule once the school uses assessment more productively, and support for pupils learning English as an additional language improves.
4. Two further factors hinder progress. First, the learning of many pupils has been held back by changes in teachers in the past. The school now, however, has a stable staff but these pupils have some catching up to do. Second, many pupils join the school other than in the nursery, and their attainment is often very low and they have not achieved full fluency in English (see paragraph 2). Although they are made fully welcome and valued, their learning is initially too slow because their learning and developmental needs are not assessed fully the moment they join the school. There are more strengths than weaknesses in the provision for learning, but the weaknesses are crucial to good progress.
5. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' attainment is still below national expectations in English, mathematics and science but it matches national expectations in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and religious education. In music, attainment in both Years 1 and 2 is above national expectations because of excellent teaching. Pupils have also made a good start at learning French. This gives a picture of very good progress. The key reasons for this good progress is the good teaching and excellent provision for personal development. Once weaknesses are rectified, the school will

gain the capability to improve further, and more pupils will attain higher than national expectations.

6. All pupils continue to make at least good progress between Years 3 and 6. There are, however, weaknesses in present provision, for example, in helping pupils acquire higher level skills in English as an additional language and improving standards in writing, and in particular the repercussions from discontinuity in teaching in the past. Although the school has put in effective provision to help pupils catch up, this has been comparatively recent and has not had time to rectify in full the situation. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, attainment in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT) is still below national expectations although they are met in mathematics. Attainment in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education broadly match national expectations. In music, attainment in Years 3 to 6 is above national expectations, again because of excellent teaching. Pupils have made a good start in learning French. The key weakness in the pupils' attainment remains writing, and this still restricts achievement in all subjects. Overall, however, the breadth of the pupils' attainment prepares them well for success at secondary school, a fact confirmed by parents.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans and in the development of self-esteem and confidence. They are supported well in literacy and numeracy, frequently working in small groups. The school makes good use of assessment information to identify these pupils' needs and for target setting on individual education plans. The school also uses this information effectively to work out booster and support groups.
8. In National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002, the results were well below the national average in English and below these averages in mathematics and science. This pattern is reflected in comparison with the averages within similar schools. The reasons have been described previously in this section. The picture improves by the end of Year 6. Results in National Curriculum tests for these pupils in 2002 were well below national averages in English and science but above this standard in mathematics. When judged against average results in schools facing similar problems, however, the strengths of the school begin to shine through. Results were in line with the average performance in English and science, and well above in mathematics. Throughout the school, these tests show both the underlying improving trend, and also the high capacity the school already has for further improvement, once key weaknesses are rectified.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school and learning. They work especially hard in lessons that captivate their interest and where they are active. This is especially the case in music lessons, but also occurs throughout the school, for example, when Year 2 pupils made their newspaper sculpture of a person, which they decided was their headteacher. Pupils are willing learners and by Year 6, work well in total silence in a formal writing lesson, giving their total concentration. Teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to talk about their work in pairs, but this is only fully effective when an adult is present to help them focus on the task. Pupils do not divide their learning into separate subjects. For example, in a discussion about the seasons of the year, a Year 1 pupil suddenly announced: 'Spring is a doing word!'. Pupils eagerly talk about and share what they learn. They are proud of their school and the part they play in its success.

10. Pupils behave well in lessons, because they know what teachers expect of them. They know and understand the 'golden rules', and chant back to the headteacher when he reinforces practical things that they can remember. He builds an excellent relationship with pupils based upon mutual respect and pupils agree that, 'If you practise, you get better'. Teachers build continually upon this balance between clear expectations and the pupils' own responsibilities.
11. The school gives pupils many responsibilities in the life of the school, from routine classroom tasks to reading the 'thought for the day' in front of the whole school in assembly. Pupils treat each other with kindness, waiting patiently in class as a pupil tries hard to pronounce a word. They are polite to adults, offering a chair at their table. Relationships between pupils of all ages are excellent, as they are with all the adults in the school and those visitors who are linked through the community partnerships. Staff from a local printing business visit each week to take part in a 'reading partner' scheme, and this helps the pupils to improve their reading and to establish a relationship with an adult. Pupils showed interest in the work displayed by Year 4 pupils in assembly, and took pride in the success of their football team, applauding the players and their coach, the premises manager.
12. Recent improvements in the playground have given pupils a pleasant place for relaxation and games, and as a result behaviour outside is also good. Some older pupils have been trained as play leaders, and they have relished this responsibility, teaching playground games to younger pupils. Increasingly these opportunities to be responsible are helping pupils to mature. Older pupils run a healthy-eating tuck shop at break time, and the school council organised a multi-cultural healthy snacks fair. The pupils talk about why they should look after their diet.
13. Pupils from various ethnic and language groups mix well together throughout the day, and no incidents of a racist or anti-social nature were observed. Some pupils have a problem with anger, which the school helps them to manage. When pupils are involved in violent incidents that hurt others, they are excluded. There have been five such exclusions, involving four pupils, in the last year. The number is not high compared with other schools locally and most of these pupils subsequently develop in ways that are more socially acceptable.
14. Pupils make exceptional progress in their personal development during their time in school. Their social skills are very underdeveloped when they join the school, but by Year 6 they are responsible young people, who can show initiative and think deeply about life. As one result, they work to improve the appearance of the grounds and understand why this is important. This personal development is making a key contribution to improved attainment.
15. Attendance in the last school year was below the national average, though it has improved as a result of closer monitoring, and closer liaison with parents, including using a Turkish-speaking member of staff. Unauthorised absences are above the national average. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection, because the school day starts at the same time for all pupils, and registration periods are better used for silent reading. Governors are reporting attendance figures annually to parents as required.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is good overall. It is very good in the nursery and reception classes and at least good in Years 1 to 6. It has improved and is still improving. Of the lessons

observed, most were satisfactory or better, and in a significant proportion very good or excellent. Teaching is at least good in all subjects and the teaching of music and information and communication technology is especially good.

17. Teaching for particular groups of pupils, for example for those with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and those needing more challenging work in English and mathematics is mostly good and usually very good. These latter groups benefit especially from resources made available by the EAZ. Teaching assistants in various roles make a major contribution to the pupils' learning. This is because they work very closely with class teachers, forming an integrated team. They see themselves as teachers and often play a key role in the teaching. The teaching overall is highly inclusive, picking up quickly and relevantly when any pupil needs particular help.

18. When teaching is very effective, it has certain qualities:

- Teachers share clear objectives and expectations with the pupils and expect them to be met, and check that they are.
- Class management is very secure and grows from the work at hand.
- Teachers use very clear language, asking questions that force the pupils to think for themselves.
- Planning is detailed, setting out tasks that lead from one to the next, and providing different ways of learning that match the various abilities and learning needs of the pupils.
- The teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, and this allows them not only to set challenging objectives but also to plan so that learning in one subject supports and enriches learning in another.
- Teachers make effective use of the good resources, for example, the new computer suite.

In these lessons, the learning bowls along with an enthusiasm and excitement shared by pupils, teachers and teaching assistants alike. Most teaching shared most if not all of these qualities.

19. When teaching was only satisfactory or, rarely, unsatisfactory, the reasons were also clear:

- Class management was insecure and this meant the teacher needed to spend too much time controlling the pupils.
- Subject knowledge was not completely secure, and this threatened the confidence of the teacher.
- Questioning became closed, expecting single word or idea answers.
- The teachers were insufficiently aware of the language problems facing pupils learning English as an additional language.

In these lessons, the pace of learning became slow and pedantic, and pupils saw learning as tasks to complete rather than an exciting route to success. They also lost concentration and focus, and their behaviour deteriorated. This slight inconsistency in teaching does slow down the pupils' learning in some years.

20. The teaching of literacy and numeracy shows the strengths listed above, but occasionally the weaknesses. Teaching of numeracy is stronger than for literacy. This is because teaching of literacy is more complex, especially with the very wide range of language development and needs within each class. The teaching of writing needs to

improve. The most effective teachers focus first on the pupils' ability to speak in structured ways and to listen carefully for the meaning in what they hear. This helps pupils to use 'thinking in their heads' to plan what they will write. Teachers as a whole make good use of information and communication technology both through using the new computer suite and also in classrooms. This use becomes a natural part of learning in most subjects and this is contributing significantly to improvement in standards of attainment.

21. Teachers and support staff plan thoughtfully together for pupils with special educational needs. Targets in individual education plans are clear and achievable. Pupils are usually grouped according to their prior attainment in literacy and numeracy although in some lessons pupils with special educational needs work successfully with a more able pupil. Staff maintain good records of each pupil's progress.
22. The teaching as a whole tends to lack the range of skills found when teaching overall is very good; for example, it lacks the many techniques present in schools where teaching is already very good. This means teachers at Holmleigh tend to succeed through energy, hard work and determination, rather than the equally important range of higher level skills that can be gained through additional training. Areas for improvement include:
 - More skilled use of assessment, language and marking to feedback to pupils precisely where and why they succeed and what they need to learn next.
 - Better understanding of the blocks to learning facing pupils learning English as an additional language.
 - A clearer focus on the pupils' speaking and listening skills, so that they develop the language skills to think through problems for themselves that they can then transfer to their reading and writing.
 - Techniques that help pupils focus their thoughts rather than simply to pay attention.
23. When the pupils are well taught, they approach their learning with excitement and enthusiasm. They pay attention to their teacher and value the views of other pupils. They co-operate with each other, and often collaborate to solve problems by sharing ideas. They try hard, and work quickly yet carefully, showing pride in their work. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are excellent. A feature of pupils' keenness was that learning often overshot the end of lessons without a murmur of complaint. They complete homework tasks conscientiously, although, inspectors agree with parents, that more extensive use could be made of homework and some tasks could be better matched to the range of learning needs within each class. The homework clubs provided by the school are very well attended, and parents support the learning of their children in several ways for example, through shared reading sessions.

