

INSPECTION REPORT

ALMA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ponders End

LEA area: Enfield

Unique reference number: 102012

Headteacher: Mrs J Holder

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 17 - 20 November 2003

Inspection number: 255334

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:	418
School address:	Alma Road Ponders End Enfield
Postcode:	EN3 4UQ
Telephone number:	(020) 8804 3302
Fax number:	(020) 8805 8740
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs N Conway
Date of previous inspection:	7 / 6 / 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- Socio-economic factors are well below the national average.
- There is much ethnic diversity amongst the school population.
- Attainment on entry to the school is well below expectations.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is broadly average.
- English is an additional language for 55 per cent of pupils. This is high.
- At 30 per cent, pupil mobility is very high.
- Staff turnover during the last two years has been very high.
- The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark (2002), the Healthy Schools Award (2003) and the Investors in People Award (2001).
- There are two on site nurseries – Alma Nursery operating all day and John Grove Nursery offering morning provision only.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25470	J Morley	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education
9388	A Mundy	Lay inspector	
19120	D Pattinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education
26292	H Mundy	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Physical education
16773	R Arora	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Special educational needs English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education although there are significant issues still to address. The new headteacher - in post for one year - has a crystal clear vision for the development of the school and staff have united behind her. This has generated much improvement during her one-year tenure and she is fully aware of what remains to be done. From well below expected attainment when they join the Nursery, pupils make sound (and sometimes good) progress, leaving the school with standards that are below average overall. About two-fifths of teaching is of good or better quality but there are weaknesses in several classes, making it satisfactory overall. The proportion of good or better teaching will need to increase if attainment is to improve further. Assessment systems are now in place but most are very 'young'. Currently, **value for money is satisfactory.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By Year 6, standards in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are below expectations and those in English are well below.
- Pupils' written work is too limited in quantity, quality and breadth and too poorly presented.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and she is supported well by her deputy.
- Governance is good.
- The work of adults involved in teaching is satisfactory but further improvement is needed.
- In some lessons there is too little challenge for pupils.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with adults and respond eagerly to good quality teaching.
- The school is caring and provides well for pupils' social and cultural development.
- A lack of clear purpose and direction and poor resources inhibit progress for Nursery and Reception children.
- The school reaches out well to its multi-lingual community.
- Its commendable systems have improved attendance significantly.
- Pupils know too little about how well they are doing and what they should do to improve.

Since the last inspection and until 2002, Year 6 test results showed standards dipping and a trend that was below the national one. However, subsequent to the appointment of the new headteacher, standards have started to improve again and when the 2003 results are included, the trend is in line with that nationally. So, while progress overall has been barely satisfactory, over the last year it has been good. The school has dealt successfully with the issues from the last inspection relating to religious education and funding, but work remains to be done on standards in English, particularly writing. Standards overall have been maintained except in ICT, where the school has not, until this year, kept up with the rapid pace of change. The school's strong leadership and committed and supportive staff mean that the capacity for further improvement is good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is well below that expected. **Achievement of pupils from the Nursery to Year 6 is satisfactory** overall, although there is variation between and within groups and classes, depending on the quality of teaching pupils receive. By the end of the Reception year children fall well short of the early learning goals in most areas of learning, although they meet them in physical and in personal, social and emotional development. Achievement through Years 1 to 6 is also satisfactory but a greater degree of challenge is needed if pupils are to make up the deficit in attainment with which they enter the school.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils behave satisfactorily. They have good attitudes to work, which can easily become very good when lessons are interesting, challenging and fun. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching that is of good or better quality offers good levels of challenge and adequate opportunities for pupils to record their work independently. Teaching of satisfactory quality often fails to offer the best in challenge. There are also weaknesses in teachers' marking. Overall, however, **the quality of teaching is satisfactory and the quality of learning is the same**.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is innovative in that some subjects such as history and geography are taught in 'blocks' of time rather than on a weekly basis, and some subjects such as music benefit from particular staff expertise. In addition, the curriculum as a whole is led by four senior managers of the school, rather than by subject leaders. Each manager oversees provision of the whole curriculum in two year-groups (four classes) of the school. The quality of their work varies from unsatisfactory to good. The school provides a good level of care for pupils and successfully ensures that all have equal access to what is on offer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership by the headteacher is good. Management by the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. Governance is good. Key governors are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and the areas where it needs to improve.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think highly of the school and like the fact that the staff and the headteacher are available and approachable. Pupils are happy to come to school and know that there is someone they could talk to if they were worried.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT;
- significantly increase the quantity, quality and presentation of pupils' independent written work across the curriculum;
- further improve the quality of teaching – both by the teaching and the support staff;
- present pupils with more challenge and more opportunities to develop independence;
- improve provision for the youngest children in school by providing a challenging and stimulating curriculum, appropriately resourced;
- ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they should do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve satisfactorily. Standards are not yet high enough but have improved significantly over the past year and continue to rise.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not yet good enough in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Improvement in 2003 in Year 6 has been impressive, raising the trend in progress from below that nationally (2002) to in line with that nationally this year.
- The trend of improvement is above that nationally in Year 2 although results this year showed a slight decline over those of 2002.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to both Alma Nursery and to John Grove Nursery is well below expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is very high. Progress through the Nursery and Reception years is satisfactory overall, although in one of the two nurseries it is unsatisfactory. In consequence, as pupils join Year 1 their attainment remains well below average. Lack of effective leadership of these two year groups means that overall provision lacks clear purpose and direction. Put simply, it is as good as the work of the individual teacher concerned.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.7 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.3 (14.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The table above shows that Year 2 pupils still have some way to go to achieve the standards expected nationally. In comparison with similar schools, however, the school's achievements are more favourable: above average in writing, in line with similar schools in reading but below them in mathematics. Improvement over the past several years has been impressive, particularly in writing. Inspectors find that while standards in writing and mathematics remain below the national average, those in reading now meet it. Pupils achieve consistently satisfactorily and often well. The use of the full curriculum to consolidate literacy skills is crucial to further progress. In Years 1 and 2 writing opportunities are better than elsewhere in the school. Nevertheless, too little is recorded in subjects other than English. (See the English section in Part C for further details.)

