

INSPECTION REPORT

ETRUSCAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 133328

Headteacher: Mrs G Beech

Lead inspector: Mrs J Hicks

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th December 2003

Inspection number: 255281

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	210
School address:	Dundee Road Etruria Stoke-on-Trent
Postcode:	ST1 4BS
Telephone number:	01782 235711
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Joines
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Etruscan Primary is a community primary school that opened in January 2003. It is housed in new, purpose-built accommodation on a site previously occupied by an infant school. This was amalgamated with a primary school, now closed, which was situated about two miles away. Many pupils from the former primary school now travel to the school by bus each day. Because of the disruption caused by demolition and building work, the turnover of pupils in recent months has been very high (more than 30 per cent), but this is now settling down. The school is part of a local Education Action Zone, designed to help raise educational standards in the area.

The new school is a one-form entry primary school of average size, with a nursery class providing 26 full-time places. There are currently 210 pupils aged 3 to 11 on roll. Some infant classes are over-subscribed, but there are unfilled places in the juniors. Etruscan serves two distinct, socially disadvantaged communities, one in the immediate neighbourhood of the school and the other on the far side of a major trunk road. Almost two-thirds of the pupils are from Asian family backgrounds, originating in Pakistan or Bangladesh, and many of these pupils do not speak English at home. Around a quarter of the pupils are at an early stage in learning English when they start school. Most of the rest are from local white families. There are three pupils whose families are refugees or asylum seekers of European or African origin.

Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Etruscan Primary has an average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mainly moderate learning difficulties. This includes two pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2063	Mrs Judith Hicks	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education English as an additional language
9086	Mrs Rosalie Watkins	Lay inspector	
22352	Mrs Frankie Gaywood	Team inspector	English Geography History The Foundation Stage curriculum
32401	Mr Nigel Minns	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Personal, social and health education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Etruscan Primary is a good school with a lot of potential and it provides satisfactory value for money. The school promotes strong, positive values and relationships are very good. From a low starting point, the pupils achieve well in the most successful classes and make steady progress overall. However, many of the older pupils have had their education disrupted in the past and are not yet reaching their full potential, so standards in the current Year 6 are below average overall and well below in mathematics. The school is led well and managed effectively by the headteacher and other senior staff.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All staff respect the different faiths, cultures and languages represented in the school and help pupils to do the same.
- The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual and moral development.
- There is very good teaching in the Foundation Stage¹ and teaching is generally good throughout the school.
- Support for pupils who have English as an additional language is highly effective and well managed.
- Standards in mathematics are not yet high enough, especially in the juniors.
- The school is led well, but the newly established governing body is not yet challenging and supporting senior staff effectively.

As Etruscan is a new school that has not been inspected before, school improvement has not been evaluated.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	N/A	N/A	D	B
mathematics	N/A	N/A	E*	E
science	N/A	N/A	E	D

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average;

E* - lowest 5% nationally

Similar schools are those whose pupils had comparable results at the end of Year 2.

The school opened in January 2003, so there are no results for 2001 or 2002.

Overall, the pupils' achievement is sound, but it is good in the Foundation Stage and in the infant classes. Steady progress is made in the junior classes, with good achievement in Year 6.

Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and reach many of the 'early learning goals'² by the time they enter Year 1. However, few children reach the expected level in communication, language and literacy and their overall attainment is below average. The pupils continue to do well in the infant classes. By the end of Year 2, standards are still below average in English and mathematics, but attainment in most other subjects is broadly average for the age-group. In the present Year 6, standards are below average in English and science and well below in

¹ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

² The early learning goals set out what children are expected to achieve by the end of the reception year.

mathematics, but standards are typical of the age-group in information and communication technology, religious education and most other subjects.

Provision for the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, is very good. With strong leadership in this area, staff succeed in inculcating a deep understanding and respect for the beliefs and traditions of the different groups represented in the school. The pupils enjoy learning and have very positive attitudes to their work. They work together well, and behaviour, with occasional exceptions, is good. Despite the best efforts of staff, however, attendance is well below the national average and some pupils regularly arrive late in the morning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good overall, with strengths in the Foundation Stage and in some other year groups. There is no unsatisfactory teaching, but mathematics is not taught with the same flair as English. There is good specialist teaching in music and gymnastics. Some classroom support staff make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning. The curriculum meets the individual needs of all the pupils well and effective use is made of visits and visitors from the community. Good care is taken to keep the pupils safe and to promote their health. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and, despite the aftermath of recent upheavals, they have a satisfactory relationship with the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Both leadership and management are good, with some clear strengths. The headteacher and her senior colleagues have a clear vision for the future, want the best for their pupils and are firmly committed to the values of respecting others and equality of opportunity for all. The school has a dedicated core of key staff, which includes members of the support staff. The task of establishing and taking forward the new school has been tackled sensitively and imaginatively. The governing body, established in January 2003, has only recently achieved a full complement of members. Individual governors are working hard and all the right structures are in place, but the governing body is not yet exercising sufficient influence on school development and is not in a strong position to challenge and support the senior management team. The school fulfils all its statutory responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has established a sound partnership with parents, even though it faces the challenge of serving two geographically separate communities. Most parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting or filled in a questionnaire expressed support for the school. Nearly all the pupils enjoy school very much and are proud to be a part of the Etruscan community.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school, especially in the juniors, ensuring that the teaching of mathematics becomes consistently good.
- Develop the role of the governing body so that it is in a position play a more active part and take greater responsibility for school development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is sound overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage, generally good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in the current Year 6 are making good progress. Overall standards are below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because of the consistently high standard of teaching.
- Because of the quality of support provided, pupils who speak a community language at home do well in their acquisition of English.
- Standards in English, although below the national average, are better than in many similar schools.
- In mathematics, standards are well below average by the end of Year 6 and, in general, pupils are not doing as well in this subject as in others.
- Attention to the development of investigative skills is starting to raise standards in science.
- The pupils achieve well in religious education throughout the school.

Commentary

1. The pupils at Etruscan took their first national tests in summer 2003, within a few months of the opening of the new school, and it is, therefore, not possible to comment on trends. Numbers in each of the relevant year-groups were relatively small and there had been a significant turnover of pupils. For these reasons these first results need to be interpreted with considerable caution.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003³

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.6 (N/A)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (N/A)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.4 (N/A)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. As shown by the table above, the Year 2 national test results in summer 2003 were below the national average in writing and mathematics, and well below average in reading, but the pupils performed better in all three areas than most schools with a similar intake. Some pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics, but fewer than the national average. In writing, no pupils reached Level 3, but nearly half reached a level (Level 2A) that was only a little lower.

