

INSPECTION REPORT

Balgowan Primary School

Beckenham

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101587

Headteacher: Mr Martin Barlow

Lead inspector: Mr Rod King

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th November 2003

Inspection number: 255410

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:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	598
School address:	Balgowan Road Beckenham Kent
Postcode:	BR3 4HJ
Telephone number:	020 8658 6374
Fax number:	020 8663 0251
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Janet Bell
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is much larger than an average community primary school with 598 pupils aged from 4 to 11 years of age. There are more boys than there are girls especially in Years 4 and 6. The school is undergoing a major management review in order to resolve a number of financial and organisational challenges.

The great majority of pupils are white British; nearly all pupils speak English fluently and a very small number are being supported because they are in the early stages of using and speaking the language.

About 9 per cent are eligible for free school meals; this is about half the national average.

Around 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs and this is close to the average for schools in England. The range of individual needs includes specific learning difficulties, social and behavioural issues, physical disabilities and communication.

Children enter the school twice each year, in September and in January, from 25 different pre-school settings.

The school is popular and there is very little movement of pupils other than when they transfer to the next stage of their education.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1742	Mr R King	Lead inspector	Mathematics
9007	Mr R Salasnik	Lay inspector	
1395	Mrs P Hoey	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English
32302	Ms G Read	Team inspector	Science, geography, history, religious education
28955	Ms M Slater	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, art, design and technology, music, physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school and reach high standards; they do not achieve as well as they might by the end of Year 2. There is a very strong commitment to the development of pupils' personal qualities, positive attitudes and values. The quality of pupils' learning and the teaching are good. The school is well led, but there are some weaknesses in management that are affecting some aspects of the school's provision. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are very high when pupils leave the school and pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6.
- Achievements of children in Reception classes are very high.
- Pupils develop very good attitudes, relationships, values and qualities for living a fulfilled life.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- The school sets very high expectations for pupils' personal development and behaviour; there are very high standards of care, welfare and safety.
- The school provides a wide variety of activities within and beyond the school day to enrich and broaden pupils' experiences.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they might.
- There are inconsistencies in the ways in which the school uses assessment information to set targets for improvement.

Since the school was inspected in 1998, there have been a number of improvements. National tests at Year 6 show that there has been a significant improvement in standards over this period of time. Teachers are making better use of their own day-to-day assessments to plan. Provision and attainment in information technology are more secure. There have been positive developments in provision for pupils with special needs from which they are benefiting. Subject co-ordinators are more actively involved in school improvement, but lack of funding prevents them from having sufficient time to fulfil their tasks. The school is conducting urgent consultations to bring about a more cost-effective management structure, which remains in need of attention.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Standards are very high, by the time pupils leave the school. Achievement throughout the school is variable but, overall, it is **good**. Pupils are achieving very well by the time they reach the end of their time in the school, but there is considerable variation in the achievements of different groups of pupils. Achievement of children in Reception is very good in all their areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they might in English and mathematics, but their achievement is satisfactory or better in other subjects. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is very good.

The development of pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. They have very good attitudes to school; pupils work hard and are keen to do well. They contribute well to school life, are developing a very secure sense of what is right and what is wrong and they are very aware of their personal heritage and that of others in the school. Their behaviour is very good, both in lessons and around the school. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. The main reason for this is that pupils' learning is promoted by good teaching. The great majority of lessons which pupils experience are good or better with a significant number of these being very good. Teachers have a good command of their subjects, relative to the age of the pupils they teach; they present and explain new ideas in different and innovative ways which extend their learning. Teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can do and how they expect them to behave. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and they take increasing responsibility for their own learning. There are some weaknesses in the availability of assessment information in Years 1 and 2 that impair teachers' ability to plan fully to meet the differing needs of their pupils.

The good quality of the curriculum, supported by a very strong programme of additional activities, provides well for the needs, abilities and interests of the pupils. Care systems are good and pupils have access to high quality support and guidance. Partnerships with parents and the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good and the management of the school is satisfactory; overall, they are **good**. Working with the headteacher, school leaders provide a strong sense of direction and purpose, based on improving learning for all pupils. The school runs very smoothly on a daily basis, but there is insufficient development and use of information about how well pupils in Years 1 and 2 are doing. This inhibits the school's ability to focus resources more effectively on securing further improvements for these pupils. In addition, funding constraints inhibit the school's management capacity so that senior members of staff have to cover several key areas; this is particularly acute for Years 1 and 2, where there is no full-time, dedicated leader. The school has identified these matters as priorities for development.

Governors play a full and effective part in school improvement. Through thorough self-evaluation systems, they are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and take effective action.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has effective links with parents. The majority of parents support the school and they are pleased with what it is doing for their children. A minority express dissatisfaction with the information that the school provides and some have concerns surrounding the way in which it deals with complaints. The school deals well with those complaints it can resolve.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel fully involved with school life, feel cared for and say that the school does all it can to help them learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics for pupils in Years 1 and 2
- Develop consistent school-wide systems for using assessment data and target setting to meet the needs of all pupils, based on successful practice already operating within the school

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Finalise, implement and monitor the disability access plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are very high. Pupils are achieving very well by the time they reach the end of their time in the school, but there is some variation in the achievements of different groups of pupils. Those of children in Reception are very good in all their areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they might in English and mathematics, but their achievement is satisfactory or better in other subjects. The achievements of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a very good start to their time in school.
- Pupils achieve very well in Years 3 to 6, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing are below average and, in mathematics, they are in line with nationally expected levels.
- Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in information and communication technology, art, geography, history, music, religious education and physical education.

Commentary

1. The most recent national test results show that standards at the end of Year 2 have declined since 2002 and that performance is below the national average for reading and writing, while they are broadly in line for mathematics. Those for Year 6 pupils indicate improvements on the previous year and that they are doing much better than the average for English schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (16.2)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (14.3)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (16.7)	16.4 (16.5)

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.3 (29.4)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.7 (28.3)	27.0(26.7)
science	31.0 (29.8)	28.8 (28.3)

2. Trends in the school's performance of Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science over the last four years show that there have been significant year-on-year improvements on previous results. During this period, the school has exceeded the national average each year. Over the same period of time, the attainments of Year 2 pupils have declined in reading and writing, as well as falling below the national average. There have been fluctuations in Year 2 mathematics results and these are now in line with the national levels.

