

INSPECTION REPORT

Barnehurst Junior (Foundation) School

Erith

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101474

Headteacher: Sybil M. Camsey

Lead inspector: P. D. Holwill

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 October 2003

Inspection number: 255432

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	278
School address:	Barnehurst Close Northumberland Heath Erith
Postcode:	DA8 3NL
Telephone number:	(01322) 334214
Fax number:	(01322)339242
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Richards
Date of previous inspection:	23 / 2 / 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Barnehurst Junior (Foundation) School in the London Borough of Bexley opened in 1927 serving the families of the locality but it now draws its pupils from a wider area and mixed housing. Pupil mobility is low. The school is larger than other schools with 278 pupils on roll. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with national figures. The percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English is higher than in most schools, but there are no pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak and understand English. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs including statements is in line with the national average, although the percentage of pupils who have statements is higher than average. Most pupils transfer from the adjacent Infant school into the two form junior school at the start of Year 3 and a small number of pupils come from other schools at this time. In recent years the school has been awarded the School Achievement Award (in 2001 and 2002) and the Basic Skills Award in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2705	Pat Holwill	Lead inspector	Science, History, Religious Education, Art
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25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Music, Physical Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Overall evaluation

This is a good school. Its very strong caring and sharing ethos results in the very effective personal development of pupils. They achieve well in all subjects and make good progress because teaching is good and often very good. The school takes care that all pupils do as well as they can. Overall, standards are high in English, mathematics and science. The school is led and managed by an excellent headteacher, who is well supported by her able and very effective deputy. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are good and often very good. Many Year 6 pupils are working at the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science because teaching is consistently good.
- Opportunities for writing across all subjects are not fully exploited.
- There has been an excellent improvement in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment in the subject now meets national expectations.
- Leadership is excellent. Strategic thinking and planning are also excellent as they are clear, innovative and promote further improvements very effectively.
- In most respects the curriculum is carefully planned but opportunities for multicultural education are not included directly in teachers' planning.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The school sets high expectations for pupils' conduct and they respond very well.
- Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils work and play well together.

Since the school was inspected in 1998, improvements have been very rapid, with all issues raised in the last inspection having been fully addressed. Moves to improve standards and enrich the quality of education for pupils have been very successful. The headteacher's leadership, the support of governors, and school improvement planning have all been central to this process.

Standards achieved

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	B	B	B
Mathematics	C	B	C	D
Science	D	A	D	D

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.

Pupils' achievements in Year 6 are good and standards are on course to be above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of the year. Many Year 5 pupils are also achieving good standards. **All pupils achieve well** and make good progress as they move through the school. Teaching is consistently good across all subjects; it captures the pupils' interest and makes them want to do well. Pupils reach appropriate standards, but their written skills are not always being given sufficient emphasis in some subjects

Pupils' personal qualities, including their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good**. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good in class and around the school. They show a high respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They listen carefully to their teacher's instructions and try hard to complete their tasks well. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Quality of education

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The main reason is that **teaching and learning throughout the school are consistently good**, with many examples of very good teaching, especially in the Year 5 classes. This contributes substantially to promoting enthusiasm for learning and high standards of achievement. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They plan work at suitable levels for all pupils, but there is not enough deliberate planning for the multicultural aspects of learning. Teachers give good explanations at the start of lessons to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what is to be learned. They often imaginatively pose a question in a variety of ways to ensure that all pupils understand, and then encourage extended answers. Assessment of pupils' progress is good and this is another reason why standards are improving. Consistently good teaching is also helped by the effective support offered in class by the learning support assistants who work with individual pupils and small groups. Pupils use and practise the skills they have learnt well, but writing skills in some curriculum areas are not sufficiently well developed. The curriculum has good breadth and balance and is enriched by a rich range of extra-curricular activities. All these strengths make learning a pleasure for pupils. They respond by being interested in their work and determined to do well in all aspects of their education.