³ **Average Points Scores.** The average points scores table compares the school's performance with the national results. The calculations are arrived at by using the total of all test scores gained by pupils, and dividing the total by the number of pupils with a test result. This calculation is carried out for each subject tested.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (N/A)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.2 (N/A)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	26.1 (N/A)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The results achieved in English by the pupils who were in Year 6 last year were below the national average, but above average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was broadly in line with the national average, suggesting that teaching in this subject was suitably challenging. In science, however, test results were well below the national average, and below average when compared with similar schools. The results in mathematics were very poor and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Only one pupil reached the higher Level 5 in this subject, and there was a 'tail' of pupils with very weak results.
4. On entry to nursery, the attainment of many of the children is well below average, especially in communication, language and literacy. About half of the children speak little English when they first start school. With very well-organised and enthusiastic teaching, they make good progress through the Foundation Stage and most are on track to reach many of the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. Overall, standards are below average at the end of the Foundation Stage, largely because attainment is below average in communication, language and literacy. The children do better than average in physical development, however. Very good bilingual support contributes to the progress made by children from families with an Asian family background.
5. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, continue to achieve well in the infant classes, especially in Year 2. Pupils in the current Year 2 are reaching standards that are not far below average in English and mathematics, whilst attainment in most other subjects is broadly average for the age-group. The pupils listen attentively and talk confidently, showing secure general understanding. Those who have English as an additional language receive highly effective support from bilingual assistants and other staff, enabling them to make the same good progress as the rest. Many pupils are beginning to read with good technical accuracy, and about half are already writing fluently and independently, needing a minimum of adult support. They are developing a sound understanding of the number system and are beginning to grasp the idea of place value (tens and units). In science, the pupils make reasonable predictions, undertake practical work sensibly and use charts and tables to record their findings. Their skills in information and communication technology are average for the age-group. The pupils show interest and enthusiasm in all their work.
6. The pupils are currently making steady progress in the junior classes, and are achieving well in Year 6. However, some of the older pupils have significant gaps in their skills and understanding as a result of past disruption to their learning. This presents a significant barrier to raising standards. In the present Year 6, standards are below average in English and in science, despite improving investigative skills. Standards are well below average in mathematics, where overall levels of numeracy remain low. Standards are typical of the age group in information and communication technology, religious education and most other subjects, but below average in art and design. The pupils are articulate and confident speakers, and all make good contributions to discussion. This includes pupils from Asian families who use English as an additional language. Despite the best efforts of the staff, however, subtler shades of meaning are sometimes lost on the pupils, and this can affect their understanding of what they read. Standards of writing have improved recently as a result of a whole-school initiative, but there is further to go in improving handwriting and presentation. One

strength of the older pupils is their ability to support one another in discussing and solving problems, for example when they talk about the work they have done in science.

7. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported, although this support is better for language and literacy than for mathematics. They generally keep up with their classmates and make similar progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, and behaviour is good. Their personal development is very good because staff promote their cultural, social, spiritual and moral understanding so well. Attendance is much lower than in many primary schools and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are helped to consider the needs of others, and to show a sensitive respect for other cultures and beliefs, so the school is a happy community.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and are mostly very keen to work, although a few lapse occasionally into distracting behaviour.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes show great interest in all their activities, because staff make sure learning is fun for them.
- A minority of pupils are often absent from school without sufficient reason, despite the school's continuing efforts to improve attendance.

Commentary

8. Pupils have a strong sense of community because of the very good example and guidance they receive in lessons, assemblies and around the school. Friendly, caring attitudes between pupils of different ages are clear to see. Older ones at times show a remarkably mature approach. For instance, a high level of respect for others is evident when they explain how staff help them understand one another's religious beliefs. Similarly, they have a firm grasp of right and wrong, and appreciate the way that staff help them to improve their own behaviour. Pupils recognise each other's good qualities regardless of ethnic or other differences. They respond eagerly to the opportunity to award one another 'smiley' certificates for particular kindness, for entry in a weekly prize draw. The friendly atmosphere leaves little room for bullying, and staff quickly resolve the few problems that arise. It is very rare for any racial tensions present in the local community to be reflected within the school.
9. The school is highly effective in promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils, especially through assemblies and the programme of religious education. Collective worship is thoughtfully tailored to the particular needs of the school's multi-faith community, and, as a result, all the pupils are comfortable to participate in celebration and reflection in a way that is relevant to them and includes everyone.
10. In lessons, pupils are usually keen to learn, and this contributes to the progress they make. Those with special educational needs are as well motivated as others because of the good support they receive. Similarly any pupils who need extra explanations in their own first language remain interested and involved because bilingual support staff are quick to meet their needs. A few pupils, especially in the Year 1 class, find it hard to behave as they know they ought. At times, they need frequent prompts to help them concentrate. At such times, their progress slows somewhat. The behaviour of the individuals involved is improving, however, because good strategies are used to support them. There has been one exclusion since the school opened.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	51		
White – any other White background	2		
Mixed – White and Black African	1	1	
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	77		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	11		
Black or Black British – African	3		
Any other ethnic group	5		

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

11. Children in the nursery and reception classes behave very well and join enthusiastically in all the activities. They take great interest both in the opportunities they choose for themselves and also in games and activities led by staff. Though their co-operative skills are relatively low on entry, they develop a good grasp of the need to share equipment and to take turns. They are well on course to achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year.
12. The low attendance arises partly because of absences of many pupils on particular days for the acceptable reason of religious observance. However, concerns arise about the erratic attendance of a sizeable minority of pupils, who often miss school without good reason. These frequent absentees include a greater proportion of white pupils than of others. Very good efforts are made both to help parents grasp the importance of children's attending regularly and also to motivate pupils to come to school. There are signs that the school's efforts are succeeding; one class, enthused by the high profile rewards for attendance, often manages a weekly attendance of over 95 per cent. Attendance was a little higher in the weeks leading up to the inspection than in the two previous terms.
13. Long absences of a few pupils on family holidays in Pakistan also cause some concern because of the work they miss. However, these absences are not reflected in attendance statistics because pupils who go away for an unknown period are taken off roll and only rejoin the school if a place is available when they return.
14. Punctuality is unsatisfactory. A trickle of latecomers comes in after the start of the day's activities. This is usually because their parents do not bring them to school on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.0	School data	1.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Strengths include the high-quality provision in the Foundation Stage and the level of support for pupils' individual learning needs. The

curriculum is broad and well balanced. There is good attention to pupils' welfare. The school is developing a satisfactory partnership with parents and has good relationships with the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery and reception classes and good throughout the rest of the school. Arrangements for assessing pupils' achievements are effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Around one third of lessons are of a very good standard, and there are no indications of unsatisfactory teaching.
- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are consistent strengths.
- English is taught well, with highly effective use of bilingual support for learning across the curriculum.
- Teaching is only satisfactory in mathematics.
- Lessons are very thoroughly planned, with particularly good attention to the development of key vocabulary.
- Assessment is good and target setting is highly effective; both contribute to improved learning, and rising standards.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	12 (30%)	18 (45%)	9 (23%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is of a consistently high standard. Provision in the nursery and reception classes is planned as a whole, with first-rate organisation and deployment of the closely-knit staff team. Planning is meticulous, with very good attention to developing spoken language through structured play. The teacher, nursery nurses and assistants all have an unfailing enthusiasm that draws the children into a rich variety of imaginative activities, involving all. Bilingual assistants ensure that all the children understand what is going on and know that they can communicate in their home language as well as English. The children respond with excitement and interest, soon developing the confidence to 'have a go'. With very positive relationships and praise for good behaviour, they soon learn to share and take turns, and understand that calling out is not accepted. Overall, their learning is very good.
- Teaching and learning are good overall in the infant and junior classes, with strengths in Years 2, 4 and 6. Because of the consistent quality of the most effective teaching, the pupils learn well and they make good progress in these classes. Teaching in all the other year groups is competent, resulting in steady achievement overall. Throughout the school, positive features of the teaching include:
 - thorough planning, including a focus on key vocabulary for each lesson;
 - good subject knowledge, especially in English, science, physical education and religious education;
 - good relationships with the pupils, so that standards of behaviour are good;
 - effective teamwork with classroom support staff;
 - helpful marking so that the pupils know how to improve their work.
- Staff have given much thought to the development of teaching and learning throughout the school, and there is a constructive, professional approach to monitoring and self-review. One

result has been the introduction of 'brain gym', which typically consists of short bursts of physical activity to music, designed to break up spells of listening or sedentary activities. In the episodes seen, this was done with great panache and a sense of fun. It was enjoyable and enhanced learning by giving the pupils time to refocus their thoughts. Teachers' planning shows that the different ways in which pupils learn is taken into account, so, for example, material may be presented in diagrammatic as well as verbal form. This is one of the many ways in which the school makes every effort to cater for the individual needs of all its pupils. Another example is the care taken to understand and respect the pupils' different home backgrounds at all times. One of the classroom support staff, a member of a neighbouring mosque, provides invaluable help in bridging cultural gaps, for example in art and religious education lessons, also providing a respected role model for the Muslim boys.