3. Children in the Reception class are achieving very well and, in all their areas of learning, many are exceeding the national expectations by the time that they start in Year 1. They do well because they have very good teaching, their progress is monitored carefully and action is taken to ensure continuous improvement.

4. The progress that children make in Reception is not built on systematically in Years 1 and 2. Many pupils, especially those who are capable of achieving more, do not do as well as they could. This is due to the inconsistent ways in which assessment information is collected and used. The data that is available is not in a form that helps teachers to plan better to meet the specific learning needs of individuals and groups of pupils and set targets for improvement. The school has identified this as a priority and action is being taken to secure improvement.

5. From the time they begin Year 3, and for the remainder of their time at the school, pupils' progress and their achievements in all areas of learning are at least good and, sometimes, very good. This is due to the following reasons: high quality teaching, setting targets that are derived from analysed assessment information, tracking progress and intervention where pupils are deemed to be underachieving. In addition, the school has invested considerably in a series of additional support measures designed to provide specific support to enable pupils to do as well as they can.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. They reach standards higher than those expected when they transfer to secondary education. Achievement is good because teachers plan carefully for them, expect them to do as well as they can and they are appropriately supported.

7. Standards in all other subjects throughout the school are at least in line with those expected nationally. Pupils achieve well in science, art, geography, history, religious education and physical education because teachers have high expectations and motivate pupils well. In music, and, sometimes, in information and communication technology, children are doing well because they work with staff who have experience in and enthusiasm for these subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to the school and their behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour is very good, both inside and outside school.
- They have very good attitudes to school and are confident and enthusiastic.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- Pupils are enterprising and take responsibility; they have very good relationships with each other and with adults.
- The school sets high expectations and stimulates pupils to learn.
- Attendance and punctuality are good.

Commentary

8. Pupils behave well in lessons, assemblies, at lunchtime and when moving around the school. This begins with the calm way they come in to school in the morning. It is also evident during playtimes, wet breaks in the school and in the playgrounds. Pupils understand the high standards the school expects and respond very well to them. Pupils' very good behaviour in most lessons makes a major contribution on their learning and plays a large part in ensuring lesson outcomes are met.

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and enjoy life there. They are forthcoming and very positive about their school experiences with visitors. Those who had attended other schools said they preferred being at Balgowan. They show confidence in their lessons displaying a positive approach to independent learning and collaborative work; this makes a significant impact on their high levels of achievement. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes and are confident; this enables them to make good progress. Teachers' high expectations of conduct promote this productive working atmosphere. Pupils participate eagerly in the many extra-curricular activities, some attending more than one.

10. The school lays great stress on core principles and values which underpin its work for pupils. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. Assemblies and lessons give pupils opportunities to reflect about the wider world and their place in it. As a result of what the school is doing for them, pupils are developing a strong sense of self-awareness and of being valued as individuals. Pupils have opportunities in lessons to talk about their own faiths and experiences. Pupils' moral development is very good. They know right and wrong and respond well to the high expectations of all adults, who act as very good role models.

11. Pupils' social development is very good. They listen to and respect the views of each other and, when working in groups, pupils share tasks out equally. Each class in Years 3 to 6 has a boy and girl representative on the school council. Non-council members value what it achieves on their behalf. Year 6 pupils help in the dining hall and infants' playground on a rota basis so that all of them get an opportunity to help; this develops mature and responsible attitudes. Relationships amongst individuals and within groups are good. Pupils are involved in a variety of ecological projects in school and in the neighbourhood. Pupils' cultural development is very good. They are given opportunities to celebrate their own and others' cultural traditions and this is especially so in art and music.

12. Attendance has constantly remained above national averages with unauthorised absences being below national averages. This is helped by the clear and detailed guidance in the school brochure, which sets out the importance of regular attendance, the part parents are expected to play and gives examples of how the school classifies authorised and unauthorised absences. The school monitors the attendance of individual pupils so that it can deal quickly with those who are causing concern.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
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

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background

No of pupils on roll
426
3
22
8
4
13
25
9
3
11
13
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
18	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
1	0

Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	27	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	30	0	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

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good, and, in a significant proportion of lessons, it is very good. However, it is not fully supported throughout the school by assessment systems which are used consistently. The school's curriculum is good; it provides well for the experience and interests of pupils and provides them with a very wide range of additional activities to enrich their learning. The pupils are provided with very good levels of care and are supported well. Overall, the school's links with parents are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of pupils' learning is good because the teaching is good. Four out of five lessons are good or better and over a quarter are very good. The high quality of the teaching explains why children in Reception do so well and why pupils achieve as well as they do by the time that they leave the school. Weaknesses in teaching, especially in Years 1 and 2 are associated with lack of availability of interpreted assessment information to enable teachers to focus more effectively on the needs of learners. This explains why teaching overall is good and not very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan effectively; this is enhanced when they have access to analysed assessment information.
- There are weaknesses in the use of assessment information in Years 1 and 2 which result in low attainments in English and mathematics.
- There is an insistence on high standards of behaviour throughout the school.
- Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of their subjects in relation to the age range they teach and use questions well to support their pupils' learning.
- Pupils have a very good capacity to work independently.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 75 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	20 (27%)	41 (55%)	14 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

13. A key factor in the high achievements of pupils in the school is the good quality of pupils' learning, supported by equally good quality teaching. High achievements are also associated with the ways in which teachers use their own assessments to set challenging targets for their pupils and review progress towards them. In the Reception class, regular assessments are used to set targets, check improvements and provide focused support for improvement. In Years 3 to 6, assessment information has been collected and analysed so that teachers can plan for the needs of their learners and to identify where additional support is needed to help pupils achieve their targets.