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.5 (21.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.7 (23.6)	26.8 (26.7)

science	25.8 (25.0)	28.6 (28.3)
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There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In comparison with similar schools, standards in 2003 in English improved from being in the lowest five per cent nationally to being below average: an increase of 23 per cent in the proportion of pupils attaining the level expected nationally. This is a dramatic improvement over one year. In both mathematics and science the comparative improvement was from well below to below that of similar schools with improvements of 11 per cent and four per cent in the two subjects respectively. Inspectors find that standards continue to improve slowly but that the quality, quantity and breadth of pupils' recorded work will have to improve if standards are to reach the levels they should and could. This is key to further improvement. Currently pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. Standards in ICT are improving but remain below expectations. Standards in art and design, music and physical education meet expectations but in too little evidence prevented secure judgements on standards in design and technology, geography, history and religious education.
4. Realising the need to improve standards urgently, the headteacher has cleared the way for some flexibility in timetabling. This enables some subjects – typically history and geography – to be taught in blocks of time rather than on a weekly basis. In Year 6, for example, these two subjects are being left until later in the year, allowing these classes to spend more time on English, mathematics and science prior to the national tests in May.
5. The achievement of most pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. Where teaching is good and a range of teaching methods are used, these pupils effectively cope with the language demands of English and benefit from opportunities to develop their language in context. They are disadvantaged initially until they reach satisfactory level of competence but, thereafter, make gains in line with their peers.
6. Pupils with special educational needs begin their time in school at a low base but, as a result of carefully targeted work, attain standards in line with their capabilities. They gain a lot in self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning, and their behaviour is satisfactory. The school provides good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education overall, and pupils' personal development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy most lessons, informal activities and a variety of clubs.
- Attendance is satisfactory, and is improving.
- The number of unauthorised absences is significantly above the national average.
- Relationships are good between pupils, and between pupils and staff.
- International links are underdeveloped.

Commentary

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and most attend regularly. Attendance and punctuality have improved since the recent appointment of an attendance officer to help families overcome difficulties in bringing their children promptly to school each day.
8. Most pupils – including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs - are relaxed in the school environment, and have few concerns about bullying or racist behaviour. They know that reported incidents are quickly resolved by mediation. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall, and is often very good in the playground and in the dining hall at lunchtime. In classes where behaviour is consistently good, teachers move lessons ahead at a good pace and pupils make good progress. In a small minority of lessons behaviour is unsatisfactory or poor because teachers have inadequate skills in

behaviour management to overcome persistent disruption or disobedience. In these lessons, progress is unsatisfactory or poor.

9. The school successfully develops pupils' personal qualities and social achievements. Pupils are attentive and reverential in assemblies and hymn practices, participating fully. They respond warmly to spiritual stimulus. For example, during a very good Year 3 art lesson, the teacher skilfully interwove a brief period of reflection on the meaning of friendship. Pupils and their families contribute generously to local, national and international charities.
10. Staff are good role models. Good relationships between staff and pupils promote strong moral values in all year groups. Most pupils are thoughtful and respectful, and all are aware of the concepts of right and wrong demonstrated by the school's five Golden Rules.
11. There is a school council, which is increasingly influential. Recently it has defined and agreed the school's Golden Rules, and suggested a number of improvements to the ICT suite. However, pupils in all year groups have few responsibilities in their classrooms. During the inspection, most resources in art and science lessons were brought out and put away by adults, or by pupils under close direction.
12. When working in small or large groups, most pupils happily share materials and ideas. They cheerfully accept praise and criticism when evaluating the work of their own group and other groups. They are cooperative, friendly and respectful to their peers and teachers, and are relaxed and adept with visitors. In the current school year, two pupils have been excluded for brief periods.
13. Boys' and girls' interest in a range of dance, performance, sport and other activities enables them to work and play together, without tension or embarrassment. The school values and celebrates cultural diversity. Pupils have good understanding of western culture, and of some other faiths and cultures. In autumn term, a storyteller contributed to the success of Black History Month, and pupils in Year 4 visited a synagogue. However, as no direct international links are established, pupils have limited knowledge of the day-to-day life of children in developing countries, including home countries of families in the school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.8	School data	2.4
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.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
97	2	0
54	4	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Provision is satisfactory overall and improving.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and, for pupils of all capabilities and backgrounds, the quality of learning is the same. Assessment is satisfactory overall, although systems are very 'young'.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is working hard and very productively to improve teaching quality.
- The oversight of planning for children's first two years in school is not good enough.
- There is much good quality teaching in Years 1 and 2 but writing opportunities should be broader.
- Teaching and learning are generally sound and sometimes good in Years 3 to 6. It is failure to deal with occasional misbehaviour that makes a few lessons unsatisfactory.
- Basic writing skills are taught well in literacy lessons but this good work is partially wasted because other writing opportunities are not good enough, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching for pupils whose first language is not English and for pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory but, in line with provision throughout the school, there are improvements needed.
- Assessment systems are very new but ideas for development are realistic.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 57 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	5 (9%)	18 (32%)	28 (49%)	3 (5%)	2 (3%)	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.

14. Taking the school as a whole, the quality of teaching is satisfactory for pupils of all backgrounds and capabilities. Support for those who need it is sound. However, there are variations between year groups and, to some degree, between subjects. The nuts and bolts of good quality teaching are now in place in most classrooms and the headteacher is continuing to work hard to enhance teachers' skills where necessary. However, she is right to be dissatisfied with the current quality of teaching and learning. There is much still to do if pupils are to achieve well.
15. In the Nursery and Reception classes the quality of teaching ranges from good to poor. Where it is poor it is because the environment is uninteresting and activities are aimless. In general the overview of planning is weak because it lacks sharp focus and there is too little evidence of a clear route from children's attainment on entry into the Nursery to achieving the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception. This is a key issue for the school to address. The good teaching seen was in Reception classes where teachers work particularly hard on the development of children's listening skills so that they can attend well enough to learn.
16. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 ranges from excellent to satisfactory. While it is satisfactory overall it has a number of good features. In particular, teachers motivate and engage pupils well, they have high expectations of behaviour and concentration and deploy support staff effectively. The one excellent lesson seen was the work of a Year 3 class teacher who also teaches music to these younger pupils. He taught with humour and with an excellent understanding of how to fully engage young children. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 offer

pupils better writing opportunities than is the case in Years 3 to 6. However, more needs to be done in extending these opportunities outside the confines of literacy lessons.