18. Teachers' planning shows generally good attention to the learning needs of pupils of different abilities, although this is not as strong in mathematics as in most other subjects. Those with special educational needs are supported effectively and enabled to keep up with their classmates. In year groups where the teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, however, there are some indications that the most capable pupils are not sufficiently stretched. For example, pupils' books showed use of the same undemanding worksheet for all the pupils in a science lesson in the juniors and, in the same class, pupils had copied from the board, rather than using their own words to explain their findings.
19. English is taught well and, as a result, learning and achievement are good in this subject. The attention given to the development of the pupils' spoken English throughout the school and in each subject of the curriculum is a particular strength, helping pupils to increase their vocabulary and improve their sentence structure. Highly effective support for pupils learning English as an additional language is provided throughout the school by bilingual assistants and the other staff. There is judicious use of translation and plenty of opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas in their home language. During the inspection, this was seen in many subjects, including science, art and design and religious education. As a result, these pupils become confident learners who are developing a secure command of English. Teachers' expertise in the teaching of literacy has been further enhanced by a recent and successful initiative to improve the teaching of writing.
20. The teaching of mathematics, although competent, lacks the flair seen in many English and literacy sessions. Positive features include clearly planned objectives for the pupils' learning and effective use of resources, including information and communication technology, to support their understanding. However teaching is not always good enough to ensure that the pupils continue to work at a good pace when they are working independently, and this is sometimes hampering their learning. Not enough thought is given to the development of numerical skills across the curriculum, so there are some lost opportunities.
21. Assessment is a developing strength. Nearly all teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously. The work of the younger pupils is carefully annotated and placed in context, whilst older pupils receive helpful comments that enable them to improve. On occasions there are delightful examples of productive written exchanges between pupil and teacher in one of the junior classes. For the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the pupils are set clear targets related to National Curriculum levels, so they know just how they doing. Targets for investigative skills in science are proving particularly useful in raising standards in this subject.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum offered by the school is broad and balanced and is enriched by a good range of visits and other activities. The school is well staffed and resourced. The newly-built accommodation provides a good environment for learning, but space is tight.

Strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good arrangements to support pupils who speak English as an additional language.
 - Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
 - Visitors from the community and visits in the local area are used effectively to enrich the curriculum.
 - Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
 - Space is limited, especially for physical education.
22. The long-term plan of the curriculum is clear and well organised. National guidance has been intelligently adapted to meet the needs of the pupils in this school. In particular, the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 has been organised to ensure that coherent links are made between different subjects. This is supporting effective learning for the younger pupils.
23. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils. This is significantly enhanced by the contributions of support staff, who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The planned teaching programme is usually matched well to the needs of all pupils. Pupils who use English as an additional language are very well supported by bilingual and other staff. Throughout the school, staff demonstrate that they value the pupils' home languages, for example, by giving regular time to bilingual story-telling.
24. Visits are used effectively across the curriculum to support pupils' learning. Many visits are supported by funding from the Education Action Zone. These visits help to develop pupils' personal and social skills, but are also closely linked to work in the curriculum. Visits such as the school's trip to the seaside provide opportunities for pupils to gain experiences which might not otherwise be available to them.
25. Good use is made of external resources and out-of-school activities. Artists in residence and history groups support learning in specific areas of the curriculum, while the curriculum for physical education is enhanced by a wide range of external coaching, including regular gymnastics and football coaching which is provided for all year groups. The curriculum is further enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities, though these are to some extent limited by the current transport arrangements. These activities include clubs for sewing, reading, board games and recorders, and are held at lunchtimes.
26. Provision for personal, social and health education is not planned and delivered systematically, but is making a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
27. Although this is a new school, the design was restricted by a requirement to build on the foundations of the original building. As a result, there are some limitations to the accommodation. The building is light, airy and attractive, but lacks space. There is, for example, no community room, a priority identified by the school. The curriculum for physical education is restricted by the use of the school hall for dinners.

Care, guidance and support

Staff take good care of pupils and give them good guidance so they know how to improve their work. Support for those with particular individual needs is good. The school takes a satisfactory account of pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very friendly community that takes good care of its pupils so they can feel happy and secure.
- Support is good for any pupils with particular individual needs, especially for those who are learning to use English.

- Staff help pupils to grasp the importance of trying hard and to take responsibility for their own work.

Commentary

28. Children settle down rapidly when they join the nursery class because staff plan so well to support them. Some are assisted, also by prior attendance, at the weekly mother-and-toddler group that offers an early introduction to the school. Those who transfer from other schools into older classes are also helped to cope happily. Pupils are looked after well during all school activities. Parents are happy with the quality of care. The school is alert to meet any individual needs. For instance, bilingual assistants give good support to pupils who use English as an additional language, and there is also effective help for those with special educational needs. The headteacher and other staff persevere with a good degree of success to help any individuals who need to overcome particular behavioural difficulties. Careful attention is given to arrangements for meeting the needs of children in public care and to following up any child protection issues that arise.
29. Good thorough routines are generally in place regarding health and safety. However, concerns arise about the difficulties that pupils experience in negotiating various self-closing fire doors. These concerns continue, despite liaison between the school and the builders to try and improve the functioning of the door mechanisms.
30. Pupils are helped to gain positive attitudes to lessons. Good work is praised, in the weekly awards assembly, for instance. Pupils are regularly encouraged to reflect on their own learning and to think about using their brains. Throughout the school, they are given sensible targets to work towards, and they learn to take responsibility for achieving them. They are helped to assess their own learning. Older pupils are helped to realise how their learning in school equips them for jobs they might want to do as adults.
31. The headteacher and other staff are all responsive to any views that pupils express. Pupils are encouraged to share any concerns, for instance, through worry boxes in classrooms. Some pupils have contributed to decisions about improvements to the playground. The school recognises that additional consultations, such as a school council might allow, would further help all pupils to suggest and explore ideas about the organisation of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school makes good efforts to build a sense of partnership with parents and it gains satisfactory support from them. Links with other schools and with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Satisfactory links with parents are achieved, despite the unusually wide spacing of the two catchment areas inherited by this new school.
- Good use is made of bilingual staff to build partnerships with parents and the community.
- Links with other schools and with the community make valuable additions to the breadth of pupils' experience.
- A few parents give little support to the school's aims for their children.

Commentary

32. Day-to-day communications with parents are good. Staff readily chat to parents at the beginning or end of the day and respond promptly to any queries or concerns. Bilingual staff play a full part in helping all parents to feel welcome and valued, including those from the catchment area of the former Caudon Primary school. They travel with the children who come on school buses from this area. They maintain links with this group of parents and give them friendly assistance.

33. Written communications are translated into community languages when this can be arranged. For instance, a helpful booklet about starting school, written in English and Urdu, gives all parents very necessary information about school organisation. Where translations of longer documents cannot be supplied, staff explain the essentials if parents need this. Involvement of parents from the Cauldon catchment area is helped by the way transport is arranged to bring them to the school at key times. For instance, every term a bus brings them to see their children's work. The school recognises that some parents may have little understanding of teachers' aspirations for their children. As well as termly parents' meetings, it offers others to explain the school's aims and to show parents how they can help children with work at home. Such meetings attract a satisfactory response, though the headteacher recognises that there is still room to involve more parents. The school also looks for ways to increase a sense of community among parents. For instance, it welcomes them to class assemblies and they come in good numbers.
34. Parents tend to be slow to respond to other chances of involvement. For instance, parents of children with special educational needs are invited to reviews of their children's progress, but quite often they stay away. A few parents interrupt their children's education by keeping them away from school without sufficient reason, because of other pressures and priorities in their lives.
35. Links with local schools and with the wider community are good. Pupils benefit from activities, such as an inter-school mathematics tournament organised by the Education Action Zone. Visitors from a secondary school and from a breadth of backgrounds in the community add new dimensions to pupils' experience, for instance, in dance, drama and gymnastics. Staff from a local bank helped construct a new garden in the playground. Children come to school with very limited knowledge of localities beyond their immediate home area. The school makes good use of visits to enlarge their understanding of the country in which they live and of its cultural heritage.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership provided by the headteacher and staff with management responsibilities is good, with some significant strengths. School management is also good. However, the work of the newly established governing body is, at this early stage, only just satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and senior management team have successfully managed a challenging period of amalgamation and relocation leading to the opening of the new school.
- Leadership demonstrates a strong commitment to respect the different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the pupils, ensuring that each individual pupil is valued.
- The school has a core team of dedicated staff, including both teachers and support staff.
- The Foundation Stage is led and managed very effectively.
- The newly established governing body is not yet challenging and supporting senior staff effectively enough.
- Governors do not have a strong enough understanding about how to evaluate spending decisions so that the best possible use is made of all the available resources.