14. Another important factor that promotes pupils' learning is the consistently high expectations that teachers throughout the school have for high standards of achievement and pupils' behaviour. In mathematics and science lessons, for instance, pupils are frequently encouraged to "think and behave" like mathematicians or scientists in investigation work. In almost all lessons, teachers

manage their pupils well and insist on high standards of behaviour. This helps them to develop good work habits and enables them to be successful learners.

15. From their time in the Reception class, pupils are encouraged to work independently. As they progress through the school, they take increasing responsibility for their own learning, use their time wisely and work productively. Older pupils plan their time well and complete their work to a high standard of presentation and outcome. One example was a Year 6 geography lesson on rainforests in which pupils noted their key features for themselves and, from these, produced final pieces of written work of a very high standard.

16. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers set clear learning objectives for all pupils, whilst additional visual prompts effectively support pupils with reading difficulties or those with autistic spectrum disorder. Individuals or groups of pupils have focused support from teaching assistants and this enables pupils to concentrate and succeed at set tasks. Teaching assistants know what is planned for lessons and they keep daily records in order to give feedback to the teachers with whom they work

17. There are weaknesses in the availability and use of analysed assessment information in Years 1 and 2. This means that teachers are unable to plan as effectively as they might in order to meet the differing needs of their pupils and use methods to meet them.

18. Teachers have a good command of their subjects, relative to the age of the pupils they teach. This enables them to explain new concepts and knowledge in a variety of interesting and exciting ways which capture the curiosity of pupils and extend their learning. Teachers often use their subject knowledge effectively to ask questions such as, "Can you explain to me how you arrived at that answer?" to challenge pupils, to make them reflect and to deepen their understanding. Questions are also used effectively to assess pupils' understanding during lessons and in evaluation plenaries at the end. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. These pupils learn best when their teachers plan effectively for them and expect the most of them in their lessons.

The curriculum

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum; provision is very good in the Reception year. Throughout the school pupils' learning is enriched by a wide range of activities, including, sports, the arts, visits, and visitors. The satisfactory accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy and numeracy are planned effectively.
- A good range of additional opportunities and after-school clubs enhance the curriculum.
- The school provides an inclusive curriculum that meets a wide range of needs.
- The outside play provision for Reception children is limited.

Commentary

19. Curriculum planning has been improved by the adoption of nationally recommended guidelines. Programmes for the teaching of literacy and numeracy follow the national strategies closely and this has helped to provide a useful structure for teachers' medium term plans. The school uses the framework of the locally agreed syllabus successfully to plan the teaching of religious education.

20. The curriculum in Reception is very well structured with a very strong emphasis on the three core areas of learning of personal development, acquisition of communication skills and mathematical development. There is a suitable balance between adult-directed and child-initiated learning. Children's opportunities to learn from outdoor play are limited because of the constraints of playground space.

21. The school matches the curriculum well for those pupils in Years 3 to 6 who fall short of established national standards. Additional support is given to enable them to reach suitable attainment levels for their age group. Those who achieve the national standards with ease benefit from enrichment and extension programmes. An equivalent programme is not in place in Years 1 and 2, where standards in national tests are below the national average in English and pupils do not achieve as well as they might in mathematics.

22. A very wide range of additional opportunities enriches the curriculum and this is accessible to all pupils, including those special educational needs, who have good opportunities throughout the school to take part in classroom activities and events in the wider community. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those whose additional language is English, is good overall and they have complete access to the full range of the curriculum opportunities provided by the school.

23. Good use is made of the wider community to support teaching and learning; the use of visitors in various fields enhances the curriculum and helps it to meet the needs of pupils and deepen their understanding. Educational visits are well linked to curriculum targets and make a useful contribution to extending pupils' learning as well as providing valuable social benefits.

24. The school's accommodation has a number of strengths that allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. These include an information technology suite and two good-sized halls. Outside play accommodation is very tight, but the school makes very good use of what it has and pupils are very aware of their own safety and that of others whilst they are playing in confined spaces. There are enough suitably trained and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are excellent in the Reception classes and very good in the rest of the school. The provision of support, advice and guidance for pupils is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good trusting relations with adults; teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Very good induction arrangements for Reception children and also for pupils joining later.
- School council works as a means of informing the school of pupils' views.
- Good support provided by Year 6 pupils for younger pupils enhances their own development and is successful in enabling them to take on additional responsibility

Commentary

25. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with pupils. Pupils who spoke with inspectors were very positive about the support and care they receive from their teachers and other adults who work in the school. They felt that there was always someone to whom they could turn if they needed to do so. Class, year and key stage systems work well in this big school to make individuals feel valued and cared for. Health and safety and child protection procedures, together with first aid and other medical support, are thorough and help pupils and staff to work in a safe and secure environment. Class and lunchtime support staff provide very good levels of care for pupils and make a very valuable contribution to this aspect of the school's work.

26. The school is popular and, due to the large number of applicants, arrangements are made for prospective parents and children to visit the school, which are very effective. They meet with key staff so that a comprehensive assessment of their likely needs can be made. The school views each individual as special and welcomes all pupils regardless of their individual needs, heritage or language backgrounds. When pupils join in older classes, they are given the valuable opportunity to visit their prospective class for part of the day before being registered. Established pupils are invited to be "buddies" to help with the induction of new pupils; this helps newcomers to settle in and provides pupils already at the school with additional responsibilities.

27. All pupils, regardless of their learning needs or language and cultural backgrounds, benefit from the school's guidance and support systems. The school's commitment to including every pupil and its success in developing them as spiritual, social and cultural beings are key factors in ensuring that all feel secure and well cared for.

28. The school council is a very effective way for the school to find out the general views of pupils as well as receive their suggestions. The school has responded by taking up some of its proposals. Other pupils are aware of this and recognise the value of the council as their representative body. Other useful mechanisms for seeking pupils' views include end of year pupil self-analysis and regular class circle times. Jobs are shared out at class and school levels so that all pupils have an opportunity without it being too time-consuming. Pupils say that they enjoy the additional responsibilities, whether it is helping at lunchtimes, litter picking, or handing out/collecting books in lesson time.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good. Links with the community and links with other schools are both satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of the parents support the school.
- The school provides some good information about pupils' achievements.
- General information provided by the school to parents is good.
- Very good parental involvement supports children's learning.
- The school deals well with those complaints it can resolve.