17. In Years 3 to 6 the range in teaching quality runs from very good to poor: most is good or satisfactory. In the four lessons that were less than satisfactory, the weakness was pupils' behaviour. The headteacher and staff have worked hard in the past year to improve behaviour and in most lessons it is now good. However, the potential for misbehaviour – which, for these older pupils is a legacy of the school in past years – bubbles beneath the surface. It comes to the fore in lessons with a practical or 'moving about' element because not all pupils have learned to behave appropriately in these situations. Good lessons on the other hand are typified by warm relationships, a fast pace and a good match of the work set to pupils needs. The urgent issue for Years 3 to 6 to address is the quality, quantity and breadth of pupils' writing opportunities. (See the English section of this report.)
18. The overall quality of support to pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory. Class teachers support most pupils within classrooms, although some do not specifically plan with them in mind. Some teachers have limited expertise: they are not fully aware of the full range of language needs of these pupils and do not make good use of interesting and appropriate resources. However, they provide good general support and pupils' responses are suitably supported and extended. The quality of teaching where more focused support is given - especially by the Turkish bilingual assistant - is exceptionally good.
19. For pupils with special educational needs, most class teachers provide well-planned group teaching or individual support in the classroom. Classroom assistants work mostly within the classroom and, where more intense support is needed, in withdrawal groups. The support by the co-ordinator of special educational needs is mostly in small groups taken out of the classroom with the result that pupils sometimes miss lessons. The learning support assistants are well deployed and they liaise well with teachers. However, not all support staff are made aware of the targets in pupils' individual educational plans. These plans are not regarded as living documents and some teachers do not plan work based on the targets they contain.
20. Assessment systems in the school – for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities - are relatively new and the amount of data available to track the progress that pupils make is small. For example, it was only this year for the first time that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 took the optional end of year tests. However, the school has a clear agenda for developing its systems and, considering its limited information, already skilfully identifies weaknesses in achievement. There is still much to do but the headteacher and her deputy know both 'the what and the how'. Marking that tells pupils what they can do to improve is, quite rightly, high on the agenda. So, too, is the need for more meaningful targets for pupils – such that they can fully understand them and can share them with their parents.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is a satisfactory range of activities outside the school day. Accommodation is satisfactory as are most – but not all – resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has worked hard to improve the curriculum.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum lacks cohesion and direction.
- Teachers do not plan adequately for writing in all areas of the curriculum.
- Provision for inclusion is good.
- Some resources are inadequate.

Commentary

21. A key issue identified in the previous inspection report has been satisfactorily addressed: religious education is now taught in Years 3 to 6 (although resources limit the quality of the curriculum). Curriculum development is a prominent feature of the school action plan. Schemes of work in history and geography, established before the headteacher's appointment, have been amended to ensure a curriculum relevant to pupils' needs. As the headteacher judged many teachers to be insufficiently experienced to assume whole-school subject responsibilities, she appointed four senior teachers as 'team leaders' responsible for teaching, learning and curriculum in the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. The leadership qualities of these individuals range from unsatisfactory to good but the outcomes of their work and of other innovations are, as yet, too recent to be judged.
22. There is no explicit demonstration by the team leader of the Foundation Stage of the route that children must take if they are to move rapidly and systematically towards the standards expected nationally by the time they reach Year 1. As a result, there is no cohesion to the curriculum: it is only as good as the individual class teacher who plans it for her own class.
23. To date there has been no whole-school overview of the writing opportunities on offer to pupils. As a result, these are too few and lack structure. In addition, and related to all subjects, although all teachers work together with their team leader to plan the curriculum, many plans still do not clearly differentiate between activities (what pupils will actually do) and learning objectives (what the teacher wants pupils to learn).
24. The school works hard to be inclusive and its provision is good. It makes adequate arrangements to support pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The work that teachers set is nearly always well matched to pupils' needs. There is help at hand for pupils who are worried or who find it difficult to behave well. A clear distinction is made between pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of pupils learning English as a new language. There are no pupils with special educational needs for whom the curriculum is disapplied: equality of access is fully ensured for them all. There is no clearly identified extra-curricular provision to meet the needs of the more able or gifted.
25. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, but are unsatisfactory in the Nursery and Reception classes, in religious education, and in the library (which is also underused). Accommodation is satisfactory overall although, externally, many areas of the main playground are crumbled and uneven. After rain, grassed areas in the Reception class playground are unusable for extended periods.

Care, guidance and support

The school has good procedures for child protection, health and safety. The caring environment has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is responsible for child protection: she is experienced and knowledgeable.
- Teachers and other adults know the pupils well, and respond quickly to their needs.
- Pupils of all capabilities and backgrounds are welcomed into the school family.
- Racist incidents are meticulously investigated, and perpetrators and victims counselled.
- The school values pupils' views, and often acts upon their suggestions.

Commentary

26. All adults in the school have good understanding of child protection issues. Midday assistants are conscientious and attentive. They receive regular training. Several members of staff, including the site manager, are fully qualified in first aid. The school's health and safety policy, currently under review, is based on the local authority's recommended policy. However, the

school has not formally obtained parents' approval for pupils to access the Internet and staff and governors have not yet agreed a restraint policy to ensure the safety of pupils who lose physical control of their behaviour.

27. Pastoral care is a high priority within the school and the success can be observed in the confident way that pupils become happy members of the school community. They receive good individual care and support from class teachers and from the headteacher. Teaching assistants develop very good relationships with pupils, and are skilled in curriculum and personal support. Additional to their regular duties, bilingual teaching assistants provide informal guidance to ethnic minority pupils and their families. As a part of the support programme for pupils with special educational needs, effective links are established with outside professionals. While teachers have good knowledge of their pupils' personal and social development, little information is recorded formally.
28. A good induction system settles Reception class pupils quickly into Year 1. Each year, significant numbers of pupils join other year groups. They quickly overcome language and cultural differences, and adjust easily and happily to the school's relaxed and happy routines. Good procedures in Year 6 prepare pupils for transfer to secondary education.
29. The school makes very good use of accommodation to provide special facilities for pupils: rooms are designated for counselling and social support, and a rest room is available for Muslim pupils fasting during Ramadan. A friendly early morning club provides a good choice of breakfasts and activities to pupils in all year groups. Some 50 pupils attend the club regularly, and their early arrival each day has improved the school's overall figures for attendance and punctuality.
30. Teachers respond sensitively to pupils' day-to-day comments and suggestions, generally via the school council. Although the school council is influential, and pupils and staff value its decisions, meetings are not open to all pupils, and minutes of meetings are not displayed on the school's notice boards. Pupils in all year groups enthusiastically collect merits awarded by teachers and midday assistants. Outstanding individual achievement, effort and good behaviour are celebrated at a special weekly assembly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, and satisfactory links with other schools and the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think well of the school.
- The school provides good information for parents, and seeks to involve them fully in their children's education.
- Parents' concerns and complaints are received sympathetically, and are addressed quickly.
- The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not comply fully with legal requirements. The school is addressing this promptly.