Leadership and management

Leadership is excellent. The headteacher and her deputy provide purposeful, strong leadership and all staff share their commitment and sense of purpose. Standards have improved significantly over recent years because of the headteacher's success in ensuring good teaching and learning in the school. As a result, all pupils make good progress including those with special educational needs and those who are learning to speak and use English as an additional language. The school is very effectively managed. Staff have a good range of expertise and willingly take on responsibilities to support school development. They are deployed very effectively to ensure pupil's high standards of attainment across the school. The monitoring of standards, teaching and learning is good. The school makes very good use of all its accommodation in spite of the lack of space in the classrooms. The learning environment is attractive and stimulating. All resources are used efficiently to meet the needs of the pupils. The governors' effectiveness in carrying out their responsibilities is good. They support and challenge the school and ensure that priorities in the school development plan are fully costed and monitored effectively.

Parents' and pupils' views of the school

Parents and carers have very positive views of the school. They feel that the school works well with them and provides them with good information about their children's achievements. Pupils enjoy school and feel that they are valued and well supported by all the members of staff.

Improvements needed

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

- Raise standards of writing further by exploiting all opportunities for writing in curriculum subjects.
- Ensure that opportunities for multicultural education are included more directly in teachers' planning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievements are good overall. In Years 3 to 6 achievement is good and it is often very good, especially in Year 5. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also achieve well in the school. In 2004, the standards of pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to be above average in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attainments in information and communication technology (ICT) meet national expectations.
- Standards in religious education are in line with expectations.
- The quality of pupils' learning is good overall. They work hard and achieve well.
- The school's plans for improvement, careful assessment and good use of resources are effective in raising pupils' achievements.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to write in other subject areas and this limits their progress in improving their writing skills

Commentary

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.2 (28.3)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.6 (28.0)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	28.0 (30.4)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' results in English were above the national average. They were average in mathematics and were below average in science. When these results are compared to schools with similar characteristics to Barnehurst, results in English are very high. On the other hand, results in mathematics and science are below those of similar schools. The provisional results for 2003 show that results have risen with more pupils reaching the higher levels in all three subjects. These results also show that year on year standards are rising as more pupils attain the higher levels in the tests. In addition, the headteacher's careful analysis of data and test results, and the use of target setting to track pupils' progress across the school, have had a very positive effect on raising standards of attainment.

2. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and capabilities in all subjects. Progress is good throughout all the areas of the curriculum, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and all pupils achieve well. A more detailed analysis of the data shows that over the past few years the school has become increasingly effective in adding value to pupils' learning. This is because of the actions taken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher to strengthen the senior management team and place emphasis on raising achievement through assessment, target setting and monitoring the work of the school. For example, the arrangements used to group pupils by ability in English and mathematics are particularly effective, enabling all pupils to be given appropriate work which is well matched to meet their needs. This includes the work with gifted and talented pupils to extend their thinking skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school

because work in classes is set at a suitable level for them and they receive very good support from well trained and effective learning support assistants.

3. The pupils currently in Year 6 are reaching standards in English above those expected for their age and the school is on track to meet the school's challenging targets. Their skills in speaking and listening are well developed. Those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also benefit from working in small groups where they get more opportunity to practise speaking English and to explain their ideas. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are often well above average and pupils achieve well. Higher attaining pupils, for example, explain and understand the depth of meaning implied by a single word or phrase. Standards in writing are good, but lag behind those for reading. Pupils can use complex sentences and construct their writing well in English lessons but their writing skills in other subjects are only average.

4. In mathematics, pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to meet their target of 85 per cent of pupils to attain the nationally expected level. All areas of the mathematical curriculum are covered in depth and this accounts for the good standards in Year 6. Throughout the school pupils achieve well. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of place value and those with two or more decimal places. More able pupils work confidently with very high numbers to over a million. Many pupils accurately add, subtract, multiply and divide two and three digit numbers to two decimal places. They are able to find ways of changing fractions into percentages and to explain clearly the methods they use to the rest of the class. In addition, they discuss the most effective way to solve mathematical problems and give good reasons for their results. Links with information and communication technology are particularly strong and used well to enhance learning.