Commentary

29. The responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive and show that the great majority of parents have confidence in the school. Annual reports to parents are individual to the child; they show what the pupil can do in English, mathematics and science with some examples of what they can do to develop further. A useful achievement classification is used; this indicates whether the pupil meets national expectations, does better or not as good. Parents' meetings are a good complement to written reports as these provide useful opportunities for more detailed discussions about their children and the progress they make. A note is also kept of parents' views, which is helpful to the school. Information about what each year group will be learning is contained in the programme of study produced on a termly basis. This is sufficiently detailed to guide parents to help their children's learning. The brochure and the wealth of other information given to new and prospective parents are clear, detailed and helpful. There are half-termly newsletters, with individual letters being sent out for issues that arise in the interim. A few parents noted that, on some occasions, the notice given is short and that this meant that they were unable to attend.

30. There is very good parental involvement in the children's education, with a number helping out in the school and many at home. A large number also help out with trips and some of the extra-curricular activities are organised or run by parents; this is appreciated by the school and contributes to broadening and enriching the curriculum. The parent teacher association is an active body, raising considerable sums to buy resources for the school; for example, monies raised in the last year went on new books and musical instruments and were an important asset to supporting the curriculum. All of these make a significant contribution to pupils learning and foster a sense of community.

31. The school consulted parents by questionnaire in 2001 and results indicated a high degree of support. The figures were analysed in terms of which year groups parents represented. The school is aware that more regular consultations will give it a better view of parental concerns and help create greater links with parents. Parental responses to the inspection indicated that the majority of them are happy with the school. Where a minority expressed dissatisfaction, it related to

information about staff absences. The school dealt with these matters appropriately. It follows up parental concerns and complaints effectively.

32. The school works hard to establish good links with its many associated early years providers and secondary schools and these help pupils to make a smooth transition. Its partnership with the community are strong and it is currently pursuing a business link to enhance its outdoor

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher is a good leader who communicates his vision well to the staff. The overall impact of the leadership team is good. The governors understand their role well and are supportive and effective. The management of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and leadership team are effective in motivating staff and establishing a strong sense of purpose and shared commitment to improvement in the school.
- There is a strong determination to running an equitable and inclusive school in which each individual matters.
- Administrative staff provide good support for the school.
- Governors are dedicated to the school and its aims for pupils' education and have an accurate understanding of standards, what the school needs to improve, and their role in holding the school to account.
- Inconsistent use is made of pupil performance data in order to analyse strengths and weaknesses and to plan for improvement.
- The school continues to experience financial constraints which are adversely affecting its capacity to improve.

Commentary

33. The headteacher provides good leadership. He has a clear vision for the school's purposes and aims based on his desire to help pupils achieve well within the context of care and concern for their welfare and personal development. His perceptive educational direction of the school turns its broad aims into practical reality. The headteacher is well supported by the leadership team. They work together most effectively and set the tone for the school's sense of community and the positive learning environment. The leadership and management of the Reception year are very good and the Key Stage 2 team is well led and managed. Long term staff absences and the lack of sufficient available funding to provide management cover mean that there has been no substantive leader for Key Stage 1 for some time. This lack of management capacity is a significant factor underpinning the school's unsatisfactory performance at the end of Year 2.

34. The school examines its test results, including those of statutory tests, so that it has an informed view of standards in the core subjects. The analysis of data is meticulous in Years 3 to 6, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in the provision and indicating areas for intervention and future development. Initiatives like the regular, planned writing assessment tasks have sharpened teachers' understanding of what they need to do to improve standards and they are taking place in both key stages. However, there is not a consistent school-wide approach.

35. The school's financial position is affecting its capacity to develop. Senior staff are having to provide cover for long term absences in key positions as well as undertaking demanding teaching commitments because there is no funding available. This has prevented the school from undertaking necessary analysis of performance data and from securing the leadership of Years 1 and 2. Whilst subject co-ordinators are making a greater impact in the school's development, lack of available financial resources prevents them from being involved in regular and systematic observations of teaching and learning. This, in turn, limits their ability to see any variations in expectations and standards throughout the school. The co-ordination of education for those pupils in the school identified as having special educational needs is satisfactory. Systems of financial control are efficient. Governors have a clear understanding of the school budget and this is

effective in helping them make appropriate financial decisions. They have produced a very comprehensive consultation document for staff concerning the current budget constraints with a number of realistic options for consideration. The day-to-day administration of the school is good; the school office runs smoothly and is effectively and ably managed by support staff. The school improvement plan is a useful document in moving the school forward. It identifies priorities for action in the short term. The constraints of the possible deficit budget and the need to review the management structure of the school mean that those longer-term strategic management plans cannot be made in the current climate.

36. There are very good relationships between the school and its governing body and there is a shared sense of purpose. Governors have a clear understanding of, and commitment to, their roles and they work well to fulfil their responsibilities. They are supportive and bring a considerable level of expertise to the school. The governing body has sound systems in place through the committee structure to conduct its work effectively. Governors ensure the school spends its resources wisely and seeks to obtain best value when improving its provision. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

37. The financial carry forward has been built into this year's budget to contribute towards a possible significant end of year deficit which the governing body is taking steps to manage.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1 337 966	Balance from previous year	74 672
Total expenditure	1 366 242	Balance carried forward to the next	46 396
Expenditure per pupil	2131	In year deficit	26 276

Note: This includes income from the school's parent/ teacher association that is made over to the school's revenue budget. Excluding this contribution, available income per pupil is £2 087.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in all areas of learning for children in the Reception classes is **very good**; it is a **strength** of the school. The children exceed the national expectations by the age of five years and they benefit from very good teaching of basic skills across the curriculum. Teachers have a clear overview of children's achievement at the end of their time in Reception and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to children's learning. All staff make perceptive observations by informing future planning to fulfil children's learning needs. The planning for outdoor provision lacks a coherent structure. The quality of assessment information from the many different pre-school providers varies from unsatisfactory to good; this provides the school with considerable challenges. Its own assessment system is very good. Its strength lies in the way the staff observe and record what children do in order to identify important next steps in their learning. Samples of children's work are kept so that staff can track progress over time and this is very effective.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships that adults form with children provide them with a sense of security.
- Good home links are initiated through visits to the Reception classes before children join the school.
- There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led learning.