Commentary

31. Parents' views were very positive at the pre-inspection meeting, and were confirmed by responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Most parents in all ethnic groups identify with the school's 'family community'. Pupils benefit from help in lessons provided by a few parents and friends. The school tries consistently to increase the number of voluntary helpers. Although the parent-teacher association has not functioned for some years, staff organise informal social and fund-raising events for parents and families.
32. Each term, curriculum outlines provide parents with good over-views of their children's work in class. At three consultation evenings each year, they have adequate time to review progress, and discuss targets. Where necessary, interpreters are provided for a range of languages,

including Turkish and Bengali. Teachers' annual written reports are of satisfactory quality. The format is restrictive, and is to be revised to allow teachers to comment in detail. School newsletters are brief and informative, and are available in three languages.

33. The school offers family-learning and parenting classes, and weekly 'surgeries' for Turkish and Bengali speakers. The surgeries, especially, are valued for the breadth of informal advice available. A weekly Turkish and Bengali library is open to parents and children, and a toy library is open to families with pre-school children. The *Place 2 Be* is a counselling service available on five days in each fortnight to pupils, parents and staff, funded by the school and the local education authority. Many pupils and their families benefit from this extensive range of services.
34. For parents with limited English, translators and translations are arranged. The on-going interaction between school and home in supporting pupils' learning is well developed. Most parents of pupils with special educational needs are very positive about the provision and believe that their children are well catered for. They are aware of outside agencies liaising with the school to provide additional services. The co-ordinator works well with parents of pupils in Nursery to Year 6 and encourages them to be involved in reviews.
35. The school has satisfactory links with the community, and with other schools. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy an annual residential visit, where, in unfamiliar surroundings, they develop independence and social skills. Pupils' life-skills are developed by participation in events organised by Junior Citizenship and the Lee Valley Waterways Trust. A secondary school physical education specialist teacher is helping to improve standards by supporting Alma teachers in physical education lessons, and leading some games lessons.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership by the headteacher is good. Management by the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher has high aspirations and a clear vision for the school.
- The senior management team and deputy headteacher are helping to shape the school's direction, but are not yet fully effective.
- Strategic planning reflects the school's aims and values.
- Management is satisfactory, but is improving, as newly introduced strategies start to make a positive impact on the work of the school.
- Finances are well analysed and used, so the school makes the most of the money it has.
- The committed governing body carries its responsibilities well, but is not yet good enough in holding the school accountable for what it does.

Commentary

36. The new headteacher provides strong, purposeful and effective leadership. She has clear priorities and has established a rigorous agenda for needed improvement. Her energy and enthusiasm inspire a sense of shared purpose among all staff and governors, who are keen to make the school successful. She has secured the commitment of all to school improvement and initiated strategies and approaches to make this happen. Senior staff and governors have been fully consulted in determining the school's priorities for development and this ensures they have ownership of what the school needs to do to improve. The headteacher is having a positive effect on pupils. For example, there was general agreement by a group of Year 6 pupils that 'the headteacher is great and makes learning exciting'.
37. The senior management team and deputy head teacher are being empowered, through training and support, to lead the implementation of essential improvements. Roles and responsibilities have been redefined to help ensure that both are effective tiers of management,

and will lead to rising standards. For example, part of the deputy head-teacher's new focus is to raise standards by providing pupils of different ability, background and ethnicity with the best possible opportunities for them to succeed. The most important function of senior managers is to secure the best possible quality of education for all pupils in order to raise standards. They lead teams of teachers and have clear monitoring and support roles within specific year groups. The work of some appears to have got off to a good start but that for the youngest children is unsatisfactory because the leader does not fully understand what children are expected to know by the end of the Reception year and how to get them there. As yet, it is too early to assess the impact of these initiatives or to evaluate whether the revised staffing structure can realise the shared vision for the school.

38. School improvement planning provides a useful tool for development, with a clear, measurable agenda for improving achievement, teaching and learning. It is used well to determine the best use of funds available to support the priorities for improvement. It is closely linked to the planned provision of training of teachers and support staff, and to the performance management arrangements, which are embedded in the school's work. However, precise costs of planned developments are not always specified to enable spending patterns to be rigorously monitored.
39. The headteacher is putting into place good systems to support a rigorous approach to all aspects of monitoring and evaluation to help raise achievement. For example, she has started to analyse pupils' performance in the national tests to identify and overcome weaknesses. The tracking of achievement of individual pupils is already underway because of the headteacher's determination to drive standards up. However, pupils do not yet have individual targets and have little ownership in what they learn or the standards they achieve. The many good initiatives introduced by the headteacher are only just beginning to make an impact on improving teaching and learning and raising achievement. She is very aware that the contribution of other key staff needs development. For example, the co-ordinator for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very experienced and aware of what needs to be done to improve provision, but her role in the monitoring of teaching and learning standards is, as yet, underdeveloped. There is need for all staff to train in effective strategies to teach pupils whose first language is not English. The co-ordinator for special needs is very experienced, has clear direction and effectively supports pupils and parents. However, support for colleagues would prove more effective if she modelled good practice within the classroom. Her role in monitoring teaching is not yet developed. Although there is much to do, the headteacher has the ability to train and support her staff in acquiring the new skills they need. As a result, management is judged as sound, but likely to improve.
40. Careful and regular monitoring of spending patterns helps to ensure that finance is used to benefit pupils. Principles of best value are soundly applied, and the governing body is committed to ensuring that all funds are wisely spent. Administrative staff work tirelessly to ensure that the school runs smoothly and that day-to-day financial management does not impinge on teaching and learning. Financial control is judged as efficient and effective.
41. The governing body provides good support for the headteacher and carries out its statutory duties well. All committees are properly structured, have clear terms of reference and meet regularly to help ensure that they support the headteacher effectively. Key governors are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and the areas where it needs to improve. They take a keen interest in its development and are kept well informed by the headteacher who knows, and shares with them, where improvement is needed and what can be done to secure it. However, the governing body does not yet challenge enough in all areas to ensure that it will help shape the school's future direction.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	1,470,977
Total expenditure	1,378,715
Expenditure per pupil	3,234