Commentary

36. Etruscan Primary has recently been through a very testing period of amalgamation and relocation into new purpose-built accommodation. Additional problems have included:
 - stout opposition by the community to the closure of the two former schools;
 - two wholesale removals between sites two miles apart within a short period;
 - a significant turnover of staff, governors and pupils.

37. Ongoing challenges include the need to 'bus in' pupils from the neighbourhood of one of the former schools. It is testimony to the determination of the headteacher and her two colleagues on the senior management team that Etruscan is now successfully established and that, despite lingering reservations from some parents, the school is in good heart. Having made a number of new staff appointments and entered a period of relative stability, the school is well positioned to develop and is beginning to establish a positive reputation in the neighbourhood. Some of the younger year-groups are already over-subscribed.
38. School leadership is good, taken as a whole, with some significant strengths. With committed leadership from the headteacher, the school embraces all the faiths, cultures and traditions represented in its community. This provides a positive basis for the work of the staff, who do their best for all the pupils, especially those with English as an additional language, those from different religious traditions and those with learning needs. Pupils, as well as teachers and educational support staff, have a very good understanding of what the school stands for in this respect. There is a firm commitment from the top to improve achievement and raise standards, but this is from a relatively weak starting point. Etruscan has already succeeded in building up a core team of dedicated staff who fulfil key roles, encompassing support staff as well as teachers. All of these people set a very positive personal example, whether through the high calibre of their teaching or their obvious regard and concern for the pupils. The children's interests invariably come first.
39. Leadership and management in the nursery and reception classes are strong, and the impact on the children's achievement is plain, with good progress now being made by all the children in this age-group. The picture is a little more mixed further up the school. Some subjects, including English, mathematics, science and religious education, are being led effectively by knowledgeable co-ordinators, but there has not yet been time for this good leadership to be reflected in improved standards in mathematics. In general terms, the school is, at present, more successful in realising its vision for the younger pupils than for the older ones. This is largely because the past educational experiences of the older pupils have left gaps in their learning that present real obstacles to their progress.
40. The school is managed effectively by the headteacher, who is loyally supported by the deputy head and by a third member of the senior management team. These senior staff possess complementary skills. Together they ensure that the school runs smoothly and moves forward purposefully. The current school improvement plan has a strong element of self-review, together with ambitious, but not unrealistic, plans about how to improve provision and raise standards. A detailed 'achievement file' demonstrates that staff are carefully tracking the performance of individual pupils through the school and actively identifying areas for development. A well-designed rolling programme of monitoring teaching and learning subject by subject has been established and is producing some useful insights. Because the number of experienced teachers is relatively low, one of the factors standing in the way of development is that management responsibilities are at present not distributed equitably. Some of the senior staff have daunting individual responsibilities.
41. The performance management cycle for all staff, including the headteacher, has wisely been carried forward from the ancestral schools. Two teachers, now at the start of their second year in teaching, had a well-organised induction programme in 2002/3 and have been prepared effectively for classroom teaching. They are not; however, ready to take on subject leadership at present. A newly-qualified teacher appointed only two weeks before the inspection is settling in well. The school's large and complex group of classroom support staff are, almost without exception, well briefed about their roles and making an effective contribution to the pupils' learning. Two or three individuals make an outstanding contribution to the school community.
42. The governing body is newly established and had, at the time of the inspection, only recently held its first meeting with a full complement of members. Some governors, including the chair, have solid experience as governors of the former primary schools, but there is, overall, a lack of experience, with a number of new governors awaiting training. The governing body has

adopted an appropriate structure of committees and panels to enable it to undertake its work effectively, and governors have been identified to undertake special responsibilities. All statutory requirements are met, including requirements connected with race equality and disability. Governors are, in a general sense, committed to the school and supportive of staff, but are not yet fully aware of the challenges facing the school and what is needed to raise standards. As a result, they are inclined to accept the professional judgement of the headteacher with little question. Since that judgement is good, this has not created problems, but, without change, the headteacher and senior staff could soon find themselves overburdened with responsibilities that should be shared with governors.

43. Senior staff and the chair of governors have a general understanding of the principles of 'best value', and purchases of small items and services are made, following careful comparison of quality and price. Some well-thought-out decisions have been made recently about the use of funds earmarked for particular purposes, such as the professional development of staff. There is, however, a culture of purchasing major services from the local education authority without thinking of other options. Because of dissatisfaction with current services the school has recently bought in additional support to get its computer network up and running after months of delay. It has also compensated for rather limited financial support from the local education authority by buying in additional services from a skilled accountant to produce a five-year financial projection. Whilst both of these decisions were sensible and pragmatic, the need for them only arose because, in these instances, the school found that contracts it had entered into proved inadequate for its needs.
44. Clerical support and day-to-day financial management and administration are highly effective. There has been no audit since the school opened, but an audit undertaken at one of the former schools shortly before it closed found much to praise and made few suggestions for improvement.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	802,161
Total expenditure	598, 442
Expenditure per pupil	2877

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	124,270
Balance carried forward to the next	203,619

45. As will be seen from the table above, a considerable budgetary underspend developed in the run-up to the opening of the new school, resulting in a large carry-forward figure. In normal circumstances this would be unacceptable, but circumstances have been far from normal and there is a credible explanation. Up to the point at which the two ancestral schools were closed, the local education authority funded them as separate institutions. Large savings developed because the two schools were led by only one headteacher and deputy for most of the run-up to the amalgamation, producing significant savings on salaries. For obvious reasons, no money was spent on buildings that were about to be vacated or demolished. Some of the surplus funds have already been spent on essential projects, such as installing blinds throughout the new school. The need to improve storage facilities has been appropriately identified as a priority. The school has a five-year strategic budgetary plan that demonstrates satisfactorily how the current surplus will diminish to an appropriate level.
46. Taking into account the good quality of the school's provision and its relatively generous level of funding, it is judged to give satisfactory value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

**The school considers nursery and reception classes to be one Foundation Stage Unit, and they are led, managed and planned this way.*

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

- Teaching and learning is consistently very good.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is language-rich, providing equally well for children with differing learning abilities, and those who do not speak English at home.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage Unit* are very good.
- Children make good progress and achieve well in both the nursery and reception classes.

Commentary

47. Generally, children are admitted to the nursery on a full-time basis, but special arrangements are made for those who need a different plan. This could be a period of half-day sessions, for example, when settling back in after an overseas visit, or if the child's level of maturity warrants this. The arrangements made for all children are working very successfully. Children's attainment on entry is well below average. For many, English is not their mother tongue, and most others do not have well-developed language and personal and social skills. Most children do not have many life-enriching experiences in their early years, and so the school takes every opportunity to plug the gaps. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are consistently very good. This is why the children develop so well and make good progress. Although standards are still well below average when children leave the nursery, the good foundations laid there enable them to achieve well in the reception class. By the end of their time in reception, most children are on track to reach many of the early learning goals. The exceptions to this are in physical development, where many children are likely to exceed expectations, and in communication, language and literacy, where most will still be below expectations. By the end of the reception year, the children make good progress, with attainment rising to below average overall.
48. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good. The teacher in charge of the Unit is expert and dedicated to ensuring the best experience for children in her care. She has vision and flair, and is forward-thinking. A nursery nurse who runs the nursery class supports her very ably, and, in turn, a highly effective team of nursery nurses and classroom assistants supports them both. Very good management ensures this team is especially efficient and well-organised, working as a well-oiled machine in the background, so that children can learn productively, continuously and seamlessly.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are independent.
- Staff offer a high level of care and are very good role models.
- Very good management of teamwork, throughout the Unit, ensures well-established, consistent routines, which enable children to have fun and behave well in all situations.
- Activities are structured and developed well for maximum learning in all groups, and designed to stimulate the children's interest.