Commentary

38. Personal, social, and emotional development is seen as a priority in the Reception classes and the provision is excellent. The positive relationships formed by the staff with the children provide them with security and comfort. The supportive ethos and the establishment of routines help to promote independence. Through a range of play activities children develop self-awareness and they begin to understand that people have different needs, customs, and beliefs. This good inclusion practice is a hallmark of the teaching in Reception classes.

39. Very good teaching leads to very good achievement for all children in this area of learning. Particular strengths are the high quality of relationships and the respect shown by adults for the children and their carers, together with the effective management of behaviour,

Communication, Language and Literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many very good opportunities are provided for children to answer questions and to talk as part of a large group.
- There is a very strong emphasis on teaching children to read and write.
- Discussion stimulated by staff improves children's confidence.
- A very good choice of stories encourages a love of books.
- A wide range of opportunities are taken to develop language by exploiting spontaneous situations.

Commentary

40. The development of children's language skills is given high priority and a wide range of purposeful experiences is provided to enable them to make progress in their learning. Staff plan a rich and meaningful environment to support and extend their learning and language development.

41. Speaking, listening, and writing skills are well taught. A structured programme of teaching letter sounds is used effectively. The children are taught to recognise the sounds and letters that start and end words, and many can supply words that rhyme. Staff ensure that writing materials are freely available and children are encouraged to write for different purposes. The good teaching combines a good level of support with the effective use of praise and encouragement and this enables children to achieve well.

42. The staff use story sessions effectively to engender a love of books and stories. Children know that pictures tell a story and understand that print carries meaning. Some are beginning to recognise key words.

Mathematical Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good emphasis on teaching children to count and recognise numbers enables them to achieve well.
- The teaching makes a very successful contribution to children's learning.
- The activities provided are stimulating and very well planned and children benefit well.

Commentary

43. Well-planned provision effectively promotes children's learning. Every day, there is a clear focus on one aspect of mathematical development and the resources selected are designed to encourage children to work systematically and logically. By the time they leave their time in Reception, children have made sound progress in their counting skills, number recognition, and mathematical language. Mathematical understanding is reinforced during registration when counting the number of children present.

44. By the time they transfer to Year 1, children's achievement is above national expectations in practical mathematics such as sorting and counting and those aspects that require mathematical language, verbal reasoning and recording.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of stimulating activities to help children make sense of their world.
- Children are given opportunities to use their natural curiosity.
- There is good emphasis on the natural environment.

Commentary

45. Children are provided with a range of interesting activities to develop their natural curiosity about their immediate environment. Children are also encouraged sensitively to explore features of the wider world. Staff support children well in investigative activities by posing relevant open

questions. There are opportunities for children to develop their skills of prediction and scientific enquiry as they experiment with sand and water.

46. Children use computers with confidence and handle the mouse with increasing dexterity to select items on the screen. This is an example of the good learning skills that will enhance children's knowledge of the developing world. Finding out about past and present events is emphasised by the staff and children's sense of time is promoted through the regular routines.

Physical Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good opportunities provided for developing children's dexterity.
- There is insufficient outside play provision to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Commentary

47. The daily provision of a range of indoor activities are designed to develop children's skills whilst using their initiative. The indoor provision is successful in enabling children to become confident, well co-ordinated and agile. They are taught well how to use small tools and equipment and achieve well as a result.

48. The children enjoy their activities in the outdoor area. The sense of fun, coupled with appropriate praise, contribute equally to children's social development as well as their physical skills. Children explore the open spaces enthusiastically and use the tricycles confidently. The use of the outdoor space is limited because there is no designated area for the Reception classes which is fenced and secure. Children use part of the lower school playground so equipment cannot be left out because of break times and outdoor lessons for pupils in the rest of the school.

Creative Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wealth of opportunities for children to develop their imagination and creativity and they benefit from this.
- Role-play is particularly effective in encouraging children to use their imagination and develop their language skills.

Commentary

49. The provision for creative development is very good and gives children the opportunity to explore colour and texture effectively through a wide range of resources and sensory experiences. The attractive wall displays provide evidence of children's lively contributions. The staff give children the scope to select materials for themselves, time for them to experiment, and only intervene at appropriate times to teach specific skills.

50. The role-play is rooted in everyday events and features the use of imagination and fantasy. In the "library" activity, children adopt the roles of librarian, customer, and storyteller in convincing ways. A good example of this was when the "librarian" was insistent that overdue fines must be paid immediately!

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Pupils are interested and behave well in lessons.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge.
- In Years 3 to 6 there is some inspired teaching that engenders a love of literature and a desire to learn.
- The systems for monitoring pupils' attainments are good in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards for pupils Years 1 and 2 are below the national average.

Commentary

51. Pupils attain very high standards by the time they leave the school when compared both with those nationally and with similar schools. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well. Younger pupils are confident and expressive speakers who describe their work and explain its purpose with a degree of clarity showing an awareness of the needs of their audience. Older pupils demonstrate an eagerness to answer teachers' questions and participate willingly in class discussion, explore meaning and offer ideas in response to literature. They are able to identify the main points of a text and pick out relevant detail.

52. National guidance on teaching literacy is used successfully by teachers to help pupils make progress in reading. In Years 1 and 2, some pupils work above or in line with the level expected for their age; many attain below this level. Although pupils use workable strategies to read words they do not recognise many, have not retained their knowledge of initial sounds acquired in Reception classes. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress so that they are reading at the level expected for their age and many well beyond. Pupils can analyse texts critically and author's intentions with insight and sensitivity as well as describing the effectiveness of particular word choices. They use punctuation as a guide when reading, to help them bring more meaning and expression to the text.