Balance from previous year	75,375
Balance carried forward to the next	167,637

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The Foundation Stage

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, as it was at the previous inspection. Provision in Alma Nursery is poor, while in John Grove it is satisfactory. Provision in the Reception classes is satisfactory, with some good features. Children entering the nurseries are well below average in achievement for their age, and almost 60 per cent have English as an additional language. They make satisfactory progress overall, are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals in physical development and personal, social and emotional development but will fall well short of them in the other areas of learning.

There are key points that apply to all areas of learning. These are dealt with in this paragraph to prevent repetition below. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, but is much stronger in the Reception classes than in the nurseries, and better in one nursery than in the other. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Written reports from nurseries provide little helpful information for Reception class teachers. Day-to-day assessment is poor in the nurseries, and satisfactory in the Reception classes. Teaching assistants are keen to assess children, but are inadequately trained in assessment techniques. Resources in the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory overall. Resources, including books, are poor in Alma Nursery, and are unsatisfactory in John Grove. In the Reception classes, resources are generally satisfactory, but the number and quality of books available for children is poor. In addition:

- All relationships are very good.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in the Reception classes.
- Some good teaching by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Teacher [EMAT] contributes to the progress of pupils with English as an additional language.
- Planning is unsatisfactory overall: the nurseries do not plan closely enough with the Reception classes. (See the Curriculum section in Part B.)

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction processes are good.
- Resources in the Nursery limit progress.

Commentary

42. The school has good induction programmes linking home to Nursery, and Nursery to Reception. Parents are welcomed, and quickly settle children into their classes. Children in both Reception classes are keen to attend. They feel secure because they understand that all adults in school are helpful and sympathetic. Children have good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour in class is always good because teachers and teaching assistants are consistent in their behaviour management techniques. In both nurseries, children have poor concentration skills because resources provided for them are inadequate, poorly organised and uninviting. In Alma Nursery, children are often restless. Because activities rarely have objectives, children wander aimlessly in the classroom and outside area. Their skills improve greatly in the Reception classes, where clear instructions from teachers ensure that they complete focused activities. Reception class children attend occasional assemblies, where they learn something of Christianity and other faiths.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is just **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The lack of clear planning inhibits progress.
- Phonics are taught well in Reception classes.

Commentary

43. Provision is unsatisfactory in both nurseries, and is satisfactory with good features in the Reception classes. In all classes, children's speaking and listening skills are well below average for their ages. Most children with English as an additional language have much better understanding of English than is indicated by their spoken vocabulary. Children's home languages are valued. For example, a Reception class teacher was seen to teach a Turkish child the English word 'sweetcorn', while learning the Turkish equivalent. Many children in the Reception classes speak in incomplete sentences. In a satisfactory Nursery session, led by the EMAT, children's vocabulary improved when they played developmental word games. However, learning was inhibited because planning for the lesson failed to clarify the learning outcomes. During the inspection, no child was asked to explain work or discuss the work of others.
44. Phonics teaching is good in the Reception classes, and children learn many sounds. Most children recognise their own names, and they understand that print conveys meaning. A few higher attaining children can read simple words, but available books are in poor condition, and often unsuitable for classroom use. In the nurseries, writing and mark-making activities are poorly resourced and poorly organised. For example, children do not have a designated writing area related to real-life locations. Children currently in the Reception classes could not write their names when they left. A few higher attaining children now write their names, but often in an uncorrected random mix of capitals and lower case letters. They copy simple words, but are rarely asked to use their phonic knowledge in spelling attempts. During the inspection, in a good Reception class lesson, a teaching assistant pleasantly insisted that a child's work was not the best that she could do. The child immediately re-wrote the work, and received a suitable compliment.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Variations in teachers' knowledge lead to teaching and learning of variable quality.

Commentary

45. Provision is poor in Alma Nursery, but is satisfactory elsewhere. A few Nursery children with English as an additional language count objects accurately to ten in their home languages but not in English. In a number of poor sessions seen in Alma Nursery, children with English as an additional language were asked to place in sequence printed numbers from 1 to 20. The teacher's subject knowledge was poor, work was not matched to children's needs, and they learned nothing. A few children in the Reception classes count accurately to ten and recognise some of the numbers. They know that a maximum of four children can play in the home corner, and occasionally count each other to ensure the limit is not exceeded. A few higher attaining children recognise two-dimensional shapes. Many children know the difference between *long* and *short*. However, in an unsatisfactory session seen within a

satisfactory lesson, the teacher's planning confused children with too much similar vocabulary:
long, longer, longest and short, shorter, shortest.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject knowledge is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

46. Discussions with teachers indicate unsatisfactory subject knowledge in this area of learning. Weekly planning and timetables indicate very limited time allocated to teaching knowledge and understanding of the world. During the inspection, children had few opportunities to investigate objects, or attempt to solve simple problems. Meagre resources inhibit children's learning in Alma Nursery. For example, in order to learn what the teacher intended, children needed a wide range of materials, tools and equipment. In practice, they were provided only with cornflour and plastic knives. Consequently, they soon lost interest and moved to other activities. In the Reception classes, children demonstrated good mouse control when using the computer to play simple games. Despite this, planning does not show how computers are used to support learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Individual coaching is used well in Reception classes.
- Nursery planning does not deal with known weaknesses.