- Very good relationships between children and the team ensure trusting relationships are established, and parents are part of this.

Commentary

49. The staff offer a high level of care and children learn from them quickly. During the inspection it was rare to see children not getting on with each other. Through well-structured activities and meticulous teamwork, the staff enable children to learn to be confident and to begin to co-operate with others. Children are independent in preparing themselves for outside activities, and self-assured in taking responsibility for such tasks as tidying up after play. Most sit quietly and listen to the teacher and one another for a reasonable length of time, joining in confidently, for example when there is a 'special person' session. During this discussion in the nursery, the children found several nice things to say about the birthday girl, including, 'She is very beautiful' - quite unsolicited!
50. Children are generally confident with adults. They are used to asking for help when they need it, but get on happily when they don't. The team in the Unit has high expectations for the children's social and emotional behaviour, and supports them well when there are difficulties. Their respect for the children is infectious, and the children learn well how to value themselves and others. Their insistence on high standards of behaviour is consistent, firm and fair. This foundation sets the children off on a positive footing and supports good achievement. The children are on course to achieve all the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.
51. Children with difficulties of any kind are identified quickly, and their needs are woven into the planning. As a result of this, children who are shy, have problems with language, or have special educational needs are all catered for well. Others who are capable of achieving well are consistently challenged. This all promotes self-esteem and self-confidence, and ensures an environment in which children's personal, social and emotional development can grow. As a result, many of those who enter the school with very low skills, move into Year 1 well motivated to learn and achieving many of the goals set for them.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities are provided for the children to develop spoken language.
- Very good use is made of story time and reading.
- Excellent use is made of bilingual speakers, assistants and other support.

Commentary

52. Children enter the school with a wide range of communication and literacy skills, but speaking and listening skills are often underdeveloped, and, for many, English is not their mother tongue. Because all activities focus upon developing language, children are constantly exposed to new vocabulary and ways to say things. They love stories and songs, but new ones take time to master. In the reception class, the movement tape offers very good opportunities to listen to and follow instructions at a brisk pace. However, many children have underdeveloped speaking skills, and only a few use complex sentences regularly. This situation improves throughout the Foundation Stage and the children achieve well, but most are unlikely to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area by the end of the reception year.
53. Reading and writing skills are developed systematically throughout the Unit. The teachers in both classes are particularly skilled at reading stories aloud and the excellent partnership with the bilingual staff enhances the involvement of all children. The interaction of the two

storytellers, and their interpretation and hand gestures, are fascinating. When a story about a bear was related, more than 50 children, from nursery and reception classes, sat in rapt attention, watching both storytellers carefully, and joined in with excitement and joy. The translation into Punjabi added to the experience for all, including the enjoyment of the other adults in the room.

54. Another noteworthy session took place in the reception class, where the teacher skilfully introduced new vocabulary and ideas through an alphabet book. Children were practising initial sounds without even noticing it. Occasionally, they were carried away by the pictures, and the teacher adroitly drew their attention back to the sounds. For example, the picture was of gloves, but the children said, 'Hands, hands!' The teacher told them to 'watch the picture' and reminded them of the initial sounds. This helped them to realise these were gloves. The teacher is warm and positive in her relationships with the children, but firm about calling out and listening. This ensures that all children can learn without fuss.
55. Planning shows very good targeting of specific vocabulary linked to play activities, and support staff work very hard to promote good oral language development and early attempts at writing. All staff lose no opportunity to promote language, reading and writing, speaking and, especially, listening.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical development is woven into everyday activities.
- There are plenty of opportunities for the children to learn through practical tasks.
- Mathematical language is developed well.

Commentary

56. Many children reach the early learning goals for mathematical development by the end of the reception year, but it is rare for children to progress beyond the expected level. All make good progress. In the nursery, children count as they sing favourite songs. All the children can show five fingers for the current buns, and some count to four as one is eaten, and so on. Each day children think about the date, the month and the season. Excellent support from bilingual assistants enables children to gain confidence in counting and numbers. Good work also takes place in shape, with ample opportunities to name and handle objects. This work is linked well to outdoor activities, where children post various shapes into holes in the course of their building activities.
57. A similarly wide range of opportunities is offered in the reception class. Some children here are counting successfully in many different situations, including 'brain gym'⁴, movement time, and when reading. The teacher encourages patterns in threading, activities using money, and uses a wide range of vocabulary to improve children's understanding. She supports the children's learning well, and they are confident enough to point out her 'mistakes'. A 'post office' and a 'garage' in the role-play areas complement other practical ways of learning numbers and mathematical ideas. Consistently very good teaching successfully develops children's skills and their knowledge of different shapes. Regular observations and assessments of children's attainment and progress ensure that children are introduced to new mathematical ideas as they are ready.

⁴ 'Brain gym' typically consists of short bursts of physical activity to music, designed to break up spells of listening or sedentary activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The classrooms are rich and varied, attractive and stimulating, so children want to learn.
- The meticulous teamwork of the staff enables children to move through their activities with freedom, ease and fun.
- The activities are carefully planned and structured to offer first-hand observations, lively chat and to develop understanding.

Commentary

58. The children achieve well in this area of learning and, with very effective teaching, are likely, by the end of the reception year, to reach standards that match expectations for the age-group. Children in the nursery and reception classes have had little experience at home to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world. A few children from Asian families have been abroad to visit relatives, but, otherwise, many have not had a wide experience of life beyond home and the immediate neighbourhood.
59. The Unit offers an opportunity for children to develop and broaden their learning through a very good programme of practical situations. The children use computers, sand, water and other materials to gain a rich diet of exploration and experiment. Blowing bubbles was one source of fun and excitement during the inspection, as the children discussed how hard to blow, and what strength the mixture needed to be. They thought it should be much stronger because it was 'not bubbly enough'. They were right. All children in the nursery and reception classes have the opportunity to role play in different ways. During the inspection, children had the opportunity to imagine they were in a post office, or a garage, in the nursery and reception class, respectively. One of the teacher's relatives, who is a mechanic, had been to visit them, and the children were fascinated by this experience.
60. Through a range of interesting activities, the children are building up a wealth of ideas and skills, and a confidence to talk about what they know. They are learning through their senses and often through watching others play. Staff are good role models. They move children through a carefully planned programme without them realising that they are being manoeuvred. This happens because the team is highly organised and attuned to the children's needs. They are like the warp threads and the children weave in and out, learning as they go. Throughout these opportunities, the conversations and interactions are rich in language and vocabulary with which to explain and question. Support is strong but unobtrusive, helpful but not overbearing. Excellent bilingual assistants help to enhance the learning of all as they assist those children who need some translation.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planning is very good and teachers have high expectations.
- Activities are well organised and assessed to note progress.
- Children enjoy the physical exercise.
- The outdoor area provides appropriate challenge, physically and mentally.