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

24. The school provides a very good range of high quality learning opportunities for its pupils. The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good. All statutory subjects of the National Curriculum are in place and the school complies with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Numerous other opportunities for learning within the curriculum such as extension lessons for higher-attaining pupils in English and mathematics, and 'booster' groups in the same subjects add greatly to the effectiveness of overall provision. Likewise, pupils' other talents and abilities are

catered for well through opportunities such as recorder groups, choir sessions, country dancing and many other activities within and outside lesson times.

25. Pupils with special educational needs and also those pupils learning English as an additional language benefit from good provision for their needs within lessons, for example by support from additional adult help. The daily literacy and numeracy sessions take up an appropriate proportion of each school day, and strategies to teach these core subjects are generally good. The exception to this is the arrangement for induction of those newcomers to the school, especially when their level of English acquisition is very low. These pupils do not have their needs identified clearly enough to enable them to understand or fulfil demands made on them in areas of the curriculum, especially where writing is required. Sufficient time is planned for all subjects. Policies and plans are adequate, mostly drawing sensibly on published schemes of work, which cover National Curriculum programmes of study appropriately. Personal, social and health education is integrated well into the curriculum in a well-structured way, mainly through circle time. The performing arts such as music and dance enrich and extend the pupils' learning significantly, and the school could usefully develop further opportunities for drama.
26. An excellent and very extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities of many different types, offers pupils extremely beneficial ways in which to extend learning beyond their lessons. The list of such clubs, visits, visitors, parental involvement, other community involvement is very wide-ranging indeed. Pupils of all ages, particularly older ones, join in frequently and readily, understanding the benefits which they can gain. This creates a school, which is alive with a buzz of activity after school hours and during lunchtimes. It is a hub for a range of lively pursuits in which all sides of the community, parents, teachers, governors, visitors, pupils and others, feel that they contribute and participate, and that their contributions will be welcomed and valued. The very good involvement of the local authority, the EAZ and other partners of the school such as business sponsors make these pursuits possible. The local community values the contribution the school makes through its provision to the lives of its pupils and themselves, and responds highly effectively though helping with valued opportunities of this kind.

How well does the curriculum meet the needs of all pupils

27. The curriculum is highly inclusive. The pupils learn within an environment that celebrates each individual's cultural heritage and individual value. Teachers track the progress and development of each pupil and act if either is threatened. The school provides a wide and increasing number of well-considered additional opportunities to target particular needs, for example for pupils needing increased challenge and those with special educational needs. The excellent provision outside lessons enables the gifts and talents of each pupil to shine. Pupils feel that they have a part to play and their views are fully taken into account.

Provision for personal development

28. The provision is excellent and makes a major contribution to the pupils' ability to develop as balanced, independent and confident young people. Most children join the nursery and reception classes with extremely low social and personal skills but leave from Year 6 as thoughtful and caring individuals, secure in their own identity. This makes a major contribution to their learning. Provision is greatly improved since the last inspection and is now a key strength of the school.

29. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Assemblies are at the heart of the life of the school and give pupils good opportunities for quiet reflection and thought. Religious education lessons have a good balance between knowing about different faiths and using this understanding to build personal belief. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to respond to the world around them with a sense of wonder. Children in the nursery are fascinated by the hatching of a butterfly and pupils in more senior classes use art to see the beauty within an urban landscape. They are given many opportunities to use writing and literature to probe their inner feelings and see the purpose and responsibilities within human lives.
30. Provision for moral and social development is excellent overall; for moral development it is excellent and for social development very good. The school promotes strong moral values that teachers explain clearly to pupils. The curriculum for personal and social education is well structured and very well taught; this helps pupils gain deep understanding of moral and social issues. Teachers and, in particular, the headteacher, provide outstanding role models that the pupils are keen to follow. Clubs, visits, residential trips and visitors to the school very significantly enrich and extend learning in lessons. They show pupils a wider world, building their aspirations and their sense of being part of a world of many functions and peoples within which they have a part to play. The pupils take full advantage of these opportunities and, as is seen in the work of the school council, begin to play their role as young citizens. Above all, the pupils learn by being part of a purposeful and caring school community of which they are very proud.
31. Provision for cultural development is excellent. The pupils revel in their cultural richness and diversity. Dance, music and art are strong, and celebrate a rich mix of cultural traditions. The school has exciting drama productions and these could prepare the way for more learning through drama in the day-to-day work of the school. Religious education, alongside other subjects such as history, English and geography gives the pupils experience and knowledge of many faiths and different cultures. Pupils respond with natural curiosity and take it for granted that something different is interesting and has value. The various cultures represented within the school are celebrated and recognised through displays. The school could usefully consider ways that the key cultures could be slightly more clearly marked so that every child can see how their heritage is highlighted. This would help certain cultural groups amongst parents to feel more part of the school. At present, each special part tends to get lost in the very complexity of displays.

Contribution of the community

32. The community makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' learning and the EAZ has provided excellent support. Many parents work in the school, not only helping the children but also following up their own learning. This shows pupils that learning is important and life-long. Two businesses work closely with the school week-by-week through mentors and also provide major help with improving the environment and with training. As one result of very strong partnership with the community amongst many, the pupils benefit from an excellent range and variety of experiences outside lessons. It is not too much to say that this aspect of the school changes the pupils' lives and very much for the better.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. There is very good provision for the welfare of pupils, because members of the teaching and non-teaching staff care for individuals and their families. The school nurse, education welfare officer and a counsellor are among those used to provide specific and

appropriate support for individuals. The school liaison officer provides exceptional support for Turkish-speaking pupils and their parents.

34. Pupils' welfare is well considered throughout the school day. The well designed and equipped playground makes play times happy occasions, and the healthy eating initiative means that fruit snacks are available. Trained lunchtime supervisors are well led and not only take good care of the pupils but also help them play constructively. The school makes valuable connections within its community so that pupils gain through meeting with other adults, such as the reading partners.
35. There are very good arrangements for child protection and very good attention is paid to health and safety matters by a well-trained and pro-active premises manager. Although the school assesses risk diligently, there are no planned occasions when someone not so familiar with the building and with routines gives an external perspective. Pupils who are unwell at school are well cared for and well supervised, but the open location is not ideal.
36. Staff know pupils well and relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. As a result, learning takes place in a purposeful inclusive atmosphere. The school liaises effectively with external agencies and complies suitably with the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils benefit from not only academic support but also care for their personal development through, for example, 'circle time', a planned circle of friends and the support of the school's counsellor. There are sensible plans to develop a 'nurture group'. This will provide a quiet place for pupils who feel their feelings are 'boiling over'.
37. Improved monitoring of attendance has led to some improvements, but the school is not making enough use of its computer database. The liaison officer monitors attendance manually for certain language groups, but this could be done more efficiently and for all language groups.
38. Simple 'golden rules' are clearly and regularly reinforced and pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils value the reward systems, and the 'Big Book of Brilliant Behaviour' is on display for pupils and parents to see. Poor behaviour is very well managed in the classrooms and by the headteacher who monitors it each week. He has identified anger as a trigger of poor behaviour, and so has incorporated ways for pupils to address this into assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons. Pastoral support plans are well used with these pupils and parents play their part.
39. There is high pupil mobility affecting about a fifth of pupils. Induction for these pupils is not good enough, because their language and learning needs are not properly assessed when they arrive.

Assessment

40. Assessment is satisfactory overall. The school collects a large amount of data about pupils' attainment in core subjects, which is an improvement on the situation described in the last report. Now, as then, however, teachers do not use this information well enough to inform planning. Most assessment informs staff of standards pupils reached some time in the past, and tracks progress reactively. Although some analysis has started recently using data from mathematics tests, this has come to a halt and assessment does not yet provide the school with a mechanism for generating improvement of the standards of pupils' work, even in mathematics and English. Some

advances have been made, for example in the area of target setting for groups of pupils in each class, but these have not had the effect of raising attainment, for example in writing.