Commentary

47. In a satisfactory Reception class lesson seen, many children threw beanbags to head height and caught them successfully. A few threw and caught beanbags successfully while running. The teacher coached individuals to develop individual skills. In the nurseries, children demonstrated good co-ordination on bicycles, and on their climbing frame. However, most outdoor play is unstructured and adults do not often intervene to improve children's skills. The school recognises that many children enter the nurseries with inadequate fine motor skills. However, Nursery planning does not respond to these weaknesses. Children in the Reception classes have satisfactory fine motor skills although many have difficulty in using scissors.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources limit progress in the Nursery classes.

Commentary

48. Provision is unsatisfactory in Alma Nursery, and satisfactory elsewhere. Nursery children enjoy painting, but many children with English as an additional language cannot name colours. Children in Alma Nursery were completing a large collage entirely in one shade of red tissue

paper. They had no opportunities to discuss the texture, shape or colour of other materials. In John Grove Nursery, a similar activity was enriched by provision of a wide variety of materials, including sequins, ribbons, buttons and straws. Good displays of self-portraits in the Reception classes confirmed good progress in children's observational drawings. Skin tones in the portraits, carefully matched to the children's complexions, demonstrated good knowledge of colour mixing. In the nurseries, imaginative play is restricted by inadequate resources. Imaginative play is satisfactory in the Reception classes, where children were seen to play in their café, and pretend to make telephone calls to their friends.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving but are not yet good enough.
- More benefit could be derived from speaking opportunities.
- Pupils generally listen well.
- The quality of pupils' written work is the major weakness.
- Other subject of the curriculum do little to promote writing skills.

Commentary

49. Standards in English are improving. Despite this they remain below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. Additionally, there are differences in pupils' attainment in the four elements: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The low standards result from the failure of other subjects of the curriculum to provide opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate newly learned skills.
50. Although pupils achieve below average standards, in speaking this represents progress through the school that is at least satisfactory and occasionally good. Some activities produce good speaking opportunities but, too often, there is insufficient 'sense of audience' amongst pupils. Hence, some of what pupils say – in wind-up sessions at the end of lessons, for example – can be lost on all their classmates but those who are sitting very close. Making a 'class-sized' voice a requisite in these and other sessions would improve pupils' 'public' speaking skills and enhance the benefit of the session to everyone. In addition, more encouragement to talk in sentences when responding to teachers' questions would be a useful tool in the development of writing skills.
51. In most classes pupils listen well and this attentiveness helps them to learn. In some classes a significant minority is inattentive and disrupts the concentration of others. This variation has much more to do with the teachers' ability to motivate and engage than with the pupils themselves.
52. Reading standards are close to expectations in Year 2 but fall short of them in Year 6. This is an example of improving standards working their way through the school. Pupils have regular and adequate opportunities to read while in their classrooms and make satisfactory, sometimes good progress. Some have the advantage of reading regularly to an adult or older sibling at home and this is of clear benefit. Those who do not do so progress less well. In addition, the library is significantly underused and, as a costly resource, plays no influential part in encouraging pupils to read.
53. Writing standards are below average in Year 2 but are weaker still in Year 6. This is a crucial weakness for the school to address and there are several key points to be made:

- The quantity of written work pupils produce is far too small if they are to develop as writers.
- The way that the school organises its literacy lessons and teaches the 'nuts and bolts' of writing is satisfactory and often good. It is the sparse opportunities on offer to pupils to develop these across the curriculum that prevents basic skills being practised and consolidated.
- Too much writing is supported - by worksheets or by sentence 'stems', for example; or is lacking in challenge – like handwriting practice.
- The 'from scratch' writing that pupils do is far more evident in Years 1 and 2 than it is thereafter. Independence in writing should grow as pupils get older. Such is not the case at this school.
- Teachers do not make it clear to pupils that their writing should demonstrate what they have been taught. Handwriting is one of several examples. Pupils learn cursive script but virtually none of them use it outside of 'handwriting lessons' and teachers make no demands on them to do so.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Opportunities for pupils to read in subjects other than English are satisfactory. While some pupils do have difficulty in reading what is required of them, most manage. Opportunities for pupils to write are very poor and there is much work to be done to ensure that these are increased to be adequate in number and in challenge. In the absence of a co-ordinator for the subject, changes to practice will need rigorous and uncompromising monitoring and evaluation by someone in a position to have a clear overview of provision throughout the whole school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**. This is similar to provision at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not high enough because pupils record too little work to enable them to make the best possible progress.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with strengths and weaknesses evident.
- Leadership is not yet fully effective.
- Important developments are starting to raise pupils' achievement and increase their interest and involvement, but weaknesses also exist, which slow progress.

Commentary

55. A scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that standards are below national levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. On balance the achievement of pupils is satisfactory as they move through the school. However, more able pupils sometimes do not make the best possible progress because work they are given is too easy for them. This is because there are no consistent approaches to assessing and recording pupils' progress from day to day to enable teachers to build carefully on previous learning. Most teachers do not ensure that pupils record enough work to enable them to extend learning at a required rate for standards to rise.
56. Most teaching and learning is satisfactory, although some good teaching was seen in both key stages. Strengths in teaching include purposeful questioning, which develops clear understanding of new knowledge, good encouragement, which helps to motivate pupils, and well-chosen resources, which aid learning. Teachers' marking usually celebrates pupils' efforts and sometimes helps them to move forward. Learning support assistants mostly work well with pupils with special educational needs and other less able pupils to help them develop important skills. These positive features of lessons help to explain the mostly good attitudes to learning and at least satisfactory behaviour seen during the inspection, which contribute to the

sound progress pupils make. Weaknesses, which slow progress, include slow pace, imprecise questioning, unclear instructions, insecure control strategies and low levels of challenge. Pupils are not always required to take pride in their work.