Commentary

61. The programme for physical development is very well planned. This enables children to achieve very well and to reach standards that are better than average for the age group. The activities are well structured and work requiring large movements is well juxtaposed with tasks requiring small, delicate actions. In the reception class the two sessions of large then small movements challenged children mentally as well as physically and aesthetically. Most children managed to put on their shoes, socks and jumpers successfully. In the hall, they showed good self-control as they moved to the pre-recorded tape. This was well chosen to guide the children through a series of energetic movements, and the teacher made excellent use of her support assistant, who watched and noted those who had difficulties, did not join in well or were very good and could master skipping, galloping and so on. Over half could not yet get the hang of skipping, but the teacher sensitively chose a couple who could do it well to demonstrate. They were good role models, and the next bout of skipping was a little more successful. In the later, more sedentary small-action session, all children took part in tasks designed to test their fine movements and co-ordination. Through various activities, the children were assessed and their ability was noted for future lessons.
62. Outdoor play is also very well organised. Children throughout the Unit have access to the area, when the need arises. The activities planned are a continuation of those planned indoors, as far as possible, and the team is working hard at this to improve it still further. The activities are changed frequently, and provide very good opportunities for a variety of movement, including kicking into goal and building on a large scale. Adults are always strategically placed to offer advice and reinforce learning. The teacher is energetic and lively and this is infectious. The leader of the nursery class is particularly enthusiastic and effervescent, and the support staff and children respond positively to the 'can do' ethos in the Unit.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links are made with language development.
- The Unit is a rich, colourful environment, which stimulates imagination and creativity.
- Activities are well structured to offer good opportunities for creative development.

Commentary

63. A very good variety of opportunities is provided to mould, stick, cut, print, draw, trace, paint and so on. Colourful collages on painted trees will soon be decorated Christmas trees, and the interactions and conversations prove to be valuable experiences, opportunities to discuss Eid alongside Christmas, for example.
64. The classrooms are very colourful and there is lots of visual stimulation. The children are encouraged to build imaginative structures and have a wide range of other well-chosen resources such as cloth, wool, dough, card, glitter and tissue. Expectations for success are high and children rise to them well.
65. Teaching is very successful because very good links are made with other areas of learning, and all activities are inextricably linked with language development and understanding of vocabulary. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated work, so that children are able to express themselves and their creativity. As a result of this very good quality provision, the children are making good progress and, by the start of Year 1, standards are well in line with expectations for the age group.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in both key stages.
- Teaching is consistently good, so pupils learn and achieve well.
- Very good use is made of bilingual support.
- Lack of understanding of vocabulary and nuances in text are a barrier to learning.
- Presentation of work and handwriting are not as good as they should be.
- Strategies to improve boys' writing are organised and carried out well; they are, therefore, having a positive effect on standards.
- Good leadership and management ensure strategies are in place for standards to rise.

Commentary

66. The school's results in reading and writing in the most recent national tests at the end of Year 2 were below the national average in writing and well below in reading, but above average in comparison with similar schools. The school was disappointed by these results. However, it should be noted that the score for reading was nearly into the next grade up, and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was reasonable when compared with national levels. The school did well in writing, despite not getting pupils to Level 3, and boys did particularly well, scoring marginally better than the girls, against the national trend. The pupils now in Year 2 are currently below average, but improving rapidly.
67. The results achieved in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6 in English were below average, but were above average when the background and previous performance of these pupils was taken into account. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was broadly in line with the national average. The pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving standards that are below average, but they are improving well.
68. Generally, pupils participate well in lessons, and many are competent, confident speakers. They listen attentively and make good contributions, even where English is not their mother tongue, because teachers make very good use of bilingual support assistants. Pupils are encouraged to extend sentences and their ideas as they speak and listen. Teachers provide many good opportunities for pupils to explore language.
69. Standards in reading are below average. By the end of the year, many pupils in Year 2 are established readers, and many in Year 6 are reasonably fluent and confident. However, their main obstacle to improvement is the lack of understanding of the nuances in the text and the meaning of some vocabulary. The school works hard to counter this, but it is difficult when pupils are not fluent English speakers or have insufficient life experiences upon which to draw. Most enjoy reading and analyse points in the plot and characters with increasing accuracy. Most pupils also enjoy and appreciate the humour in the texts they are reading.
70. The school has consciously chosen texts to interest boys, and both boys and girls say they like to read. However, for various reasons, many do not have support at home, and they do not practise as often as they should. The school encourages the keeping of simple journals, and most pupils like these. An interesting and useful club takes place, twice weekly at lunchtimes, for readers in Year 3, where they are helped by a paired reader from Year 6. These older pupils are mature and sensible, helpful and supportive in their interactions with the younger readers, and both groups benefit greatly from the sessions.

71. Generally, book areas in classes are organised well and contain a good stock of books, and the whole school is rich in language in its displays. However, the library area, which doubles up as a computer suite, has limitations because of a lack of space and availability.
72. Staff have worked hard to improve standards in writing, based on a culture of talking and expression of individual ideas. The confidence to speak is giving pupils the confidence to write, and offers them opportunities to sort out their ideas and experiences. These are usually practical in nature and often include visits or visitors. An excellent example was seen in Year 2, where the teacher enabled pupils to understand a story through mime and 'photographing' a scene. She enhanced their skills by telling them what to consider as they acted out their scene; they all contributed very well, and each was valued when re-telling their bit. This kind of in-depth thinking and feeling contributes greatly to the understanding of the writing experience.
73. The school offers pupils many interesting opportunities to write across a range of genres, and this focus has begun to have positive effects on pupils' achievement, especially that of boys last year. However, they are also aware that aspects of writing still requiring improvement are handwriting and presentation. Few pupils join their handwriting using a consistent cursive style, for example, and many have writing which changes size and orientation. This militates against good presentation and makes the work look untidy, when the actual content may be better than at first appears.
74. Pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities. This is because the teaching is consistently good, providing challenge, lively use of resources and tasks well suited to different ability groups. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs do well in relation to their capabilities. Work is matched well to the learning needs of all the different groups, including the more able pupils and those who use English as an additional language. Very good support is available and is used very well to give maximum benefit to pupils learning English.
75. The teaching ensures that pupils get a continuously positive experience as they move through the school. The major contributory factors to this good teaching are:
 - well-organised teachers;
 - highly effective planning;
 - good, appropriate pace;
 - very good bilingual support and teamwork;
 - appropriate, realistic challenge at all levels of ability, and high expectations;
 - good direct teaching of skills;
 - very good classroom relationships and management of lively pupils;
 - effective end sessions to lessons.
76. Teachers have good subject knowledge and employ an interesting range of techniques to sustain interest. Because they are well motivated by their teachers, pupils co-operate well when necessary and are equally independent, learn appropriately and enjoy their lessons in English. This has the effect of promoting not only good achievement, but also very positive attitudes to learning. An excellent lesson took place in Year 2, where the teacher taught word skills in an exciting and lively way, so that every pupil was highly successful, including those who use English as an additional language. She made the task different for each group and set tight time limits, as they sorted endings or initial sounds, according to their abilities and learning needs. The excitement was infectious, as tension built up in the game, and the quality of the bilingual and classroom support was effective and dynamic. An excellent round-up reminded and exhorted the pupils to use the knowledge they had just explored in their everyday writing. The teacher then calmed the pupils down very effectively, ready for the next part of the lesson.
77. The subject is led and managed well. The school has considered its own strengths and weaknesses very thoughtfully, has analysed its work to improve the English curriculum successfully and assessed the pupils' efforts realistically in order to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

78. Good examples were seen for pupils to use their reading and writing skills as they learn in other subjects. Every opportunity is taken to reinforce literacy skills throughout the school's work, and the school is a rich place for language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment in mathematics are well below average in Year 6.
- The satisfactory teaching is not good enough to raise standards for the pupils in the juniors.
- There is insufficient provision for numeracy across the curriculum.
- Leadership and management of mathematics are good.
- The resources for learning in mathematics are good and are used well.
- Even though the use of classroom support, when available, is effective, there is, overall, insufficient additional support for pupils' learning in mathematics.