41. Marking in most subjects does not provide individual pupils with clear enough information about what, specifically, they need to do to improve standards and thus about how to reach the next stage of achievement. Teachers' assessments are mostly accurate in mathematics, but the new literacy co-ordinator has recognised that assessments of English in relation to the levels of the National Curriculum are often inflated, and that training is needed to ensure consistency and accuracy. The school also recognises that its overall use of assessment to inform planning and teaching requires improvement. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, very little attempt is made to assess pupils' standards in relation to the national expectations. At present, teachers' recording of curriculum coverage in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, shows what pupils have experienced, but not what they have learned, or how well. Similarly, only the most effective teachers continually use assessment to feedback to pupils why they have succeeded or met problems and what they need to learn next. Overall, the use of assessment to improve learning and teaching needs to be improved, and a good start has been made in ICT.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Parents think very highly of the school. Three-quarters of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire, and over 90 per cent were happy with the school's work, except for homework. They appreciate the wide range of after-school activities available. The school is very successful in meeting its aim: to involve parents fully in their children's education. The very good partnership with parents makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' learning. The school is always seeking new and better ways to improve this partnership further.
43. The school is very good at communicating with parents, encouraging them to want to be involved in their child's education. They are sent useful curriculum information and newsletters each term. Communication is effective because it is often face-to-face, and very good partnership with parents of children with special educational needs is an excellent example. The headteacher and class teachers are readily available for parents at the end of the day. Parents are welcomed into school at all levels: to read with their children, attend assembly, or have free computer lessons themselves. Exceptional support is provided for parents with little or no English; translators are provided and this is particularly good for Turkish-speaking parents, with letters and reports translated. An area for improvement is to meet the needs of other parents whose first language is not English equally well. Parent teacher consultation evenings are well attended and useful.
44. Reports to parents have good features, but these reports are not consistent across the school. They are best when there are practical 'next steps' suggestions, attendance is reported as a percentage, and parents are given some indication of their child's progress in relation to national standards or their ability. Reports for pupils in the reception class are not good enough because they do not report on the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher provides excellent personal and professional leadership for staff and also pupils. He has a clear vision of where the school needs to go and a deep

commitment to the values the school stands for. His leadership is the key reason why standards have improved and are still improving, and it enlivens every side of the school's life and work. His leadership has built a very strong team spirit amongst staff, pupils, parents and other partners of the school. Consequently, adults and pupils have pride in their school and are determined to be even more successful.

46. The acting deputy headteacher supports the headteacher's leadership with complete commitment and perceptive professionalism, and these qualities extend to other middle managers. The deputy head was on long-term absence at the time of the inspection, but she has laid strong foundations for the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for the support of trainee teachers. Although improvement is still possible, subject co-ordinators provide good support for their colleagues, and provision for special educational needs and those pupils learning English as an additional language is well managed, and for the Foundation Stage, very well organised. The management overall of the school is efficient and effective, and the good policies and procedures now in place create a firm foundation for future improvement.
47. In the absence of the experienced special educational needs co-ordinator the provision has been maintained effectively by support from the special needs consultant and other staff. There are good records of pupils' progress. The special needs governor is fully involved in the life of the school and makes a valuable contribution to the monitoring of special needs. This ensures that the governing body is fully aware of the progress of pupils with special educational needs and prudently directs money from the budget to support the provision.
48. The governors are a strength of the school. They are well led and work through effective working committees. Their key contribution was the skill and determination they applied when recruiting and selecting the headteacher they knew the school needed. They work closely with the school and are currently building stronger links through working with subject co-ordinators. The premises manager is the governor responsible for special educational needs and his dual roles bring special insights. The governing body meet their statutory responsibilities well.
49. The school development plan is a carefully and skilfully constructed action plan. It covers the necessary areas and has a strong sense of purpose and direction. Even so, it would benefit from having a stronger link between raising attainment and the improvements decided, alongside a clearer focus on the quality of learning and teaching that will help the plan succeed.

Staffing

50. The school has enough qualified staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum and, in the main, the needs of the pupils. Currently, however, there is insufficient support for children learning English as an additional language in the nursery and reception classes. The school is working towards the Investor in People standard and, consequently, training is relevant and appropriate, for example training for teaching assistants on how to help pupils learning English as an additional language. The school has several trainees. They are very well supported and guided and also bring new skills to the school. Support for teachers new to the school is usually very good but sometimes misses the need to help the colleague gain the technical skills required to meet the wide range of learning needs of the pupils present. Teachers benefit from good performance management. Lesson observations are frequent, systematic and followed by constructive feedback on how to improve. Currently, this focused staff development does not extend to teaching assistants and this offers an area for

improvement. At present, the school does not have a clear enough policy on what constitutes excellent, as against simply satisfactory, learning and teaching. Such a policy would give teachers a better idea as to how and where they can improve their work.

51. Delegation and allocation of tasks is effectively managed, in particular in the way the school manages the additional teaching resources made available through the EAZ.

Accommodation

52. The school has made improving the environment a very high priority. The inside provides stimulating and attractive accommodation, and displays celebrate the pupils' achievements and the various cultures present in the school. The school makes good use of all available spaces. The outside has beautiful gardens and attractive quiet areas to sit, and also a wildlife area and a pond. The school provides a secure and safe place in which to learn.

Resources for learning

53. Resources are of good quality, range and of sufficient quantity. They are accessible and well cared for. The library is well stocked and arranged, and the new computer suite, which is used well, shows how good resources can quickly raise standards.

Efficiency

54. The governors ensure that finances are invested widely and prudently, and that financial control systems are effective. Even so, there has not been a financial audit since 1999. Longer term planning has ensured the school has moved from a deficit to a small surplus, and the governors have planned for this to grow. This places the school's future on a secure foundation. The school's administration officer provides very efficient support for the school's management, including financial control and information. The monies the school receives that are intended for set purposes are very well managed to gain maximum value, although more focused analysis of costs and benefits is needed; for example, for monies used to support pupils learning English as an additional language. The school uses information technology to improve the efficiency of the school, but too many things are still done by hand that could be better and quicker done by computer; for example, analysis of attendance, and managing assessment and special educational needs data.
55. The school makes very good use of advice from elsewhere, and uses the guidance of parents and, through the school council, the pupils. Managers use comparison with others to test the school's performance, although they could gain more extensive insights from this work. The school ensures that it gains best value from purchases. By working with others, the school gains considerable resources from outside for example, through the support of businesses. The school receives higher than average funds but also offers good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. Standards are improving rapidly and the time has come for governors and staff to stand back and recognise what they have already achieved. What follows are the key areas to rectify so as to continue to improve and they are designed to work in conjunction.

To improve standards further governors and staff should:

- (1) Improve support for pupils in the nursery and reception classes who are learning English as an additional language by:
 - ensuring that these pupils have specialised support for their acquisition of English, alongside their other learning.
(Paragraph 61 but also 57-64 as a whole)
- (2) Make better use of assessment to improve learning and teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers' assessments are accurate, especially in English;
 - ensuring that pupils always know what they need to learn and what the teachers will look for in their work;
 - giving pupils clearer feedback on where they succeed and why, and what they need to learn next so as to improve;
 - analysing assessment data more closely so that managers and teachers can quickly recognise and rectify key weaknesses in the teaching.
(Paragraphs 40-41)
- (3) Improve the pupils' ability to use writing to support their learning by:
 - creating better links between the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills and their writing;
 - focusing on the writing skills that help pupils write more quickly and easily so that their writing supports rather than hinders their ability to record their learning.
(Paragraph 80)
- (4) Improve induction procedures for pupils joining the school other than in the reception class by:
 - taking time to assess these pupils' learning and developmental needs at entry in order to be certain what will help them most when they join the class;
 - producing a detailed induction plan for each pupil that will guide the class teachers and teaching assistants;
 - monitoring induction over time so that timely and relevant action can be taken when the pupils meet problems.
(Paragraph 63)

While rectifying the above, governors and staff should:

- (1) Improve the attendance of pupils by:
 - continuing present strategies with even greater rigour;
 - making better use of information technology to analyse pupils' attendance.
(Paragraphs 15, 37 and 54)

PROVISION FOR PUPILS LEARNING ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

57. Holmleigh makes good provision for most pupils learning English as an additional language. There is, however, insufficient provision for children in the nursery and reception classes. The specialist teacher is expert, experienced and an effective manager. She has clear ideas as to how provision can be improved. She works closely with an equally expert language assistant who also has a home-school liaison role with the Turkish community. She fulfils this role very effectively. There are two

further language assistants, one of which speaks Yoruba, a language spoken by many of the pupils. Her knowledge and skills provide a good basis for improving provision for this group of parents. The number of specialised staff is sufficient to meet the needs of pupils in Years 1 to 6, but insufficient to meet also the needs of children at the Foundation Stage.

58. The team have a satisfactory base room that can be used for small group or individual work, and this contains a good range of appropriate learning resources. All general teaching assistants have received training in support of pupils learning English as an additional language and teachers receive briefings.
59. Strategically, the provision aims to maximise these pupils' access to the English curriculum. The teachers and teaching assistants largely succeed and these pupils quickly gain in confidence. However, the specialist teachers and assistants were often observed taking a general teaching role rather than addressing the specific language needs of these pupils. This misses their equally important role in supporting these pupils' acquisition of English, alongside their other learning.
60. Assessment is thorough but basically measures these pupils' ability in English compared with their English-speaking peers. This is important, but misses the equally important need to measure these pupils' language development in English alongside development in the language they speak at home. Many of these pupils have under-developed language in their first language, and this is being addressed in passing rather than specifically. This situation leads to class teachers over-estimating the language development of these pupils and failing to understand the language problems they still have, even when fluent in conversational English. The manager understands this and has clear ideas as to how to make provision more effective within present resource levels. She wants to make provision very good and then excellent, and knows how to do it.
61. The above has led the school to focus support on Years 2 and 6. This is understandable but is overly reactive. This tactical decision has drawn resources away from equally important areas, and withdrawn support from pupils who are equally in need. The clearest example of this is in the nursery and reception classes. Almost three-quarters of these children are learning English as an additional language, and most children join the nursery with very little English, and very under-developed language in their first language. Specialist provision is urgently needed at this very important stage in children's learning.
62. As a whole, class teachers do not have sufficient awareness of the language needs of these pupils. This leads to their using words these pupils cannot understand, and missing the fact that the pupils' home language may not have direct equivalents to the English words and concepts they are expected to use when accessing the curriculum. This confuses the pupils but they are often too polite to say so. It runs the risk that pupils may think they are unintelligent rather than spotting what is needed to unblock their learning. They need more help to make a bridge from one language to another, repairing the bridge when they do not have the understanding of a word or concept.
63. Most pupils have English as an additional or new language, and many join the school other than at the reception stage with little English. Considering this situation, the school gives insufficient time to carefully assessing these new pupils' language needs. This means they join a class before the teacher can be guided and informed as to their language and learning needs and how they can be met. These pupils are made very welcome and made to feel valued, but they do not start learning as quickly as they

should and could. Currently, these pupils do not have a detailed and reviewed language and learning development plan, and their progress is insufficiently precisely tracked. This is area for urgent improvement and the manager has clear and very appropriate ideas as to how this can be achieved.