5. Science standards for pupils currently in Year 6 are above average and they achieve well and make good progress. The reason that standards are better now is that the school has been successful in raising pupils' achievements and teaching has improved. Their work in Year 5, for example, shows that they had been taught well and had covered the subject in depth. Pupils currently in Year 5 classes are also achieving well and some are already working at levels beyond those expected for their age. Again, this is because of the good teaching. Younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 follow a carefully prepared scheme with regular assessment of strengths and weaknesses and this ensures a firm foundation of scientific processes as they move through the school. In all classes, pupils make accurate use of terms, know how to construct a fair test, predict outcomes and test their theories fairly and accurately.

6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are likely to be in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6 and pupils are achieving well. This is an excellent improvement since the last inspection. There are a number of reasons for this:

- pupils have high quality resources and using these helps them learn at a good rate;
- all aspects of the subject are taught and pupils use ICT to help them in their work in other subjects; for example, they used the Internet and CD ROMs to help research their studies in science and history and are able to compose tunes in music using the computer.

Multimedia presentations are particularly strong but pupils' keyboard skills are relatively weak and this limits their output in the allocated time.

7. In religious education pupils are achieving standards in line with those expected. By the end of Year 6 pupils have acquired a good understanding and knowledge of the important religious traditions and have covered all aspects of the syllabus. In history, standards are likely to be above those expected nationally for pupils by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good progress in the subject and achieve well. During the inspection period, however, it was not possible to make any judgements about standards of attainment in physical education, art and design, design and technology, geography and music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' show a very high level of interest in their school and behave very well at all times.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- There is a high level of racial harmony.
- Pupils' show a high level of respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.
- Pupils' appreciation and understanding of multi-cultural diversity is not strong enough.
- Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are managed very well.

Commentary

8. Pupils' moral development is very good. They behave well throughout the school, in lessons, on the playground and around the school. Pupils' have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, the staff constantly reinforce the importance of the schools motto "Caring and Sharing with Responsibility and Honour". All the pupils know and abide by this motto. The school sets high standards for pupils' conduct, and they respond very well. There is racial harmony throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs who have identified emotional and behavioural difficulties are very well managed in class and during breaks. They are very well supported by teachers, support assistants and midday supervisors. The school fully includes them in all activities and ensures that their behaviour is not detrimental to their own learning or to that of their classmates.

9. At the pre-inspection parents meeting and in their questionnaire responses, parents confirmed that their children valued good manners and politeness. Parents were happy that there was no harassment in the school and that all pupils knew what to do should it occur. Pupils spoken to confirmed that they trusted all the adults in the school to help them. Pupils' attitudes are very good, they are eager to come to school and to participate in every aspect of school life. There is a very good range of after school clubs and many children take the opportunity to attend them. Pupils also think of others less fortunate than themselves by supporting a number of charities throughout the year.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

10. Attendance at the school is below the national average, but the school does all that it can to encourage parents to get their children to school and to get them to school on time. Few pupils are late to school. There were no exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection.

11. Pupils' social development is good; they have very good relationships with each other and with all adults in the school. They work well with each other and listen to others contributions. They are given the opportunity to express and to share ideas. The reading 'buddy' system enables pupils to share and enjoy reading together. They are encouraged to celebrate the success of others in class and they evaluate the work of others critically but also sensitively. Pupils are confident, there are many opportunities for them to take on additional responsibility. Pupils have to apply for the position of Head Boy and Girl as well as House Captains and the role of monitors. In addition there is the school council and reading and playtime buddies. Pupils value these opportunities and respond well to them.

12. Pupils' spiritual development is good; it is enhanced through religious education (RE) lessons and in assemblies where they are given the opportunities for quiet reflection. For example, in a Y4 RE lesson, the atmosphere was reflective and thoughtful, and care was made to ensure that the artefacts were treated with respect. In art lessons pupils' are given the opportunity to look at the work of different artists such as Klint and Mondrian and discuss their feelings about their work.