Commentary

79. Standards of attainment in mathematics are well below the national average at the end of Year 6. Although all the expected topics are covered thoroughly, number work remains a weakness, because the pupils are starting from a low base. In the 2003 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, the standards attained were very low; in the bottom five per cent when compared with all schools, and well below average when compared with similar schools.
80. In the 2003 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, the results were below the national average. However, the standard of pupils' current work observed in lessons and in their books, in infant and lower junior classes, was close to the national average, indicating that standards of attainment are rising.
81. Overall, pupils' achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. Pupils who are currently in Years 5 and 6 are making satisfactory progress from a very low starting point. Achievement is also satisfactory for other pupils, and better than this in some year groups.
82. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. It is satisfactory for pupils, both in the infants and juniors, and has some strengths. Lessons are generally planned well, with clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils. Teachers set clear targets which focus on pupils' needs. Resources for mathematics are good and are used well to support pupils' learning. However, the planning and management of independent activities are less effective. Pupils are unable fully to access the activities planned, either because they were insufficiently explained, or because they were not matched closely enough to pupils' ability levels.
83. Support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in class. For example, in a very good example of teamwork, the teacher used the translation of her teaching points as a teaching tool which helped all of the pupils to understand the concept better. However, the school does not provide the kind of additional support for mathematics that has helped to raise standards in English.
84. Mathematics is led well, but the co-ordinator has not yet had time to make a significant impact on standards. She has, however, carried out detailed data analysis, and targets have been set based on this analysis. She has monitored the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' work and, as a result, is gaining a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject as a starting point for development. She has given feedback and provided training for teachers and has taken appropriate action to raise standards of attainment in mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

85. Although there is some development of numeracy skills in science lessons, the school does not plan enough opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy skills through other areas of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Target-setting to improve the pupils' investigative skills is helping to raise standards throughout the school, especially those in scientific enquiry.
- The subject is largely taught well, with good attention paid to pupils developing scientific vocabulary.
- The pupils make good progress and reach average standards by the end of Year 2, but standards achieved by the older pupils are still below average.
- Pupils particularly enjoy practical aspects of the subject and work together sensibly and effectively.

Commentary

86. This is an improving subject. Pupils in Year 6 did not perform well in last summer's national tests, with results well below the national average and below average in comparison with similar schools. Relatively few pupils reached the higher Level 5 and considerably more than usual fell below the expected Level 4. Standards in the current Year 6 are better than this, although still below average. In their current work on materials, nearly all the pupils demonstrate a grasp of the relevant scientific ideas and terminology. Those with English as an additional language are doing at least as well as others in this respect; indeed, the most capable group in Year 6 consists mainly of girls with an Asian background. Almost all the pupils understand the process of scientific enquiry and the principles of fair testing, carrying out practical tests carefully and accurately. Occasionally, their hypotheses and attempted explanations are naïve, suggesting inexperience, but the pupils are thinking for themselves and making good progress. They have a secure understanding of their recent work, reasonable recollection of previous topics and an ability to apply what they have learned. For example, a number of older pupils were asked to suggest ways in which a mixture containing four different substances could be separated. Working very effectively together, they solved the problem by discussion in a relatively short time, showing keen interest and enthusiasm.
87. The teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2003, indicated standards were also well below the national average, mainly because of a lack of higher-level attainment. Pupils' skills of enquiry were judged to be somewhat better than their scientific knowledge. All the signs are that the standards being attained by pupils currently in Year 2 are broadly average and that the pupils are now achieving well. The pupils have very good opportunities to help plan investigations, and are beginning to understand why they should make only one change at a time when carrying out their tests. They record their findings using a broad range of tables, charts, graphs and independent writing. Recent work on materials and their properties shows an increasing use of appropriate vocabulary to describe differences such as 'natural' and 'man-made'. When the pupils tested different brands of kitchen paper, a pupil of average ability wrote, 'We predicted that Bounty would suck up the most water', whereas, a more able pupil stated, 'We found that Bounty *absorbed* the most water'.
88. The teaching of science is generally good throughout the school, but less consistently so in the junior classes. Some very good teaching was observed at each key stage. A lesson on forces in an infant class was, for example, delivered with infectious enthusiasm, inspiring the pupils to work hard and think scientifically. The strengths of the teaching include thorough planning,

broad subject knowledge, good attention to key vocabulary, effective marking and regular assessment. Throughout the school, plenty of time is given for the pupils to work practically on their tests and investigations. Where teaching, although competent, is not of the same high standard, there is less to stretch the pupils and an occasional tendency to over-use worksheets. Bilingual assistants make an invaluable contribution to the pupils' learning throughout the school. Even in the upper junior classes, time is given for the pupils to discuss concepts in their home language, thus making quite sure that their understanding is secure. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported with extra assistance when they need it. There is satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support learning in science.

89. The subject is led effectively by a hard-working and capable co-ordinator. Recently introduced targets for investigative skills are providing a clear focus for staff and pupils, ensuring that skills are developed systematically and that gaps in learning, for example, a lack of line graphs to help older pupils with data analysis, are quickly spotted and addressed. This, together with other initiatives already introduced, is what makes science an improving subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' demonstration of information and communication technology skills is good.
- Resources for information and communication technology are good.
- Lack of technical support is hindering progress.

Commentary

90. Opportunities to teach the subject have been limited since the opening of the new school, due to installation and hardware problems, but the school is making rapid progress in recovering lost time. This is enabling pupils to achieve average standards for their age.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers demonstrate skills clearly and confidently using the interactive whiteboard. They break skills down into small steps and make them explicit to the children. They use questioning well to develop pupils' understanding and give pupils the opportunity to practise skills they have been taught. They coach individual pupils well during lessons. Teachers do not, however, always draw effectively on the support they give to individual pupils to develop the skills of the whole class.
92. Resources for information and communication technology are good. The computer suite is supplemented by 14 laptop computers, which are used effectively in the classrooms. The school has purchased a range of high-quality software to support pupils' learning, but some of the software is yet to be installed, while other software is not working properly. Current arrangements for technical support are inadequate to resolve these software issues and to avoid the hardware problems such as those the school has recently encountered.
93. The leadership and management of information and communication technology by the temporary co-ordinator are satisfactory. Plans are well in hand to appoint a new co-ordinator.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

94. The use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum is satisfactory. It is particularly effective in mathematics, where it is used as a tool for whole-class teaching, demonstrating concepts such as fractions in a lively and interesting way.

HUMANITIES

95. Work was sampled in **history** and **geography**, and one history lesson was observed, but only in part. It is not possible to make a judgement, therefore, about the provision in either subject. Pupils' work suggests that standards are broadly average, but pupils' written work tends to lack depth. Younger pupils use writing frames to good effect, so they can record their work with a minimum of writing, when appropriate. It is clear that pupils' skills are built up systematically.
96. Planning indicates a good spread of work and some unusual topics in **history**, such as a study of the Indus Valley in Year 6. The pupils enjoyed this lesson, and were given good opportunities to think historically and explore ideas in an enquiring way. Novel methods were used by the teacher to help pupils understand how difficult interpretation can be, for example, as they played 'pictionary' with the seals.
97. The co-ordinator leads and manages history ably. Resources have been modified extensively, and cross-curricular links are encouraged. Monitoring of teaching has taken place, and planning is then scrutinised to ensure adherence to the outcomes. A simple but effective system is in place for assessment. Responsibility for **geography** has been taken over very recently by the deputy headteacher. As he is also in charge of English, a major priority, and information and communication technology, he has not yet had the opportunity to do more than review resources and purchase new materials.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education makes a very strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Excellent support is provided by a bilingual assistant who has close links with a local mosque.
- With consistently good teaching, the pupils achieve well.
- The subject has a high profile and is led effectively by a knowledgeable co-ordinator.