53. Pupils write for many purposes. As with reading, attainment in writing in Years 1 and 2 is below the national average and in Years 3 to 6, it is above. Some pupils in Year 2 are able to write chronologically with an awareness of the reader; at the same time, many are using phonetic strategies when spelling and are not fully secure in their understanding of capital letters and full stops. Pupils show improvement when teachers mark their work constructively and the "next step" is provided to help them understand what they need to do.

54. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve good standards in writing because of the successful way teachers exploit the links between reading and writing. Teachers focus well on the characteristics of different writing styles, their purposes, and audiences; pupils are given the opportunity to use these styles in their own writing. Good opportunities are provided so that pupils can practise composing extended sustained narrative writing. The majority of pupils' writing is confident, fluent and punctuation is sound.

55. There is appropriate emphasis on consolidating skills in handwriting, spelling, and punctuation effectively linked to purposeful reading and writing activities. Regular practice of spelling and handwriting is an established routine and the majority of pupils become increasingly adept at both.

56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good or very good in Years 3 to 6. A significant factor which explains this is the extent and quality of available analysed assessment data which is available to teachers of older pupils and which has led to the identification of

individuals and groups of pupils at risk of underachieving. This kind of data is not readily accessible by teachers in the lower part of the school. At present, the subject does not have a full-time co-ordinator as the school has no capacity to make an appointment. Inconsistencies in performance in English are partly due to the lack of an individual in this key position.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills to good effect across the curriculum. Opportunities are provided for pupils to write extensively outside literacy lessons. Pupils write in the conventional way for specific subjects, for example, recording a science experiment, comparing geographical features or writing with empathy in history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach high levels of attainment by Year 6.
- Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 results in high levels of achievement.
- Good use is made of evaluated assessment data to plan and monitor the work and progress of the older pupils.
- Attainment is in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 1 and 2, but they achieve less than they might.
- Pupils have very good attitudes.
- The subject is well co-ordinated.

Commentary

58. Pupils make good progress and are achieving well in their final year in the school. The national tests for 2003 show that standards attained by those pupils were well above the national average. The current Year 6 pupils are also attaining well and are reaching standards which are above those expected for their age; they are able to use their mathematical knowledge well to define problems and have the skills and vocabulary to solve them. Arithmetical and data handling skills are very secure. In work that Year 6 pupils were doing on shape, they were able to use mathematical reasoning very effectively to explain the properties of different polygons, nature of congruence and identify the symmetries of two-dimensional shapes.

59. Good teaching throughout Years 3 to 6 is a significant factor in promoting high levels of achievement among pupils. All lessons began with a mental mathematics warm up session so that pupils were well prepared for lessons which required them to use their mental agility and work at a good pace. Teachers are making good use of national guidance and adapting this effectively to meet the learning needs, interests and aptitudes of their pupils.

60. Effective use is made of evaluated assessment data to plan and monitor the work and progress of pupils throughout the junior years. This enables teachers to plan interesting and successful lessons that make sure that their teaching focuses on key learning points and promotes good quality of learning for all pupils. Plans and methods are designed to match the needs of different groups of pupils, so that they benefit regardless of their prior levels of attainment. This assessment information is also used well to identify the needs of groups and individuals so that targeted support can be provided to enable them to achieve as well as they can.

61. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are in line with national expectations. However, pupils are achieving less well than they might. Weaknesses in management, particularly in the use of pupil performance data, mean that pupils are not being identified early enough and that there is insufficient information available for teachers to target individuals or groups needing specific support. In addition, there is insufficient provision of additional programmes compared with those available to older children.

62. Throughout the school, pupils have very good attitudes towards mathematics and they behave very well. Teachers have high expectations of them, to extend them intellectually as well as encouraging positive attitudes, values and behaviour. Enthusiastic teaching is resulting in enthusiastic learning. Pupils are confident; they take initiative in their work and increasing responsibility for their own learning. Teachers value mistakes as key opportunities for learning, so that pupils can contribute to lessons confidently without fear of ridicule from others.

63. Co-ordination is good; the co-ordinator provides useful advice and support for staff, together with suggestions on teaching and use of resources. A full time teaching commitment means that she is unable to make a full contribution to the school's monitoring and support arrangements. Overall, the school's results have shown consistent improvements since the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Mathematics is used effectively to promote pupils' achievements in other subjects. Many Year 1 and 2 registration sessions were used to reinforce mental agility, with teachers posing such questions as "If there are thirty children staying for lunch and fifteen have brought packed lunch, how many will be having a school meal?" Some good use of data handling skills was made in a Year 3 lesson on investigating the strengths of different magnets where pupils collected results and categorised them in a recording table. In a Year 6 music lesson, pupils used a matrix to identify and use rhythm patterns, counted accurately and executed their parts on the correct beats.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There are very good standards as judged by national tests.
- Teaching is good and, sometimes, very good.
- There are innovative activities to enrich the curriculum.
- Co-ordination of the subject is very good.

Commentary

65. National tests, teachers' assessments and pupils' work shows that standards for the younger pupils are good and those for the older pupils very good. The 2003 results show that almost all Year 6 pupils reached the expected level for pupils of their age in science. Achievement in lessons is good for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 and very good for the pupils in Years 3 to 6. Throughout the school, the final part of each lesson is consistently used to very good effect for pupils to demonstrate their new learning. There is clear evidence of joint planning and progression through the school and as a result there is equality of opportunity for all the pupils.

66. Teaching for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good overall and for older pupils, it is very good. Very effective teachers set out the learning outcomes for the lesson very clearly and skilfully recap prior knowledge to set the context for learning. Very good questioning skills lead to pupils being required to justify their views, to use correct terminology, to think more deeply and to frame their replies accurately.

67. Through engaging in interesting science investigations, pupils are keen to explore and they use very good resources sensibly and effectively. In one lesson observed, pupils were encouraged to 'think like scientists' and co-operate as groups to perform an experiment. This was a very successful strategy and the pupils worked quietly and productively in friendship groups. In another lesson, pupils of all abilities were successfully included in the lesson because the teacher used cards displaying key words to support their recording.