13. Pupils' have a sound understanding of their own culture, but as yet there are too few opportunities for them to experience or have an understanding of life within a multi-cultural society as it is not deliberately planned throughout the curriculum.

14. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They show keen interest, enjoyment and involvement in all their work and achieve well. Staff listen to pupils' views and value their ideas. Pupils expressed the view that they are happy at school. They said that the teachers are fair and that they trust all members of staff to help them with their work and all their activities.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	282	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	6	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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 quality of education provided by the school is good. Pupils achieve well in all subjects and they make good progress because of the consistently good and sometimes very good teaching. The school's very effective sharing and caring ethos results in pupils having high self-esteem and helps to ensure that they all do as well as they can.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall. In nine out of ten lessons it is good or better. The teaching in Year 5 is a particular strength as over seventy per cent is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Pupils' learning is also good and directly reflects the good teaching they receive throughout the school. The assessment of pupils' work is good. It is thorough and is closely linked to the planning of suitable future work to help pupils of all abilities learn well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach.
- Planning of lessons is effective and meets the varying needs of pupils.

- Teachers manage their pupils very well and create calm and purposeful working environments in which pupils flourish.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in class.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and provide challenging work.
- Pupils' work is regularly and thoroughly assessed. It is made clear to them how to improve further.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0(0%)	12(41%)	14(48%)	3(10%)	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.

Commentary

15. The consistently good teaching is helping pupils of all ages and abilities towards reaching their full potential. They are able to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge at a good rate in all the subjects they are taught. There has been a very good improvement in teaching since the last inspection. The quality of teaching was a key issue and this has been very successfully addressed by the school.

16. Teachers have good subject knowledge and many have specialist skills that they willingly share with colleagues. This means that they are able to explain new ideas and concepts to pupils clearly and help them learn the correct facts and vocabulary. Teachers are often passionate about the subjects they teach and this is transmitted to pupils in lessons so that they want to learn more and become enthusiastic learners. This was clearly seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson when the teacher read an extract from a book with such feeling and good expression that the pupils became completely absorbed in the story.

17. Lessons are well planned by teachers to interest, excite and help pupils learn at a good rate. Planning is done in year groups, which again gives teachers the opportunity to support each other and share ideas. They use good quality resources imaginatively in lessons to stimulate pupils and give a good focus to learning. It is the very good planning of imaginative and often entertaining lessons that makes the teaching in Year 5 so strong.

18. Teachers manage pupils very well and relationships are very good indeed. There is a high level of mutual respect in all classes and this is a significant factor in helping pupils learn. Teachers, because they are very good at managing their pupils, are able to create a working environment that is conducive to good learning. Despite a lack of space in the classrooms, they are often able to give pupils interesting practical work. This makes learning more effective and fun, as pupils are actively involved. As a result, pupils willingly participate and are eager to learn.

19. There is very good support in class to those pupils who have special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. Work is consistently well planned by teachers at an appropriate level to enable pupils to make good progress. Teachers use learning support assistants very well and fully brief them about their role in each lesson.

20. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. They want them to achieve well and constantly strive to find ways to make the work they plan challenge and stretch pupils of all abilities. For example, there are often extension activities planned in numeracy lessons so that the more able pupils are taken on to a higher level in their work. In a very good Year 5 numeracy lesson these pupils were most keen to complete their work as they thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of more difficult tasks.

21. By careful questioning and constant assessment of exactly what their pupils know, teachers are able to plan work closely matched to their individual needs. Work is marked regularly and pupils often evaluate their own work. This gives them a good understanding of how well they are doing. Targets set in English and mathematics also help them focus on areas most requiring improvement.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good overall with some very strong features, including a very good range of extra activities to enrich pupils' learning. The accommodation and learning resources support the delivery of the curriculum effectively. The school has a strong focus on curriculum innovation to ensure that pupils' learning is highly motivated and effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school has a well constructed teaching and learning plan which ensures pupils have a balanced programme to meet all statutory requirements, including religious education and personal, social and health education.
- Teachers' planning takes account of the learning needs of pupils' different attainment levels within each year group, including extending the able pupil in a gifted and talented programme
- The curriculum provides very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school has a rich programme of extra-curricular activities.
- There is a lack of planned opportunities to reflect on the cultural diversity of the school community