Commentary

98. Religious education is taken very seriously at Etruscan Primary. Older pupils show real enthusiasm for the subject. They are all very clear about the relevance of the subject to their lives and are confident that their own faiths are valued and respected. The Muslim pupils, in particular, are highly articulate when they explain how they are learning to respect other world faiths without compromising their own integrity and religious identity.
99. Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and the pupils make good progress. By Year 6, all the pupils, including the less able, have a secure general knowledge about a range of faiths. They have a clear understanding of the significance of religious symbolism, ritual and celebration in worship and can explain the significance of major festivals such as Easter, Eid, Passover and Divali. The pupils are particularly knowledgeable about the similarities between the Christian and Islamic traditions, and have also, but to a lesser extent, grasped the links with

Judaism. This is based on an understanding of important narratives such as the story of Moses, which they have heard in different versions.

100. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to build up their understanding of Christianity and Islam. In one lesson, they listened with deep attention to the story of the birth of Jesus, whom they were helped to identify with the Muslim Ysa. It was made clear that many Muslims, as well as Christians, believe that this was a miraculous birth. Pupils of average and higher ability later retold the story in the form of captions, showing in their independent writing that they had grasped much of the detail and language of the narrative.
101. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, resulting in consistently good achievement. One very good lesson was seen in the juniors. Here, the teacher explored the symbolism of light in various faiths, with a particular focus on the Christingle and the idea that children can light up the lives of others. The content was challenging and wide-ranging, but there was a clear visual focus, time for the pupils to reflect quietly and an opportunity for them to express their responses by contributing to a joint poem. Their response was whole-hearted. A member of the bilingual support staff provided excellent support, as he does in many other lessons, especially by helping the Muslim pupils to make connections between what they are taught at the mosque and what they learn in school. All the pupils, especially those of an Asian Muslim background, were impressed by his commitment and pertinent contribution.
102. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a very secure knowledge of the subject and has provided helpful and comprehensive documentation to support her colleagues' lesson planning. She is well aware of what is being taught throughout the school, even though formal monitoring is not scheduled until next term. The subject is well resourced, but there is scope for more use of information and communication technology to support learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

103. Work was sampled in **design and technology**, with only one lesson observed, but this was not sufficient to judge overall provision. Similarly, in **music** only one full-length lesson was seen plus two short part-sessions. Because of the cultural background of many of the pupils, the school, as a matter of principle, avoids the use of music in collective worship, so there was no singing in assembly. As a result, no judgement has been made about overall provision for music.
104. In a lively **design and technology** lesson, pupils in Year 1 were successfully designing and making a 'moving mechanism' in card, using simple levers and tabs. Although they needed some adult help in realising their designs, many of the pupils recognised the need to revise plans if they were not working out, and enjoyed selecting the resources they required. A few, mainly boys of Asian background, worked very independently. All made good progress, with end results of a reasonable standard for the age-group. In the junior classes, sketch books show work in food technology, with lists of ingredients and numbered steps, but no written evaluations. Pupils in Year 4 have designed purses, using paper templates, cut out the fabric and joined the seams with simple stitching. There is, however, no evidence of work involving sheet materials or mechanical and electrical components. The co-ordinator for design and technology has been appointed very recently and has not yet had an opportunity to exercise any influence on the development of the subject.
105. In order to strengthen the curriculum in **music**, the school has recently appointed a specialist music teacher, who visits on one day each week. A highly effective lesson was seen in Year 5, where the pupils' listening skills were developed through challenging recordings, instrumental resources and games. The lesson went at a brisk pace, maintaining the pupils' interest by introducing an element of competition. The teacher demonstrated first-rate subject knowledge and good attention to vocabulary such as 'timbre' and 'texture'. A specialist music lesson in Year 1 was seen only in part; this was not so successful because the tasks were not well matched to the pupils' developmental stage and they became restless. There is sometimes a

strong musical component in the 'brain gym' regularly performed to give the pupils a quick break from sedentary activities. In one session in Year 2, this combined a challenging routine of rapid movements to music with a tremendous sense of enjoyment. Musical resources had been carefully matched to the topic being studied, as in a 'rap' about the forces being studied in science. This all adds to the pupils' musical development.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched by dedicated 'art days' and visits to art galleries.
- The pupils do not have enough hands-on experience of a broad range of materials and processes.
- Sketch books are not used consistently enough in the junior classes.
- Attractive displays in classrooms and around the school help to make it a stimulating and civilised place in which to learn.

Commentary

106. Standards in art are average at the end of Year 2, but generally below average by the end of Year 6. This is mainly because the pupils' work is not as technically proficient as would be expected for their age. For instance, first attempts to represent a chair in the Year 5 sketch books show a very limited grasp of perspective and little use of shading to give depth to the work. The pupils' experience of a range of materials and processes is limited, with little evidence in the junior classes of printing, three-dimensional work or the use of information and communication technology. Sketch books are seldom used as a store or source of visual ideas. In the lessons observed, however, the pupils were achieving standards that were broadly average in the junior as well as the infant classes. Older pupils worked competently on movement in one class and scale in another, whilst pupils in Year 2 produced work inspired by their study of Van Gogh. All were making steady progress. Little observational drawing is undertaken in art lessons, but there is some competent drawing with good attention to detail in pupils' science books.
107. Teaching was at least satisfactory in the lessons seen during the inspection. Positive features included careful planning, clear technical instruction and effective management of the class. Teachers are critical in a positive way and support the pupils in improving their work. In one lesson, strong bilingual support contributed to the pupils' learning, but there was a tendency for staff to intervene too much and do the pupils' work for them. Although there is no formal system of record keeping, teachers assess the pupils' work carefully and develop their skills and understanding in subsequent lessons. In Year 5, for example, the teacher organised an activity that was well designed to develop the pupils' appreciation of scale and perspective.
108. The management of the subject is sound, but the co-ordinator has pressing whole-school responsibilities and art and design has, for good reasons, not been a high priority for development since the opening of the new school. In an effort to strengthen provision, the school has termly 'art days' when pupils and staff focus for the whole day on a range of collaborative projects. This is a worthwhile strategy. The theme for the most recent art day was 'texture', which involved work in a wide range of media, including work with fabrics of a high standard. Throughout the school there is attention to the appearance of classrooms and corridors, with a generally high standard of display. With regular visits to art galleries to extend the pupils' knowledge of well-known artists and sculptors, art is making a good contribution to their cultural development.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching in physical education is good.
- Standards achieved by pupils in gymnastics are above average.
- The curriculum for physical education is enriched by a range of additional activities, resources and visitors.
- The limited availability of the hall restricts the time available for physical education.

Commentary

109. Standards in physical education are in line with those found in other schools. However, standards in gymnastics are above average.
110. The quality of teaching in physical education is good. Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of the importance of warming up and discuss the effect on specific muscle groups. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' performances. They demonstrate skills well and encourage pupils to evaluate and learn from one another. However, teachers do not always ensure that all pupils focus on these performances in order to gain the maximum benefit from them.
111. The school participates in the sports co-ordinator programme. As a result, it has received a range of training for staff, additional learning resources and extra coaching for pupils. This coaching has included basketball and tennis as well as regular football coaching in school time. In addition, the school has provided all pupils with coaching on a regular basis by a professional gymnast, offering them a rich and stimulating experience. All pupils are given the opportunity to go swimming each year.
112. The school only has one hall which is used as a dining hall and for music as well as for physical education. As a result, the opportunities to timetable physical education lessons are limited. The under-floor heating also limits the curriculum, as it is not possible to fix large apparatus to the floor.
113. Physical education is led and managed well. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and teaching and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. As a result, she takes appropriate action to improve teaching and learning in the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

114. Only one lesson, dealing with the topic of bullying, was seen in this area, and this is not sufficient basis for a judgement about overall provision. The school has not yet developed a formal programme of learning in this area, although the subject is timetabled. Pupils' personal development is fostered in many other ways. Aspects such as healthy diet, drugs and sex education are covered comprehensively as part of the science curriculum, whilst personal relationships are considered in the course of religious education lessons. Collective worship makes a strong contribution to the pupils' understanding of moral and social responsibility. Special occasions, such as a recent health week, supported by the school nurse, and a safety week, supported by local road safety officers, make a valuable contribution to provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	N/A
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	6
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).