68. Co-ordination is very good. The science co-ordinator is very effective despite a lack of time to monitor and evaluate the subject. She is available for discussion with teachers about how to improve the progress of their pupils in science. There is a clear policy with an improvement plan and a termly audit of resources is conducted. The co-ordinator has brought in many innovations to enrich the science curriculum. Good improvements in provision and achievements have been made since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach a good level of skill, knowledge and understanding in the range of ICT programs they use.
- Pupils make good progress including those with additional needs.
- There is good use of ICT to support other subjects during dedicated lessons in the computer suite.
- School-wide assessment systems are underdeveloped.

Commentary

69. Standards are above expectations. The computer suite is used regularly to enable pupils to learn skills quickly. In these sessions, they complete their set tasks, co-operate well and take turns in controlling the mouse and the keyboard. This results in good understanding of the skills and sequences needed for word processing, spreadsheets, and paint and draw programmes. Skills in control technology are under-developed due to programming difficulties. Assessment for progress across school is weak but there are indications that this is beginning to be addressed.

70. The achievement of pupils is good because there is growing confidence of teachers using the increasing amount of hardware in the school. All staff have had training and plan for cross-curricular learning in the computer suite. Younger pupils benefit from more regular use, becoming competent users and manipulators of the mouse and keyboard. Older pupils have had fewer opportunities to consolidate earlier learning because of the technical problems. Teachers plan well to include pupils with additional needs. They also attend special sessions three times per week. Most groups of pupils progress well, including pupils with specific talents in particular curriculum areas. They acquire skills quickly and apply previous knowledge well, as seen with a Year 1 pupil who could use a rainbow icon to speed up the application of colour to his 'Mondrian' picture. Those with English as an additional language also access programmes well; clear assessment criteria are used to determine their starting point on a support program used by the school.

71. Assessment for learning in lessons is used well in many cases. For instance a Year 6 class inputting data for a spreadsheet were given the choice of graphs rather than be directed to a specific one as happened the week before. The teacher used this as a teaching point in the lesson to ask them if anyone was having problems. The subject is co-ordinated well, but assessment is not used consistently to track and monitor progress over a longer period of time. Teachers' planning is monitored but there are few opportunities to model or teach in partnership due to lack of release time. This subject was identified as a key area for improvement in the last inspection and the school has made good progress since that time.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. The transfer of pupils' skills in ICT is limited during class lessons in other subjects. There are a few examples of pupils using programs in English and mathematics, but these are isolated to individuals or a pair of pupils. Teachers do not make enough links to ICT in other lessons and those pupils who used a computer often did so working on a skills reinforcement program and then returned to whatever they were doing in class.

HUMANITIES

History

73. No history lessons were seen, but discussion with the co-ordinator, samples of pupils' work and reviews of displays show that standards of work seen across the school are above levels expected nationally and pupils are achieving well. Pupils' learning is well supported by collections of historical artefacts such as those from Victorian times and a selection of World War II memorabilia. Black History Month is celebrated each year and lives of famous black people studied; this enriches pupils' understanding of the contributions of other cultures to English and international history. The school is a listed building and was used during World War I as a field hospital. There are plans to include the visits of an author and curator to bring the past to life for the pupils through a project about 'Balgowan and World War I'. The subject is co-ordinated effectively and, as a result of termly assessments, areas of development have been highlighted and improvements made.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good; teachers follow well-planned schemes of work which enable pupils to make gains in their learning.
- Co-ordination is good.

Commentary

74. Standards are above those expected nationally throughout the school. Younger pupils demonstrate good mapping skills with a growing awareness of differences between different localities and have the ability to set comparisons in table form. Older pupils understand and use geographical terminology correctly and can productively use a variety of secondary information sources. In one Year 6 class, there was a high quality display showing how mountains are formed with word processing, pictures, maps, photographs and research from the Internet.

75. Achievement for the younger pupils in geography is good and for the older pupils very good. In a Year 2 class, all pupils at the end of the lesson had grasped that some places need protection from the effects of people and that these effects might be positive or negative. In one Year 4 lesson, pupils had researched temperatures in various world cities for homework and every pupil brought in their findings. The teacher used the figures to complete a chart on the board so that the pupils were clear about the task. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils watched a rainforest video and then made notes in their rough books. Once the notes had been made, the teacher gave the pupils a list of prompt questions to consider prior to redrafting their notes into paragraphs with sub-headings. The consequence of this very good teaching was that the pupils completed thoughtful, well-constructed pieces of work about people living and surviving in the rainforest. Two pupils with writing difficulties in this lesson used laptops for note-taking. Where teachers demonstrate good use of geographical vocabulary, pupils use appropriate vocabulary with increased confidence.

76. All pupils benefit from good teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of what their pupils can achieve; as a result, they do well. Resources for geography are good and pupils are able to use items such as globes and atlases effectively because of the consistently good modelling by teachers throughout the school.

77. Co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator is a point of contact for advice on resources and teaching and monitors planning across the school, but has insufficient time available to develop the subject fully.

Religious and multicultural education

The provision for religious and multicultural education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are higher than those set out in the local syllabus.
- Teaching is good and, sometimes, very good.
- Assessment for religious education is in the early stages of development.
- Co-ordination is good and there are good resources.

Commentary

78. Standards for religious and multicultural education throughout the school are good. Younger pupils work at suitable levels and learn about religion in the form of festivals and special books and learn from religion when thinking about sharing. Older pupils learn about Christianity, missionaries and relief agencies, Hinduism and pilgrimage. They learn from religion by reflecting on moral issues such as famine or the work of missionaries. One pupil in Year 6 wrote, 'I am grateful for what I get to eat. Unlike people in the third world I get a choice of food and drink and it is rather luxurious.' People who have stood up for their beliefs such as Gladys Aylwood, Martin Luther King and Mother Theresa are studied and examples drawn from their lives. Displays about multicultural and religious education are good.