Commentary

22. The school effectively uses the approved national advice to plan the curriculum in all subjects, including design technology, which was an area of concern at the last inspection. The school has developed a clear framework which aims to ensure that pupils enjoy a well balanced programme, including timetabled opportunities for personal, social and health education, citizenship and a modern foreign language. The school has organised the curriculum plan so that extended blocks of time are allocated to particular subjects in particular terms. This kind of planning allows pupils to study a particular topic in more depth. Further work is under way to plan topics in such a way that there are strong links made between the work pupils are doing in different subjects. For example, in design technology pupils designed and made a hat, using the traditional design of hats on St Lucia, an island which they are studying as part of their geography work on contrasting locations. This imaginative and innovative curriculum development brings cohesion to pupils' learning. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good and, where possible, is linked to the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils are given full access to the curriculum and receive very good quality support from teachers and learning support assistants.

23. The school has also taken the advice of the national strategies for literacy, numeracy and information and design technology, which are effectively adapted to meet pupils' needs. In English and mathematics, pupils work together in sets grouped according to pupils' experience and ability, and this has allowed more closely targeted support for all pupils. Good monitoring and assessment indicate that this innovation is having positive effects on pupils' performance.

24. The school places a very high priority on equal opportunities for all pupils to make good progress and achieve the best results they are capable of. Towards this end pupils are well supported in class, with different appropriate work planned even within the set classes. The school is building up a register of gifted and talented pupils, offering them an opportunity to receive appropriate challenge through a special programme of lessons, activities and special events in mathematics, English, science and art and design. This will expand to cover talents in the areas of sport, music and other aspects of creativity. Pupils with special educational need are also well supported by trained classroom assistants who aim to ensure that these pupils achieve the learning objectives in each lesson. Where pupils appear to need a boost to help them achieve expected

levels, this is also provided. Whatever their level, teachers use knowledge of pupils' achievement to plan work and identify further targets.

25. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by the large number and range of relevant visits planned for pupils and the rich variety of visitors who talk to and work with the pupils in school. The number and range of out of school clubs for pupils to attend is very good. There is a wide range of activities throughout the year, which cater for boys and girls in all classes. Both pupils and parents are consulted about the opportunities on offer. A few examples of clubs include French, football, recorders, and a newly formed 'animation' group. Within these extra-curricular activities pupils get suitable opportunities to experience different activities and make suggestions about new initiatives.

26. The school makes good use of all the accommodation available. The hall is used efficiently for assemblies and indoor physical education. The outside environment has an imaginative range of exciting and interesting features to enrich the quality of learning for pupils. The school's building is very clean, well maintained and effectively managed. Although there is limited space in the classrooms and too little storage space, teachers ensure that pupils are provided with opportunities for working in pairs and small groups on investigative and research topics. The school's learning resources are of good quality, and sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. There are good resources for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. They are used effectively in order to bring about improved standards.

Care, guidance and support

Care, guidance and support for pupils are very good and clearly help pupils to learn well. Health and safety procedures are good. The checking and recording of pupils' achievement and personal development are good, as is the involvement of pupils in the school's work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very good relationships between pupils and all members of staff.
- Very good transfer arrangements from the infant classes into Year 3.
- The school provides a secure, safe place for pupils to learn.
- The school is open to new ideas to promote pupils' safety, welfare and self-esteem.
- The school does not recognise sufficiently the linguistic and cultural aspects of pupils' family backgrounds in order to acknowledge particular pupils' experience and to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

27. The school is a caring and supportive environment, which places high priority on ensuring that pupils feel safe and well looked after by every member of staff. Sensible safety and security measures are in place and are regularly reviewed by the headteacher and site manager. This work is supplemented by an annual review by an external assessor from a specialist agency.