64. As is noted above, provision is good but needs to be very good. This is because the English development needs are great and cover many languages. Currently, provision is not good enough to support the significant increase in attainment the school seeks, and, although pupils quickly gain social fluency in English, too few gain the higher-level language skills they need in Years 5 and 6, and will need at secondary school. Although there is a need to increase the effectiveness of present provision, there are also insufficient staff to meet the needs of the pupils learning English as an additional language, not only in the nursery and reception classes but also of those joining the school late, often directly from other countries.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	21	22	8	2	0	0
Percentage	6	37	39	15	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	200
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	na	99

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	na	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	na	58

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	134

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	5	12
	Girls	6	6	11
	Total	12	11	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	43 (74)	39 (74)	82 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	12	5
	Girls	6	11	6
	Total	12	23	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	43 (74)	82 (93)	39 (74)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	11	9
	Girls	9	14	16
	Total	16	25	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (76)	83 (76)	83 (86)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	12
	Girls	12	17	16
	Total	20	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (62)	93 (69)	93 (66)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
20	3	0
1	0	0
38	0	0
8	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
17	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
36	2	0
34	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
14	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.1
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	190.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	812890
Total expenditure	793058
Expenditure per pupil	3494
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9007
Balance carried forward to next year	10825

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	229
Number of questionnaires returned	171

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	33	3	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	44	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	44	11	7	2
The teaching is good.	65	28	1	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	32	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	26	3	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	25	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	56	36	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	56	35	3	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	36	4	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	36	4	1	4

Other issues raised by parents

- One parent was very concerned over the way that an alleged serious incident that occurred in school was dealt with. Inspectors investigated the complaint thoroughly and found the school had dealt with it properly.
- One parent was concerned that expenses incurred by such activities as swimming were difficult to pay. Inspectors find that the school asks for voluntary payments appropriately. The management and governors understand fully that some parents are unable make such payments and ensure that this does not disadvantage any child.
- One parent was very concerned by about the leadership and management of the school. This does not reflect the very positive views of most parents or the positive findings of inspectors.

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

(Provision for early years learning at the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) covers six areas of learning. To prepare for work within the National Curriculum, children are expected to progress through three steps and achieve early learning goals (ELGs) in each area of this learning. Guidance for this stage expects learning to be a balance between focused work in groups and structured play with a purpose.)

65. Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. The co-ordinator provides clear and perceptive leadership, and efficient management. Teaching in both classes is very good, with strong teamwork between the class teachers and skilled teaching assistants. The setting provides two attractive and well-organised learning areas, and there is a very good outside area with excellent equipment, adjacent to the nursery class. The outside area adjoining the reception class is small but also includes a very good flower and wildlife garden. Resources for learning, including computers, are of good range and high quality.
66. The curriculum is well planned and covers the required areas of learning well. The nursery curriculum places an emphasis upon developing personal and social skills through purposeful play but also develops these skills through structured learning in, for example, the early stages of literacy and numeracy. The reception class provides a very smooth transition to more structured activities and this gives the children a very good preparation and foundation for work within the National Curriculum.
67. Most children join the nursery with extremely low attainment, and many children join the school other than at the beginning of the year. These children often have extremely low attainment and do not speak English. Most children have very underdeveloped language skills and several cannot speak with any confidence even in the language they speak at home. Three quarters are at an early stage in learning English as an additional language. Even so, they rapidly settle and gain in confidence, learning the routines of the nursery. Very soon, they begin to play independently and to relate to others productively. Assessment is continuous and this helps staff identify when children need specific support, and, especially in the reception class, ensure that the work matches each child's level of attainment and development. This includes closely targeted support for children with special educational needs and more stretching work for very able children. Children make very good progress as they move towards Year 1, yet in most of the areas of learning few will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, except in their personal and skills, where most will exceed them. The main hindrance to making even better progress is their spoken language and their ability to grasp the meaning of what they hear. Consequently, they do not have the language skills necessary to order their thoughts. The children do not have specialised support in learning English or in developing their speaking and listening skills in the language they learn at home. They need this type of support, and rectifying the current situation is urgent.
68. There is a very positive and productive partnership with parents. Even so, reports to parents at the end of the reception year require more detailed information on each of the areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Teaching is very good. In both classes, the adults ensure that activities have a purposeful structure. Children quickly make these routines their own, for instance, times together on the carpet, play outside and set activities such as painting. Once started on a task, they stick at it until finished and are proud of their success. They share and take turns, and are caring towards each other. They follow instructions willingly and understand why this is necessary. Through singing rhymes, they quickly gain an understanding of what is right and what is wrong. The adults create a very good balance between firm guidance and allowing the children to gain in independence. The adults help children feel very secure and highly valued, while also setting high expectations that they reinforce and that children apply to themselves. The provision helps all children make very good progress. By the end of reception, the children have a secure sense of their individual identity and worth, and a highly developed sense of what they need to do when working with and alongside others. Most will exceed the ELGs for this aspect of their development.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Teaching is good. Adults spend a great deal of time talking with and listening to children. In turn, although in some cases very slowly, children begin to speak confidently and lessons are full of constructive 'chatter'. Even so, most children join the nursery with very low speaking and listening skills, and despite good provision, most will not have reached their ELGs by the end of the reception year. This has two main reasons. Firstly, most have yet to learn to use language to order their thoughts. Secondly, many have not made sufficient progress in their acquisition of English because they do not have sufficient specialised support.
71. Children quickly begin to enjoy books and reading, and by reception, value and enjoy books, and are very keen to 'read' to others. A few are able to read simple texts, knowing the sounds of letters and how they fit together. Most, however, do not reach this stage and, although they know that text has meaning and can talk excitedly about events and characters in a story, the words themselves hold little meaning. This is linked to their lack of ability to think, using words in their heads to structure their understanding. Few will meet the ELGs by the end of the reception year.
72. From an early stage, adults encourage children to begin to form letters and know their sounds. Most children can write their names by the end of the reception year. However, only a very few go on to write simple sentences. The majority will not reach the ELGs by the end of the reception year, and a significant number will be well below this level of skill.

Mathematical development

73. Teaching is good. Children in the nursery develop, through varied activities, a good understanding of large and small, heavy and light, longer and shorter and begin to count. In reception they count confidently to 100 and further, and begin to understand how to group things, and how to take away and add. A few children will exceed the early goals, able to add, subtract and share confidently, but most will not. This is in part because the teaching at times puts too great a priority on counting by rote, and too little time is spent on helping the children to manipulate numbers for example, spotting when a number is missing in a sequence or estimating a number by knowing other numbers. Even so, all children learn to find number work exciting and interesting, and realise how important these skills are for example, when shopping.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Teaching is very good. Children join the nursery with a very narrow understanding of the world. By the end of the reception year, however, they have an increased sense of time and space. They understand how they have developed over time, and begin to understand short and long times ago. They differentiate between different places and suggest reasons why, for example, home and school are different. Children become confident users of computers, for example, to paint, print and play mathematical games. They model in clay, make collages with a variety of materials, and even begin to sew with the help of a volunteer helper. They make interesting models by joining boxes that they then colour and decorate with care. Children learn what plants, and they, need to grow and to be healthy, and how to investigate things carefully, using magnifying glasses. Trips, such as to a farm and the local library, extend their experience, as does a visit from an artist who speaks the same language that many of them speak at home. Throughout, adults encourage children to respond with awe and wonder for example, when a caterpillar pupates and then emerges as a butterfly. Most children will just reach the ELGs in this area of their learning.

Physical development

75. Teaching is very good. Children join the nursery with a very wide range of ability, some advanced and some with very low ability. From these varied beginnings, some will be well beyond the ELGs by the end of the reception year, able to co-ordinate the movements of their bodies very well for example, when skipping with a rope, while others will find it still very difficult to balance when walking down a narrow bench. Even so, all progress well by using the excellent large equipment and tricycles in the nursery, and through more formal activities in reception for example, in the hall.
76. Most children join the nursery with low ability to manipulate things with their fingers, and to co-ordinate the movements of their hands by using their eyes. This means they take longer to learn how to use simple tools such as pens, brushes and scissors. The adults give them many opportunities to gain these skills, but the absence of the skills still holds back their learning in the reception class for example, when forming letters and numbers. Despite these problems, most but not all children will meet the ELGs, and a few will exceed them.

Creative development

77. Teaching is very good. Children are introduced enthusiastically to music and love to sing. Even in the nursery they can sing in tune and keep to the beat, learning new songs quickly. They paint with imagination and flair, and even in the nursery paint very recognisable pictures of flowers. They enjoy playing roles, often with others, and use their imagination to act as other people. They enjoy responding to things that make them happy, sad or excited. Most children will meet the ELGs by the end of reception and a significant number will exceed them. This is very important since these children need these skills to extend the ways they can experience and investigate the world in which they live.