79. Teaching is at least good and, sometimes, it is very good. High teachers' expectations result in focused on-task behaviour and good learning. Carefully constructed lessons have a positive impact on pupils' learning and older pupils in particular are encouraged to reflect on their 'blessings' and help others less fortunate than themselves. Where teachers respect pupils' contributions and listen carefully, pupils respond by showing each other mutual respect. Very good teaching occurs when a good pace of learning is maintained and teachers check the progress of their pupils through their lessons. Co-ordination of the subject is good. Schemes of work are well-planned and teachers are well supported through advice and good quality resources.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art

80. It was possible to observe only two art lessons during the inspection. Additional evidence was gathered from sketchbooks and work on display. This showed that pupils in Year 1 demonstrate very good drawing skills in their portraits of family members. They capture essential details that bring characters to life; for example, the depth and direction of wrinkles in grandparents' faces, the shape of head, hair, eyes, the shape of a smile and the style of their clothes. Trips to museums and galleries contribute to their understanding of different styles of art, one of the most recent undertaken to illustrate Charles Keeping's house by a Year 2 class. Their drawings in a similar style are well executed paying attention to drawing cats of a good size with distinctive features. The backgrounds are equally well detailed and showing well taught elements in that there are no gaps between earth and sky that would normally be a feature of six and seven year old pupils' drawings. The older pupils learn about perspective and understand what features create this in a drawing. Displays include good examples of natural sculpture using an artist's models of large rock. Pupils produce well executed miniature sculptures to create an effective display. Modelling and soft sculpture as well as drawing and painting in different media are on display and class studies of different art from around the world contributes well to the cultural aspects of their learning. The subject is co-ordinated effectively

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of music opportunities offered to pupils is very good, not only class and whole-school times but also in the range of extra-curricular activities provided.
- Music permeates the whole school and is enjoyed at all levels, providing equal access to pupils.
- Pupils are offered challenging activities.
- Leadership is very good; co-ordinators provide good whole-school teaching models and they have developed a very good range of resources.

Commentary

81. The standards attained by pupils throughout the school are above national expectations. Their attainment in singing is good. Pupils develop performance and composition through their secure knowledge of theory, due in part to the large number of pupils who play instruments and have individual lessons. The greater part of pupils' ability is due to the way that music permeates the whole school. In classes pupils are able to evaluate their work with insight and practicality, giving good reasons for changing balance in group compositions. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school with a variety of arrangements to maximise teachers' subject strengths.

82. Pupils achieve well and are very well motivated through very challenging activities and building on previous skills and knowledge. Their concentration is very good, demonstrating complete engagement and enthusiasm throughout their lessons, in small-group and large-group activities. Assessment in lessons is good. Pupils receive feedback on their performances so that they know how they are progressing. Music is a very important influence on other subjects, especially English where the skills of listening, understanding rhythm and rhyme, concentration, language development and reading contribute significantly.

83. Music is a strong feature of school life. Extra-curricular activities contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning and have improved their awareness of cultural diversity through the songs and music chosen and other activities such as the African drumming workshops. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to music activities; for example, pupils are not selected according to ability for choirs and recorder groups but simply to encourage involvement for enjoyment.

84. The leadership of the co-ordinators is very good. Both music co-ordinators provide very good models of teaching through the choirs, music assemblies and instrumental groups. They have strong direction and ideas for improvement and have developed good relationships with both staff and pupils. The resources have been improved by contributions from the parent teacher association who have raised a significant amount of money for instruments.

Physical Education

85. It was not possible to observe sufficient physical education to form a full judgement on the subject. That which was observed, together with school and teachers' plans, reports, photographs and other evidence show that by the time pupils reach Year 6 their attainment in physical education is in line with national expectations. Their attitudes are very good; their enthusiasm, co-operation and involvement demonstrate this. Many participate actively in after school sporting sessions in addition to their lessons. They concentrate well and execute tasks to the best of their ability. PE is taught well; teachers and classroom assistants have high expectations of what their pupils can do and of their pupils' behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and are helped significantly by both pupils and assistants. Pupils understand the reasons for proper warm up and for exercise. They were given opportunities to improve their learning through evaluating each other's performance. There was an excellent example of inclusion during a Year 6 dance lesson, where pupils demonstrated a highly developed understanding of relationship and attitude. Two groups each had a pupil with special educational needs from a local special school working with them. In one group the pupil from the special school was elected the 'coach' in the 'Baseball' dance they were practising. He was encouraged to 'lead' the exercise routine that was part of the whole

dance routine. Large numbers of pupils take part in after school sporting activities. Staff run hockey, lacrosse and football teams and instructors from the community run fitness and judo clubs. Last year, the lacrosse team was runner up in the national finals held in Birmingham. When pupils go on field trips they experience more unusual activities such as wall climbing and archery.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision for design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Re-organisation of the subject into blocks of time to complete projects has resulted in better achievement by pupils
- Teaching is good
- There are good examples of cross curricular work that helps to improve pupils' understanding
- It is co-ordinated effectively

Commentary

86. Standards are above national expectations. The teaching has been organised to take place in blocks of time so that pupils' motivation is maintained and this enables them to follow through their design and planning to making the final product. Pupils demonstrate good sketching in their planning, using labelling and exploded diagrams efficiently. Behaviour in lessons is good and they are aware of safety issues, knowledge of which is specifically taught by teachers. Equipment is checked regularly for safety.

87. Teachers are good at reminding pupils of links to other curriculum areas; for example the music display in a Year 5 class was used to back up a teaching point in the design and technology lesson. This display also linked to science through reference to physical processes of how sounds are made. The youngest pupils are able to follow through the design, plan and make sequence well and have produced hand puppets that show improving skills in cutting, sewing and use of glue. They can then link this work to plays and story telling. The subject is well co-ordinated.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in pupils' personal, social health education and citizenship are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

Personal, social and health education is very effective and makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal qualities and the development of their very positive attitudes and values

Commentary

88. Personal, social and health education are central to the ethos of the school and contribute fully to pupils' personal development; this results in their very good behaviour and very positive attitudes. In turn, these qualities make a major contribution to the quality of their learning and to what they are able to achieve. The programme is linked with the school's very strong focus on pastoral support and nurturing programme in the Reception classes. All staff are very committed to this aspect of their work and their approaches to behaviour and personal development are consistent throughout the school. Very good opportunities are taken in classes and in assemblies to celebrate the contributions and successes of pupils so that they grow in self-esteem and confidence.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	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	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).