28. The school is very sensitive to pupils' worries and concerns. This was evident in the week of inspection when the school took great care to respond to Year 6 pupils' anxieties about their selection examination for secondary schools. The headteacher also works hard to make sure that pupils' confidence and self-esteem are not affected by some of the inevitable disappointments of the selection procedures.

29. The school ensures that playtime is a happy and safe time. Pupils are able to play a range of traditional and more organised games under the supervision of well-trained members of staff. The school is also developing "the playground friend" scheme with an external trainer, which will support its work on providing a safe and harmonious playground.

30. The school has effective systems in place to support and improve pupils' attendance and punctuality, and also to assess and record pupils' achievement and personal development. All members of staff take time to talk with pupils throughout the day. In assemblies pupils' contributions

are welcomed and appreciated, and there is a high expectation for respectful listening to others' viewpoints. Such innovations as the "wall of achievement" allows pupils' efforts, both social and academic, to be celebrated and shared widely. The "pupil of the week" system works very well, with special privileges earned from such distinction. Pupils talked confidently about what they needed to do to earn such a title and rise to its challenge during class time. Pupils understand the importance of friendship, honour and loyalty which the school motto promotes. Understanding of these important concepts was well demonstrated in a very good religious education lesson in which they discussed the story of Joseph, and the impact of his loyalty, with very good judgement.

31. Pupils are aware that they are able to talk to an adult if they have any concerns, but have regular opportunities built into class time to talk in a group about particular issues as they arise. There is a school council to which pupils are able to raise concerns. Currently they are discussing the issue of girls' uniforms. The school also uses pupil questionnaires to learn about pupils' views on important school development matters. Teachers generally know their pupils well in terms of personal qualities and backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school life and are very carefully tracked to monitor their progress. Their individual education plans are reviewed regularly. Liaison with outside agencies is good and the school makes great efforts to ensure that pupils receive as high a level of care as possible. The ten statemented pupils in the school receive their full entitlement as outlined in their statements of educational need. However, at present, a number of pupils whose family heritage and language are not English have too few opportunities to talk about themselves and their beliefs and traditions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are good. The school has sound links with the community. Links with the adjacent infant school are very good. They are good with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The school provides a range of very good information for the parents, particularly about the curriculum and about children's progress.
- There is good liaison between the infant and junior schools.

Commentary

32. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school. The responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and parents meeting show that parents feel the school works well with them. They are encouraged to support the school through the PTA, which raises significant funds on behalf of the school each year. Parents also support their children well by helping them at home with their homework.

33. Parents are satisfied with the way the school helps their children learn. The school provides a good range of information for parents. Regular newsletters inform parents what is happening in school; in addition the school also sends out detailed information about what the children will be studying during the coming term. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about how their children are progressing and are always invited to attend review meetings. The school has an open door policy so that parents are always welcome to discuss the provision for their child and how well they are doing in meeting their targets.

34. There are good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress informally as well as formally. Written annual reports for parents are very good. They give parents detailed information about what their children know, understand and can do as well as information about how well their children are doing in relation to national expectations. Areas for development are also included. There are opportunities for parents as well as pupils to comment on the reports; many take the opportunity to respond with positive and constructive comments.

35. There are good links with other schools in the area for example through the partnership with Erith Schools for sports. There are very close links with the local Infant School. The schools work closely together to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils between schools, staff get together to talk about the pupils and pupils have the opportunity to visit the school on a number of occasions to meet their teachers and to get used to the school. Governors also meet together to discuss issues of interest to both, and staff meet and undergo joint training sessions. There are satisfactory links with the local community with a good number of visitors coming into school and pupils making visits to the local area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Together with her deputy, staff and governors, there is a clear educational direction to the school. Management is very efficient, competent and well informed. Analysis of pupils' performance is rigorous and effective, with a strong focus on raising pupil achievement and the quality of education for all. The governors' role in helping to shape the direction of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides outstanding and purposeful leadership.
- The school has an excellent deputy head and a very strong senior management team
- The levels of shared commitment and capacity to succeed by all staff in the school are excellent.
- Management of the curriculum, teaching and resources are very good.
- Teaching and learning are monitored well and school planning is seen as an important way of ensuring improvements.
- The management of special educational needs is very good.
- The governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is very good.