57. Leadership is sound, but is not yet fully effective. This is because the regular and systematic monitoring of planning, of pupils' work or of teaching and learning to discover what needs doing is not yet embedded in the school's work. As a result, weaknesses in the implementation of mathematics lessons exist, which prevent pupils from achieving well. For example, time is often not well used to benefit pupils. Most teachers spend too long with pupils on the carpet before they begin independent work, which gives them too little time to consolidate learning. Teachers rarely require pupils to evaluate with them what they have learnt to ensure that the work they are given next time builds carefully on what they know and understand.
58. Data from national tests is starting to be analysed to identify weaknesses so that they can be overcome. Teachers rightly now give problem-solving activities greater emphasis as a means of developing pupils' thinking skills to help facilitate mathematical understanding. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use different approaches to solving money problems. Teachers increasingly link classroom tasks to real-life experiences to help bring the subject to life for pupils and give good emphasis to the development of number skills. Displays are used well to stimulate interest and involvement and help pupils acquire a mathematical vocabulary. However, pupils do not yet have precise targets to help them to develop ownership in their learning. They have too few opportunities to handle data, such as through the use of ICT and rarely complete and interpret mathematical diagrams.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. The development of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through other subjects is not given enough emphasis. For example, older pupils rarely use spreadsheets to represent mathematical information in ICT or use timelines in history to help develop number skills. Opportunities tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving in all year groups.
- Throughout the school, pupils' written work is very poor.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils are not taught progressively how to make scientific enquiries.
- In all year groups, pupils have poor understanding of technical vocabulary.

Commentary

60. Although 50 per cent of pupils currently in Year 6 began their primary education in other schools, their attainment is generally similar to their classmates: below expected national standards. Some good teaching is slowly raising standards, although recording continues to be a significant weakness. For example, in Year 2, workbooks are not provided for science: occasionally, written work is copied onto the final pages of English workbooks. At the time of the inspection, in the third week of November, pupils in the Year 6 classes had not attempted any individual written work. Their folders contained some perfunctory drawings and a science word-search game. Teachers in all year groups fail to provide suitable writing tasks for their pupils.

61. Pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory understanding of electrical circuits. They have some knowledge of the range of electrical equipment used in the school, and know that mains electricity is dangerous. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, they confirmed that power produced by batteries could be transmitted through insulated wires. In groups, they amicably shared resources and discussed their findings. One child said 'Wow!' when he completed a circuit and lit a small, bright bulb. In a similar, satisfactory, lesson seen in Year 6, pupils built circuits by following printed diagrams, and used switches to activate bulbs and buzzers. In this lesson, the teacher questioned pupils ineffectively, and they often responded with single word answers. Generally, pupils in Year 2 were more independent than pupils in Year 6 when selecting resources and experimenting with circuitry.
62. In a satisfactory lesson seen in Year 5, pupils planned investigations to determine if a variety of liquids evaporated at similar rates. In this lesson, higher attaining pupils knew the meanings of 'hypothesis' 'vapour' and 'fair testing', but pupils of average attainment could not differentiate between units of volume and units of weight. Pupils in all year groups have very limited technical vocabulary, and often confuse the meanings of the few words they do know. For example, pupils in a Year 4 class confused the definitions of 'volts' 'current' and 'energy'.
63. Science teaching is satisfactory overall, and is sometimes good. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, but do not always make their lessons interesting or exciting. Assessment is unsatisfactory because pupils' individual and year-group weaknesses are not identified.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- There are ample computers in ICT suite and in classrooms.
- Some parts of the programme of study are not covered in sufficient depth.
- There is no subject leader to give direction.
- There is no assessment scheme to track pupils' progress.

Commentary

64. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory because most teachers are using the facilities of the suite confidently and choose tasks that provide good challenge and promote specific skills. Standards have not been maintained since the time of the last inspection, when they were reported as above the expectations of pupils aged 7 and 11. Pupils enter the school with little understanding of ICT. By Year 2 standards are broadly average and by Year 6 standards are below the national expectations. Although pupils now get sufficient regular opportunities to work on the computers, there are gaps in their understanding and some parts of the programme of study are not covered in sufficient depth. Most pupils are not yet proficient at more advanced National Curriculum skills, such as creating more complex databases, desktop publishing, and using computer simulations to explore changes and effect, or present work in different ways.
65. The computer suite is well set up and used regularly, and most teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject. This ensures that pupils learn well and that skills build progressively through the school. In Year 2, for example, the teacher provided a very clear explanation of how to create a picture of 'The Great Fire of London' and save it on a disk. Most pupils showed developing confidence in the use of various tools to make a picture and enjoyed opportunity to use ICT in an imaginary situation. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have a broad experience of ICT software, usually linked well to other subjects. Years 5 and 6 use word processing software to combine text and graphics. Pupils in Year 6 search the Internet for

information and images to feature in 'PowerPoint' presentations for their history topic, World War II.

66. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In a Year 6 lesson where it was very good the teacher set high expectations for the higher attaining pupils. Pupils achieved well because the task built well on earlier work, they received clear instructions and they had good, collaborative experience working on 'PowerPoint' presentations. The pupils' good relationships and positive behaviour also promoted achievement well. Pupils with learning difficulties were supported well, by extra adults present. Pupils with English as an additional language were fully included, as were all pupils. In lessons for Years 5 and 6, the teachers' effective use of the screen projector enhances learning and the straightforward and direct explanations have a good impact on pupils' achievement.
67. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school has adopted national guidance to ensure progression of skills and understanding. There is currently no subject leader to give good support. However, the recent appointment of a classroom assistant with expertise in ICT is a very good move to improve standards in the subject. The quality of support by the assistant in the lessons is good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. The school makes some productive links between ICT and other subjects and these motivate pupils to learn. There is more to do.

HUMANITIES

Inspectors saw a small number of history and religious education lessons but no geography lessons. The evidence is too limited to form secure judgements on provision.

Commentary

69. The evidence indicates that planning requirements are met in all subjects and that all pupils make progress as they move through the school. For example, in history, Year 3 pupils learn about the lives of Roman and Celtic women while Year 6 pupils find out about Martin Luther King as part of Black History Month. In geography, Year 1 pupils learn about their local area and find where they live on a large-scale map while Year 5 study the local waterway in work on rivers. In religious education, where pupils study different religions, Year 2 pupils learn about the Hindu festival of Diwali while Year 6 pupils discover what Jews believe about the Creation. Links between subjects are evident which help to reinforce learning, to increase pupils' motivation and bring subjects to life. For example, in a link with art, Year 3 pupils make diya lamps in religious education, and link geography and history when they show on a map of Europe the extent of the Roman Empire.
70. Teachers give some attention to the development of important skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, in geography, Year 2 pupils begin to develop mapping skills when they draw "picture maps" of a walk around the school and Year 5 pupils consider how the local area could be improved. In history, Year 3 pupils compare primary and secondary sources of information while Year 4 pupils begin to understand the impact of Greek mythology. In religious education, Year 1 pupils learn about Christian harvest festivals, presenting their findings at a class assembly attended by parents, while Year 5 compare Muslim communities with the school community. Year 6 pupils learn from religion as well as about religion as they explain how Jews feel about God and reflect on some of the world's wonders. However, in all subjects, pupils do not complete enough written work and progress is too slow.
71. There is a good range of artefacts to support learning in history and displays around the school help to motivate pupils and celebrate their work. Visits within the local area, such as to the River Lea, St. Matthew's Church, and further afield, such as to the British Museum, help to bring learning to life for pupils. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop

their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all three subjects. Approaches for assessing pupils' progress in the development of knowledge, skills and understanding are not yet securely established, but have been introduced. Planned developments currently taking place will improve the curriculum in geography and history.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of provision in design and technology. The subject alternates curriculum time with art and design and it was the latter that was in progress for most classes at the time of inspection. However, discussions with teachers and photographic evidence indicated that an appropriate scheme of work is covered and that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. In line with the management structure in the school, there is no subject leader for design and technology.

Art and design

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Development of the subject is promising, but at a very early stage.
73. Art and design is one of only two subjects in the school to have a co-ordinator. The potential for the subject to be well led and managed in the future is clear but there has been too little impact so far for it to be judged better than satisfactory. The teacher has held the co-ordinator post for a year and has spent much time creating central rather than departmental storage of resources. She has now started to produce a scheme of work that meets the needs of the school. Assessment in the subject is in its infancy but observational drawings have already been used well for whole school assessment. There are plans in place for the co-ordinator to undertake joint lesson observations with the headteacher and, combined with her existing subject expertise, this should equip her with the skill to offer colleagues the advice needed to raise standards.
74. Currently standards are variable but just meet those expected by the end of Year 6. These pupils, for example, produce still life work using charcoal, pastel, paint and pencil. There are examples of pupils learning about and 'working in the style of' other artists: 'The Snail' by Matisse in Year 5, for example. Art is used to support work in other subjects but too often it fulfils a purely illustrative function and the opportunity to promote art and design skills and techniques is lost. The Greek masks produced in Year 4 are an example of this.
75. The significant amount of work on display suggests that, overall, the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the lessons seen, teaching quality ranged from very good to satisfactory. The strengths in the better lessons lay in the teachers' expertise, their use of the work of well-known artists, their own skill and enthusiasm and – in the very best lesson – the really special quality of the classroom atmosphere. The weakness in the satisfactory lesson was the failure of the teacher to use his own skill to help pupils to develop theirs.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A full-time teacher is the school's part-time music specialist.
- Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
- Singing does not achieve the standard of other musical activities.

76. The part-time specialist leads music in all year groups, and develops teachers' subject knowledge. His enthusiasm is infectious: pupils in all year groups enjoy visiting a music room furnished by him in unique style, with many unusual instruments displayed and available for use.
77. Pupils know many songs from a variety of cultures, but their enthusiastic singing is not always clear or tuneful, and is rarely corrected. In a satisfactory singing lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 carefully followed words projected on a screen. The teacher asked good questions to ensure that all pupils, including those with English as an additional language, understood the meaning of the words. Among a number of thoughtful answers, a higher attaining pupil explained the underlying meaning of *My credit card is wearing thin*. He compared the words with sentiments in a previously learned song about the needy and the homeless. Many similar questions and answers contributed to pupils' spiritual development.
78. In an excellent Year 1 lesson, the music specialist successfully led all pupils in keeping time with percussion instruments to a melody pre-recorded on tape. Later in the lesson they matched displayed instruments to identical musical instruments played by the teacher behind a curtain. Throughout the lesson, their listening skills were exceptional, and they were enthralled by a variety of sounds, including a cowbell. The class teacher participated fully by using her knowledge of individuals to ensure full inclusion of pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs.
79. Pupils in Year 6, interviewed during the inspection, discussed enthusiastically how music featured in Black History Month. They knew that jazz rhythms originated during the years of slavery in the southern states of America, and that blues music was similarly associated with the great depression. In assemblies, they had performed their own jazz and blues compositions.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is addressing deficiencies in teaching and learning.
 - Teachers have inadequate subject knowledge.
 - Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are often unsatisfactory.
80. Six lessons were seen during the inspection. One was poor, two were unsatisfactory, two were satisfactory, and one was good. In the poor and unsatisfactory lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement were low because their subject knowledge was inadequate. For example, in an unsatisfactory lesson seen in Year 4, the teacher reprimanded pupils for chattering and colliding during the warm-up session. She was unaware that the reason for their unsatisfactory behaviour was because they had confined themselves to a small area of the playground rather than disperse over the full area available. In this lesson, the teacher was also unaware when a team game was collapsing in chaos. A higher attaining boy, nominally involved in the game, said to the inspector 'Not getting on very well, are we?'
 81. In a good dance lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher was knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She ensured that pupils were focused on the lesson objectives before they left the classroom to dance in the hall. In the lesson, pupils' attitudes were good. They evaluated their own work, and the work of others, and were justifiably proud of their achievements. When the teacher asked if the class performance could be improved, a boy thought for a moment then said 'No... we're perfect!'

82. In a poor lesson seen in Year 3, behaviour was poor because the teacher had little control over the class in the playground. Of 28 pupils present, nine did not participate in the lesson. No work was provided for them. Without reprimand, they wandered in and out of the school building, and bounced balls across the playground, through the lesson in progress, impeding the work of other pupils.
83. The headteacher has obtained specialist help in the subject. Local education authority advisory teachers, and a secondary physical education specialist, are beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
84. Pupils have additional opportunities for physical development through district sports events, and football competitions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. The school takes particular time and trouble in looking after the emotional and other personal needs of pupils because it is aware of the impact that this can have on learning. The services of 'Place 2 Be', 'Place 2 Talk' and 'Place 2 Think' all contribute to pupils' good attitudes and their generally good behaviour. Despite this, some pupils still have problems when it comes to dealing with less structured situations. Their behaviour disrupts lessons and leads to teaching and learning that are unsatisfactory. It affects the older rather than the younger pupils and is the legacy of behaviour in the school that evidence shows, in the recent past, was much less positive than it is now. Nevertheless, it manifests itself on a minority of occasions and should not detract from the impact of the good efforts of the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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