ENGLISH

78. Provision for learning is good and improving. Pupils' underlying attainment when they enter the school is very low. Many pupils' mother tongue is not English and they have no experience of communicating in this language prior to entry. Pupils who stay in the school until the end of Year 2 make good progress. While still below average, pupils' attainment in different aspects of the subject has improved well by Year 2, relative to the average for their age. The high turnover of pupils who leave and enter the school during all years, most of whom enter having English as an additional language (EAL), confuses this picture of good progress, however. This is because the school's current organisation of pupils' induction to English, at whatever point they enter, is insufficiently well focused on analysing and providing for their specific language needs. Better integration of the provision for these EAL pupils and the management of the English National Curriculum is required, to ensure that all pupils can make the progress in English of which they are capable.
79. Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed pupils' performance to be well below average. This represents a considerable fall from the time of the last inspection. Pupils also did much less well at this age than pupils in similar schools. Results in similar tests at the end of Year 6 also showed pupils' standards to be well below the national average in English, but in line with the performance of pupils in similar schools. Pupils did significantly less well in English tests at this age than they did in mathematics. This is largely because of the EAL factors described and because of the great numbers of pupils who join the school later than at the start of the education, most with standards below those who have been in the school since the Foundation Stage. This turnover continues through all years, with teachers frequently losing and gaining pupils in their classes. In Years 3 to 6, pupils who have remained in the school throughout the years make good progress overall, although this has recently been disturbed in some classes by staffing problems. The current Year 6 in particular has been affected in these ways, having lost momentum in Year 5, so that pupils have not progressed as well as they might. Although back on track now, attainment at the end of the current Year 6 is well below average overall. Standards are higher in Year 3 and 4, with better attainment in English feeding up through the school.
80. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening standards are at a higher level than their reading and writing. Even young pupils, unless they are amongst the proportion of those at the early stages of acquiring English, can understand what adults say and can generally use English to respond effectively in speech. Problems in speaking arise because although EAL learners often possess a satisfactory idiomatic and colloquial vocabulary and speech patterns, they cannot easily transfer to a more formal style. They receive insufficient help to acquire this skill because the very specific intervention of specialist EAL teachers is not always available. As they get older, the gap between many pupils' speaking and listening competence and their reading and writing, does not narrow enough. They are slow writers and this means that, even when their overall attainment is high, they are too slow when recording their learning in writing. Handwriting script itself is often very weak. The school has no consistent handwriting policy, so the teaching of this skill is very inconsistent across the school. Good habits form in Years 1 and 2, but those who enter later do not have the benefit of this learning and weaknesses are not picked up well enough later on in too many cases. Many older pupils still form letters upside down, or make clockwise instead of anti-clockwise strokes for rounded letters. Very few pupils consistently use joined script accurately, even by Year 6. Although some very stimulating teaching of handwriting was seen, too

many examples of classroom assistants' and teachers' own handwriting script provide poor models for pupils to emulate. Handwriting overall is well below average by Year 6. Spelling is also often weak. This is again mainly, but not only, because of pupils' EAL needs. In all years, pupils can frequently talk about their learning of English and about subjects of the curriculum adequately, demonstrating that they have learned well, but cannot write this down to the levels of competence expected for their ages. The key to helping pupils to do so is for the school to improve its provision for EAL, especially for 'casual' late entries into the school. The current 'immersion' strategy that expects pupils to 'pick up' English, is not meeting with sufficient success in improving these pupils' standards of English.

81. Reading is below average overall but is an area where pupils make good progress across the school. Parents are involved productively in the development of reading, with most pupils taking books home to read. Useful after-school reading clubs are very effective in providing pupils with opportunities to read with a variety of adults and these clubs are well supported.
82. Teaching is good overall. It is often very good in Years 1 and 2, but ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory in lessons seen in Years 3 to 6. When teaching is good or very good, the lessons are well structured, have clear objectives and learning is pacy and challenging. When less effective, the teacher cannot manage the literacy session confidently and what the pupils' need to learn becomes confused. This is a better profile of teaching than that described in the last report, but the effect of the unsatisfactory teaching is similar. Staff turnover has also been a factor disturbing pupils' recent quality of learning in some classes. Those most affected, Years 2 and 6, have settled now because of much better teaching. Most teachers' knowledge and understanding of the objectives of the National Curriculum are secure and the curriculum is planned and resourced appropriately to support learning. Current support for some pupils with EAL is good, with very effective team-teaching seen in Year 2. However, EAL staff are not deployed currently in ways which allow them to identify and overcome major stumbling blocks to many pupils' learning of the English curriculum. As a whole, teachers use work in other subjects well to broaden and practise literacy.
83. Pupils in Year 1 were learning well in a literacy hour, reading about foods and describing them orally in a variety of interesting ways. When pupils came to write these descriptions down, their written presentation was much weaker. Teaching here was good, with pupils very well supported in their group work, able to work in a focused way when in unsupported groups. The very good adult to pupil ratio in the Year 2 literacy hour seen, showed three teachers and a classroom assistant working highly effectively together, with teachers sharing the teaching, each taking a different part of the lesson. Pupils were learning very well from these methods, partly because in the group sessions each teacher and the classroom assistant had a very small group on which to concentrate their skills and attention. Here the provision for EAL was well directed towards a small group of pupils for whom English is not their first language in the group session. Extension opportunities for abler pupils here were also good, with the class teacher able to challenge a small group of higher attaining pupils equally effectively in her group. Teachers in training in Year 1 and 2 are mentored very well, providing very useful, well targeted additional teaching for pupils at all levels.
84. An excellent Year 3 literacy hour was characterised by very good class management, with pupils moving swiftly from one phase of the lesson to another because the teacher was very clear about objectives for each different element of the national literacy strategy and how best to use the time available. Resources were extremely effectively prepared and organised. Individual pupils read the sentences from the 'Big Book'

confidently and many were very keen to join them in chorus. Pupils learned well about how to start a narrative with an interesting story opening and many could give lively examples when they talked about this. When they moved into the writing phase however, this lesson too showed the same slow, inaccurate handwriting and weak spelling described above. In all years, teachers wisely overlook this when appropriate in order to encourage pupils' confidence and creativity, but writing is the key issue requiring improvement throughout.

85. Year 4's literacy lesson also showed good teaching and responses from pupils when learning about reading for information. Many lessons such as this, show teachers making very good links to other curriculum areas, for instance here, to the science and design and technology aspects related to the food pupils were reading about. Teachers almost always have very good methods of enabling slower pupils to have time to articulate their answers to questions, with effective, sensitive ways of quietening other pupils to give them time to respond. In Year 4, as in most years, teachers provide different group work appropriate for the levels of pupils' needs. The long-term absence of a classroom assistant in this year group means that more groups than usual have to work independently or with a lower level of support than the class needs. The extremely wide range of attainment here makes it very difficult for the class teacher to ensure that all pupils are making the progress they are capable of in these sessions. Pupils and the teacher manage this very effectively, with most able to work well independently, and most making good progress. The school recognises this staffing deficit and the need to provide better for this class's support.
86. Staffing at the top end of the school has been difficult recently, with the present Year 6's progress last year disturbed as described above. New staffing in Year 6 has resolved this situation and teaching here is sound, and is addressing weaknesses in the pupils' learning very systematically.
87. Pupils revising for National Curriculum tests in Year 6 were learning satisfactorily, despite potential behaviour difficulties resulting partly from last year's staffing problems. This is because the current teacher has good, tight class control, which creates focus and enables pupils to concentrate well in lessons. A bilingual teaching assistant helped lower-attaining pupils well in the group work phase, particularly those from the main community language. Good provision for abler pupils through extension work in very small groups each week, shows them making good progress in these lessons. Good written work in a variety of styles and genres from the relatively few higher-attaining pupils, show these pupils are making good progress in English generally. Similarly small 'booster' groups also provide well for those pupils who could potentially reach average standards at Year 6 national tests, but for various reasons, often to do with a lack of fluency in English, they are not yet reaching that level.
88. The co-ordination and management of English have only recently stabilised, with the head teacher temporarily filling the position until this year. Settling into the school only lately, the experienced new co-ordinator has not yet had time to make significant impact, but has monitored some aspects of the subject. An issue recognised as needing immediate improvement is the consistency and accuracy of teachers' judgements about the levels of the National Curriculum, some of which are currently generous. Marking also needs improvement, because at present it is inconsistent and focused mostly on encouragement and effort. While pupils need and deserve this, older ones in particular, also need marking which focuses them on how, specifically; they can improve each aspect of their work. Teachers generate targets for groups, but these are not yet having the effect of improving standards enough. Targets are better and more effective, for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) because they are much tighter

and more focused. Pupils with SEN progress as well as their peers, generally. Pupils' attainment and progress in the subject are assessed regularly, but the school recognises that more needs to be done with the data collected. At present, it sums up how good a pupil's English is at a given point in time, usually time past, but it needs to become a pro-active tool to point pupils in the right direction to get to the next stage in the future. Better marking is the first link in this chain of improvement.

89. Resources for English are adequate. The library is satisfactory, and most pupils use it, particularly the older ones, who regularly pass through this space as a central resource in the school. Given pupils' range of difficulties and backgrounds, the addition of drama to the curriculum would add significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of pupils' lives. Pupils generally develop well through English, but drama could enhance provision further and significant staff expertise exists in the school to provide it. ICT is used appropriately, mostly as word-processing to draft and redraft written work.

MATHEMATICS

90. The school provides well for learning in mathematics. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is below the national average, but rising, and that of pupils in Year 6 is in line with the national average. Results for Year 2 in national tests were well below average in 2002, but this is because many of these children have a limited understanding of language and need a longer time to build on previous learning. Results in Year 6 in 2002 were above the national average and the school achieved very well in relation to similar schools. Results have varied over the past few years because there are some year groups with a higher number of pupils who have special educational needs or have entered the school after Year 1. Strengths in the teaching of mathematics are:

- Very good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support and advance learning.
- Good implementation of the numeracy strategy and the opportunities to revisit topics previously covered.
- Consistently good teaching.
- Carefully planned 'booster' groups to help some pupils raise their level of attainment.

Areas for improvement are:

- To make more extensive use of the analysis of results of previous tests.
- More practical work to help pupils develop their understanding of important ideas and specific words used in numeracy.

91. Achievement in mathematics is good and the majority of pupils make good progress. There are no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Tasks are usually matched well to their abilities and needs. As a result, pupils work hard and gain in confidence. Higher-attaining pupils are usually given challenging work. This avoids them having unnecessary repetition and enables them to develop their thinking skills and sustain their interest.
92. Pupils in Year 1 order numbers to 20 and have a basic understanding of addition and subtraction. More able children have a good understanding of largest and smallest. They know the days of the week, seasons of the year and special days. They perform

simple calculations when working out how many voted for each favourite item. They know why they should have a maximum number of 30. Pupils in Year 2 divide shapes into fractions. Less able children work successfully up to quarters and more able children extend their fractions to sixty-fourths. They add up to three numbers together accurately. Pupils recognise coins and the majority build up to 50 pence and attempt simple shopping problems.

93. Pupils in Year 3 work hard to order numbers 1-100 and increase their speed of using horizontal and vertical lines of numbers to find missing ones. This work is very well extended on the computer when they challenge themselves to complete the numbers in as few seconds as possible. They complete difficult number lines from 1-500 against the clock. The majority of pupils in Year 4 know several of their tables and enjoy games in which they have to answer questions on them as quickly as possible. More able children work out angles which are larger or smaller than a right angle, less able pupils develop their understanding of right angles in different positions. The majority of pupils in Year 5 write numbers to 10,000 and have a basic understanding of solid and flat shapes. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of 'equivalent fractions' and work out a series of these in a given time. Pupils increase their understanding of fractions in well-structured 'booster' classes. They are confident in ordering decimals to two places and in working to large numbers.
94. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils enjoy mathematical learning especially when it is linked to work on the computer. For example, they have a good understanding of various forms of graphs because of the enjoyable activities they complete on the computer. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers' offers of challenge and additional levels of difficulty motivate them very well. Planning is good so that there are interesting activities to match the wide range of abilities in the groups. Teachers usually plan more advanced activities for more able children. Less able children are usually given work that helps them to consolidate their learning. Work is marked regularly and there are some good examples of comments that inform pupils of what they need to do next to improve. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent because teachers make their expectations of pupils' behaviour and work to be done very clear. Teachers and teaching assistants usually work effectively together because they have planned lessons together. Teachers involve pupils well in discussion of any new learning in the lesson.
95. Most pupils enjoy numeracy and settle quickly to work. They are keen to contribute and learn to work without direct supervision and concentrate on their task well because they want to learn and succeed.
96. The structure of the daily mathematics lesson is used well in lessons in the classroom and in the ICT suite. Mental mathematics sessions are used well to focus pupils and prepare them for the main activity of the lesson. Teachers use mathematical terms precisely but need to reinforce them consistently so that pupils have a clear understanding of what is meant.
97. The co-ordinator has been absent recently and this has held up planned improvements. However, the national numeracy strategy continues to be implemented well. Consistency of planning has improved. Numeracy is used well across the curriculum. Items such as white boards have stimulated interest from pupils and help them to write with enjoyment. Standards are rising because of very good support from the local education authority, relevant training and very effective support for staff development. Mathematics makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural

development because pupils learn to collaborate and communicate with each other in a friendly atmosphere.

SCIENCE

98. The provision for science is good and all pupils achieve well. The majority of pupils entered Year 1 with a knowledge and understanding of the world that is barely at the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are still below, but much closer to, the levels expected nationally in all areas of the subject. This is because the majority of pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language or have only recently joined the school. By the end of Year 6 an above average number of pupils in Year 6 attained the expected levels but very few attained at the higher level. Standards vary from year to year because there are more pupils with special educational needs, or who have recently entered the school, in some Year 6 groups. There are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls.

99. Strengths in the teaching and learning of science are:

- A programme of work that places a strong emphasis on practical scientific enquiry and experimentation. Topics are revisited regularly as pupils move through the school.
- Good use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Good, and frequently very good, teaching.
- Pupils' enjoyment of the subject.

Areas for improvement are:

- To make better use of the new assessment procedures, as planned.
- To provide more opportunities for pupils to use bullet points for some of their writing so that they are able to concentrate on the details they are writing rather than constructing careful sentences.

100. Pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding of what plants need to grow. They know that light and water are essential and that plants need ground for their roots. Pupils in Year 2 know the life cycle of a frog and see the change to a 'frogpole' as an important stage in the life cycle. They describe every stage clearly in an ICT lesson when they are writing their own contribution for a book about the frog. They are fascinated by the seeds inside fruits and classify fruits and vegetables with confidence. In their discussion they broaden their vocabulary extremely purposefully.

101. Pupils in Year 3 follow the light of a torch very carefully to measure the shadows produced from different angles and see clearly how it alters according to its height from their boards. They compare lengths of shadow, reasoning well why they have altered. When they go outside to check their findings the sun disappears behind the clouds. Minutes later everyone cheers, the sun has come out again! One pupil asks, 'Where does the sun go when it leaves us?'. The teacher provides a very suitable demonstration to show the class what happens at the end of the day.

102. Pupils in Year 4 explain the assembly of an electrical circuit with clear understanding. One girl enthusiastically explains why there are situations in which electricity is not safe. Pupils watch carefully as the teacher produces many items, which may or may not conduct electricity. They make very sensible predictions and share the materials they are given on each table very well. Pupils hasten through their tests but with the support

of the teacher think more deeply of why something is a better conductor than another item.

103. Pupils in Year 5 discuss the details on a daffodil with each other very sensibly and produce good observational drawings of the flowers. These good quality drawings enhance their work on the life cycle of plants. Pupils in Year 6 know what happens when liquids are dissolved, and present work on gravity neatly. They recall how food chains are established and work out their own series of food chains quickly and sensibly. Pupils use the Internet to acquire additional information about different food chains during an ICT lesson. They work well to a time target and take note of the strategies for working the chain out suggested by the teacher.
104. Teaching and learning are predominantly very good. Teachers use a wide range of interesting resources and ensure that pupils are purposefully involved in a range of practical activities. They take care to give pupils clear explanations and instructions and organise the pupils in to pairs so that they may help each other. This enables pupils with special needs to make good progress. The practical work develops pupils' social skills very effectively, for example in taking turns. Scientific terms are introduced and used correctly. Teachers plan well and encourage pupils to work out conclusions for themselves. For example, the teacher in Year 2 asks, 'What have you learnt today?'. This leads pupils to look again at the list of fruits and vegetables on the board and decide that something they thought was a fruit at the beginning of the lesson is instead a vegetable.
105. There are some good examples of marking pupils' work to help pupils improve. Some pupils try very hard to write grammatically correct conclusions and sometimes forget to include all the major points. They may find it helpful to itemise the points so they do not lose marks in assessment. Teachers and support staff frequently record what a lower-attaining pupil says about the outcome of an experiment. This enables them to check pupils' levels of understanding of the task and helps pupils to achieve their best before they move their learning on and deepen their understanding.
106. The co-ordinator is new to the subject but has already introduced new guidelines and systems of assessment. This is an improvement. She, with the support of the head teacher, is leading the subject forward well. There is very effective use of literacy, numeracy and ICT in the subject and resources are good. Science makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Provision is good. Attainment in art has improved since the last inspection, when older pupils' standards were below average. Standards are now above average across the school, particularly in two-dimensional work. Pupils have good control over tools and media such as paint, and so create high standards of mark-making in a good range of styles and materials. Their work is displayed prominently in classrooms, halls and corridors, showing the good progress pupils make in the subject overall. They understand famous artists' work well and make good links between this work and their own. Painting in particular is good throughout the school.
108. Three-dimensional work is appropriately represented in the pupils' curriculum and standards are average overall. Standards are often above average in the decoration and embellishment of pupils' three-dimensional work. Older pupils' small clay masks, for example, based on their studies of African artefacts, show good application of colour to well constructed faces. Year 2's large sculpture of a man being made during a lesson shows average standards and very good collaborative effort and enjoyment in making it together. Pupils' achievements in art are good and they progress well in all aspects of the subject. This is because of consistently good teaching and good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the curriculum on the part of staff.
109. No teaching of older pupils could be seen on inspection, but teaching overall is good. The lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 showed teachers creating good habits in art learning, for instance in their introduction of a good range of two and three-dimensional artists' work, which pupils study during their projects. Year 1 for example, was using fabrics from different ethnic sources to understand pattern. The teacher used these very effectively to teach the skills of painting and of embellishing work with other media to enhance and refine the pattern. Year 2 benefited well from a computer program, which enabled them to see many different sculptors and sculptures before they made their own large model themselves. They also have a very good classroom display of sculpture and books about sculptors to inspire them.
110. Resources are used very effectively in these and other ways across the school. A good assortment of pictures by well known artists, draped fabrics from a variety of different ethnic sources on display and so on, all serve well to heighten pupils' awareness of visual media. Teachers also enable pupils to become critics of others' work at a young age, so this skill becomes instinctive and natural, as they get older. In Year 1, pupils walked round the 'gallery' of the class's work, encouraged to give positive comments about others' pictures. This good understanding of the art curriculum is a key strength of teaching, which prepares pupils very well for work in later years.
111. Teachers also make very good use of external resources such as residential and day trips, visits from local artists and other artists in residence, to give pupils a wider experience of media they would not otherwise encounter. Their curriculum is excellently enriched by these opportunities. An unusual photographic project with nursery pupils, for example, made by children lying on photographic paper surrounded by interesting objects has provided the school with large panels for the hall. In an assembly, Year 4 displayed very proudly their collages of cityscapes based on the work of Mies van der Rohe, which they had developed in a visit to the Whitechapel Gallery. Photographs in their classroom also show some of them developing a similar collage in much larger scale in the gallery itself. Their writing shows they have learned very well from this experience. Year 3 have also linked recent good paintings of animals with written work, much of which is displayed in the dining room. Year 5 have created very sensitive self-

portraits, which are also well linked to written work in English about their aspirations for their lives when they are 25. Year 6's recent studies about perspective are well associated with Lowry's work and support pupils' learning of the space and shape aspects of mathematics, which are difficult for many pupils.

112. The subject is well managed and provision for art has improved significantly since the last report. The rich curriculum and good understanding on the teachers' part enable pupils to succeed well in all aspects of the subject. Year 6 have recently acquired sketchbooks and the plans to provide these for all pupils will help to raise standards further. More direct observational drawing and annotation of pupils' work in sketchbooks and elsewhere, by simple comments in writing of their thoughts about work, are the next steps for development. The subject currently contributes very significantly to pupils' spiritual and cultural development, creating a sense of pride and achievement, successfully celebrated across the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Provision is good. Attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. This is an improvement. Pupils gain a good understanding of design and technology and develop the full range of skills. Pupils have separate lessons in design and technology and frequently use skills learned in design technology within other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they usually work with someone who is able to support their learning.
114. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have a clear understanding of the design and making process. They plan and design interesting models and colourful masks to enhance their telling of the story of Rama and Sita. In afternoon workshops, pupils make clay containers of a very high standard. Pupils in Year 3 design a sandwich snack. They search for words in French and English to label their sandwiches and use a dictionary to spell 'picnic'. They make mouse finger puppets, very carefully writing clear instructions on how to make them. Pupils in Year 4 link their work on electrical circuits with the construction of alarms very thoughtfully. This reinforces their understanding of how circuits work well. They make interesting and carefully constructed models with a visiting artist. Pupils in Year 5 make interesting constructions with construction bricks because they are encouraged to produce good quality finished work. Pupils in Year 6 construct delightful glove puppets by stitching two pieces of felt together. They design these puppets well, showing great attention to detail as they cut pieces of material to make stripes for a football shirt, ribbons for an apron and add cross-stitch to their friend's work to improve it. Both boys and girls find this activity very satisfying and work hard to produce an attractive puppet on which there is a range of neatly worked stitches.
115. Teaching and learning is good because teachers plan lessons thoughtfully. They emphasise the need for good-quality final models and encourage pupils to check their designs against finished products. There is always an emphasis on learning skills, broadening knowledge and understanding the processes used.
116. The subject is led and managed well and the co-ordinator has interesting ideas to develop the subject further. Resources are good and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Provision for learning is good. Pupils' standards in geography match the national expectations in all years. Pupils make good progress in understanding geographical

concepts such as distance, place and other key geographical concepts, and they can often talk well about their learning. Many pupils have much more difficulty in recording down their learning because their writing itself, is weak. This is often, but not always, because they are learners of English as an additional language and can speak the language better than they can write it. Young pupils can talk about the travels of 'Barnaby Bear' who goes travelling to different countries, describing what he sees there and how this differs from home. The fact that many families came from distant places is helpful to pupils' developing understanding of comparisons and differences, particularly as they get older. Many have travelled with families to visit relatives, and some have been on holidays at home and abroad, so can use these experiences in their discussions.

118. History and geography are appropriately linked in pupils' minds when they are younger, but these ideas are appropriately separated as they move towards Year 6, which is beneficial for their understanding of the curriculum later. Pupils' achievements in understanding important geographical ideas are good. The Year 4 lesson about an Indian village, for example, showed that pupils understand well aspects of human geography, as they compared a day in their own lives with that of children in this village. Although writing here was below average, pupils could explain orally many ideas about similarities and differences to average levels of competence.
119. Although lessons were only seen in Years 3 and 4, other evidence shows that teaching overall is at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers understand the curriculum appropriately and use the resources they have to enable pupils to expand their geographical knowledge satisfactorily. In the Year 3 lesson, for example, the teacher used pictures of cold and warm places appropriately to enable pupils to understand, for example, that vegetation is different and that clothes required there are different. Lessons are well planned and structured so that pupils acquire experience in using their oral skills to explain learning. Writing is below average but adequately records main geographical ideas. Mathematical notions such as distance, are satisfactorily reinforced through pupils' geography learning. Teachers relate current events and other areas of pupils' curriculum appropriately to geography, for instance through the 'What's in the news' theme which runs through older pupils' learning. Learning about the water cycle is also well linked to science, when pupils study river systems and climate. Pupils' studies of traffic flow locally, include the collection and recording of data, which link appropriately with aspects of mathematics and pupils use ICT well to record this.
120. The co-ordinator has recently taken on other whole-school responsibilities and is aware of developments required for the subject. Further training for staff, for example, is planned. Better assessment of pupils' standards, as in other non-core subjects of the curriculum, also requires improvement in order to evaluate not only the pupils' learning but also the effectiveness of teaching..

HISTORY

121. Provision for learning is good. Most pupils of whatever ability or background make at least good progress and attain nationally expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. At both years, a significant proportion of pupils exceed these expected standards. This is because teaching is usually good or better and pupils show interest and are determined to do their best. Many pupils are learning English as an additional language, or have other learning problems. Skilled support helps these pupils to learn but, at times, their incomplete understanding of the words and concepts involved blocks them from writing down what they 'know in their heads'.

122. An example of this very good learning and teaching in history is in Year 2. When comparing seaside holidays now with holidays 100 years ago, the teacher used cross-references to other subjects to deepen skilfully and broaden significantly the pupils' understanding. This deepened historical awareness bore fruit when they went on to study Mary Seacole's work in the Crimean war. However, language problems frustrated the pupils' ability to write down what they could eagerly talk about. Even so, written work in Years 5 and 6 shows considerable ability to understand how events and discoveries change human lives and to write in ways that show good understanding of, for example, what it meant to be evacuated during World War Two.
123. The subject is well led and managed and resources are good. The pupils' learning is significantly enriched by visits to historical places of interest, in particular to gain a sense of period and learn from evidence. The subject makes a considerable contribution to the pupils' personal development because teachers help them to respond emotionally and not simply to learn the facts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

124. Provision for ICT is good and has improved significantly. Pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below those expected nationally but are rapidly improving because of the very good resources and extensive staff training since last September. The building of the ICT suite and the availability of enough computers for all pupils in each class to participate fully in lessons have had a dramatic impact on pupils' learning and acquisition of skills. However, the older pupils in the school have not yet benefited sufficiently from the new resources to raise their skills to standards expected for their age. The interactive white board is used very well. Every class has two timetabled sessions each week in the suite, and pupils in Year 5 and 6 are to go to a local secondary school for additional lessons in the summer term. Pupils make good progress because of the good teaching.
125. Pupils in Year 1 explore a program to produce a range of graphs about favourite and least favourite things. Their skills in finding keys, logging on and off the computer and following instructions are at least in line with expected standards. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the use of all of the keys they have used previously. They know the titles of the programs they use and work confidently and accurately to word process sentences. They select their own font, print their work and log-off from the program when they have completed their work. Pupils in Year 3 find patterns on a number square very quickly. They select their own level of challenge in the task and move quickly on to more complex work using number lines. They share and exchange ideas with others and use instructions from adults effectively to improve their accuracy. Pupils know how to go back to the screen showing the first program to move on to a second program. They explain their reasoning and strategies very well. Pupils in Year 4 extend their work on repeating patterns. They know how to copy and resize their drawings. Pupils confidently save their work in their own folders and print it out.
126. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 complete spreadsheets very skilfully and know how to produce a wide range of graphs. All pupils use the Internet for research and have sent and exchanged e-mail with local schools. This is shortly to be extended to e-mail with pupils in schools in other countries. Teaching and learning are good, and frequently very good. It is particularly good in teaching key skills in numeracy and supporting work in literacy, science and art. Teachers make good use of the resources and plan how pupils will work in pairs very thoughtfully so that pupils support each other's learning well.

127. Pupils look forward to their ICT lessons and enjoy their success. They are confident, work hard and explain how they complete tasks clearly.
128. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to ensure that maximum use is made of the suite and that standards improve as rapidly as possible. The support from the EAZ has been invaluable and made this progress possible. There are plans to have an additional interactive white board in Year 6. On Friday afternoons, parents work in the suite and are enjoying the experience and the progress they make. The use of ICT across the curriculum is very good. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH)

129. Provision for French is good because opportunities to learn the language are offered to all pupils. Under this exciting initiative, pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 study French in weekly lessons with a French teacher. All pupils make good progress because of the good teaching and their enthusiasm for learning another language.
130. Pupils show that they understand single words and short phrases. Pupils in Year 1 enjoy the French songs they learn and the delightful elephant puppet, Babar. They answer the register in French and recall much of the vocabulary used well. Lessons build systematically on each other, with all pupils improving their confidence in answering the register and increasing their knowledge of days of the week, months, and numbers from ten in Year 1 to 30 in Year 4. Pupils who attend the after-school club count up to 50 because of the additional opportunities to use numbers. Pupils in Year 4 understand questions such as 'What date is it?' or 'What do you want from the shop?' and answer in French. There is a good emphasis on learning whether words are male or female so pupils learn French words correctly from an early stage. Both boys and girls contribute enthusiastically to the lessons because they find them fun and challenging.
131. Teaching and learning are very good over time because the lessons are planned well and contain many different activities that reinforce vocabulary learned previously in enjoyable ways. Pupils look forward to the 'fishing game', which is used in a very structured way so that it offers greater challenge to older pupils. During the term pupils have some opportunities to write although the emphasis is on listening and speaking. The teacher reads French books to the children and discusses the story in French and English with pupils. They enjoy this activity.
132. Lunchtime and after-school clubs are well attended and give pupils additional opportunities to improve their skills in speaking French and learning about French customs and culture. Older pupils spend Euros to buy goods from a shop and find this very exciting. In their assembly, pupil in Year 4 choose to sing a French song, 'Frere Jacques', as part of their celebration of work they do in school. Everyone joins in happily because this is a good example of the experiences they share as a school. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development as well as their general understanding of language.

MUSIC

133. Provision for learning is very good. Standards in music are above average by Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 because teaching and learning are excellent. Pupils progress very well in the subject because they hugely enjoy their lessons and all the other opportunities provided. Pupils in all years learn very well, work hard and develop very

high levels of self-confidence and personal development because of this excellent provision.

134. Pupils in all years sing well. Their pitch, sense of rhythm and keeping time are very good, producing singing in lessons, assemblies and other incidental examples, which is above average for their ages. Pupils sing hymns and songs in assembly with gusto and vigour, producing a pleasant, harmonious sound. Many lessons showed pupils' sense of rhythm and tempo to be above average as they clapped, played and sang many different types of music. In Year 2, for example, the whole class can sing different parts of a song individually, or as a chorus with an unusual degree of confidence and skill. Singing and chants are well pitched, with pupils remembering and repeating the often complex rhythms in an African song very well. They also move very well to music, showing high sensitivity to tempo and rests, and sensing accurately when to stop moving because the music comes to an end. By Year 2, standards are above average and progress has been very good.
135. Older pupils maintain this very good progress in their music learning. By Year 5, standards seen in a lesson were also above average in singing, with increased levels of confidence leading to pupils being very willing to volunteer to sing short passages solo. Pupils' huge enjoyment in singing is palpable in lessons such as this. The class's singings of scales, and of songs in a round were above average here. Their work on pitched instruments such as glockenspiels, xylophones and chime-bars also showed pupils' above average ability to work out and repeat rhythms. When they hear new music from a tape, they can reproduce pitch and tempo accurately, rapidly enhancing this with variations of their own. They can sing passages with confidence and later reproduce them on instruments in pairs. Pupils respond very effectively to the teacher's instructions to reduce or increase the pace of the music they play. Pupils in a group taken from Year 6 could also deal well with 'rhythm grids', a type of emerging notation. Here, most could clap and later play on drums the different bars of music to create differing rhythms for performance with different instruments. All aspects of composing and performance are good. In this older age group, attainment is also above average overall and pupils' achievement and progress remain very good.
136. These high standards come about because of excellent teaching. The school is very fortunate to have a part-time specialist whose high levels of skill and expertise lead to such excellent learning in pupils of all abilities. Pupils' enjoyment, success and fulfilment in their musical experience are a strength of the school. Class teachers too, are ideally placed to learn from this very good model of music teaching. When whole-classes have lessons, class teachers join in and derive great enjoyment from their pupils' achievements. They are also able to help to avoid the occasional misbehaviour of a few pupils. The specialist enthuses pupils with a love of music and of what they can do, which leads to excellent personal development through the subject. Highly effective class management means that lessons zip along at a very fast pace, so pupils get an unusually rich experience of all aspects of the music curriculum. Pupils listen very well because the music they hear is very relevant to them, often coming from other cultures, with rhythms which make them want to move, sing, play and join in. A very good range of extra-curricular opportunities also lead to pupils' much greater involvement than usual in musical activity. Choir, recorder groups, country dancing etc are all available because of the involvement of a specialist. The school's productions show the success of drama and are a very good opportunity to include pupils' musical performances for public celebration. Peripatetic instrumental provision is limited to drumming, where a group of younger pupils seen were doing well with their teacher.

137. Management of music is very good. Assemblies are a further opportunity to celebrate pupils' achievements, even when the specialist is absent. The head teacher's musical competences are used very well here and are a good model for pupils. The school has staff training planned for the immediate future, so that the excellent competences described may be extended to class teachers. Music has improved very significantly from the time of the last report and is now a key strength of the school. It provides an area in which pupils gain confidence and imparts very good development to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of their lives.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Provision is good. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally. All pupils including those with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress because of the good range of activities and the good teaching. There is no longer an element of unsatisfactory progress for higher attaining pupils. This is an improvement.
139. Pupils in Year 1 concentrated very well on dribbling a football across the playground. They moved their feet on and off the ball with a good level of agility. Pupils in Year 2 threw a small ball to each other but found it very difficult to aim the ball carefully at their partner. Pupils passed the ball to a partner who was holding a hockey stick. The partner stopped the ball, as shown by the teacher, before passing it back. Pupils do this well. They became very excited when they prepared to play in a team game.
140. Pupils in Year 3 practised a dance using large gestures. They worked sensibly in small groups, observed each other and made thoughtful comments about each other's performance. They worked hard to please and tried to be inventive. Pupils in Year 4 played a game of 'Unihoc'. They dribbled and passed the ball to each other with good control. Although they were excited there was no wild behaviour or lack of control of the sticks. Pupils in Year 6 learned how to plan a game with twelve members of a team. They listened carefully to the teacher and worked out what positions they could usefully have in a six-a-side game. They played with enthusiasm and were determined to carry on when the rain came.
141. The quality of teaching and learning is good and teachers encourage pupils to give thoughtful demonstrations of their work. There is a brief warm up at the beginning of lessons and cool down at the end. Teachers have high expectations of the level of skill pupils will require. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure that pupils build on their skills and understanding systematically. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and are keen to succeed. They know the benefits of doing exercise and are enthusiastic team members.
142. The subject is led and managed well. Last year there was additional training in dance for staff. This has increased confidence in teaching dance and has had good results. All aspects of the curriculum are covered over the year. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim before they leave the school and are confident in the water. Swimming is a very enjoyable additional activity during the residential visit. This visit provides many opportunities for outdoor activities. Through the many clubs and team activities pupils have very good opportunities to participate in a wide range of games and individual sports for example, in dance and football. Physical education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because of the opportunities for working together and learning how to become a member of a team.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. Provision for learning is good. Although they join Year 1 with low attainment, most pupils make good progress and achieve standards that match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain these standards and a significant proportion exceeds them. Pupils of all abilities and cultures make good progress because the curriculum is well planned. There is a good balance between gaining knowledge and taking opportunities to reflect on how this changes and enriches the pupils' and other lives. The good teaching enables depth and breadth in the pupils' learning. Above all, the good progress is sustained because both pupils and also teachers treat the subject seriously and as covering topics of real importance.
144. As pupils move up the school, they learn how to think about topics that are based upon belief rather than proof. Teachers give them time to reflect quietly upon such as the 'new life' tree in Year 1. They grasp quickly yet deeply that stories can give us spiritual and moral truth that is not based simply upon events that have actually happened. They cover a good range of world religions and especially those represented within the school. In a school assembly, Year 4 pupils chose to tell others about their study of Islam, and in Year 5 pupils learned about the 'seder' meal from a Jewish visitor to the school. In Year 6, the work shows not only correct and secure knowledge but also a willingness and ability to think themselves into the meaning of what they learn.
145. The most effective teaching gives pupils quiet time to reflect alongside learning new information. The teachers ask questions that help pupils think through things for themselves. The pupils catch their teachers' enthusiasm that belief is a central part of being human, especially as they see this is in other subjects for example, ancient Egypt in history. The significance of religion threads itself throughout the curriculum. When less effective, teachers do not have completely secure subject knowledge and this leads them to ask questions that need only simple answers. In most lessons, pupils make good progress, willing to share ideas and ask probing questions.
146. The subject is well led and managed and resources are adequate. The school could investigate forming stronger links with local faith communities and making quiet reflection time a greater priority in lessons. Displays are stimulating and celebrate the pupils' achievements and major religious festivals such as Diwali and Eid. Even so, the school could seek ways to have more permanent displays that mark more explicitly the religious faiths represented in the school.