Commentary

36. The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection through the commitment, hard work and vision of the headteacher and her very able and effective deputy. Together they have inspired and generated high levels of commitment and loyalty from all members of staff, and respect from parents and the local community. Every possible care is taken to ensure that Barnehurst is an inclusive school so that all pupils receive their full entitlement to a good quality education and are treated with respect and consideration at all times. All who work in the school are fully committed to this aim and this is much appreciated by the pupils and all who know the school.

37. The headteacher and deputy together have built a very strong senior management team, and this has ensured a firm foundation for the continued growth and improvement of the school. Leadership of the curriculum and teaching by the headteacher and senior staff is very good. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have clear and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and standards of work. The shared commitment by everyone to focus on improvement is excellent. They follow the school guidelines consistently encouraging very positive attitudes and behaviour and helping pupils to develop self-discipline. Performance management contributes well to school development and is successful in identifying where improvements are needed to raise standards.

38. There is excellent strategic planning to reach the school's identified goals. At present, some subjects have no subject leaders, and, for example, the headteacher and deputy have temporarily taken responsibility for managing mathematics, ICT and PE. However, the recent reorganisation of responsibilities, based on a careful analysis of the priorities for development has led to a new manager who has responsibility for managing the co-ordination of the Foundation Subjects. Together with the move to establish a more flexible timetable, this is an innovative and carefully considered strategy to ensure enrichment in all curriculum areas so that they are addressed in greater depth. The school is now taking very effective measures to strengthen the roles and responsibilities of the subject managers. The existing subject managers already have

suitable monitoring tasks such as checking teachers' lesson planning and work sampling to help ensure that appropriate work is provided for pupils across the classes and year groups in their subject. They have already been very successful in this work. Time has been allocated to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities even more effectively, so that after a period of training, they will be able to support their colleagues in the classroom and monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

39. The school is very effectively managed. The school has developed and implemented some very good systems for evaluating its performance. Information and data gained from this process are analysed and then used very well to identify areas for improvement. Necessary action is then taken to implement the decisions made. The development of a coherent programme to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the classes has been a major priority for the headteacher and the system is working very successfully. The head and deputy also manage to address the day to day difficulties faced by the school very successfully with the help of the very efficient office staff. The management of special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator works very closely with teachers, learning support staff, parents, governors, outside agencies and pupils to ensure that the provision is of a very high quality. The match and deployment of teaching and support staff is very effective and helps to create an effective and improving school through its very effective management.

40. In classes, the learning support assistants work very well in close partnership with the teachers.

41. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, involved in working with pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language are clear about their roles and understand the important part they play in helping pupils in their care to learn well. No pupil's difficulties are taken as a reason not to strive for excellence. The organisation, management and support for teachers new to the school are very good. For example, the school ensures that every teacher new to the school has a colleague mentor, in order to provide relevant information. This works very well to give support and guidance to newly appointed or temporary staff who work in the school.

42. The governors are clear about their roles and their importance to the school. They act as 'critical friends' and their effectiveness in fulfilling their statutory and other responsibilities is good. The headteacher, staff and governors are all involved in school development planning. Priorities for development are carefully analysed; the appropriateness of them and the actions taken to meet these objectives are very good. Subject co-ordinators report to governors to keep them informed of developments and to enable them to assess the impact of spending on standards. Governors visit the school regularly to observe the provision first hand to assess its effectiveness. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and ensure that they take a prominent role in promoting the aims of the school. As a result of all these measures the school gives good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	704,983	Balance from previous year	46622
Total expenditure	712,232	Balance carried forward to the next	39,373
Expenditure per pupil	2552. 80		

The governors apply the principles of 'best value', (i.e. compare, challenge, consult and compete) to all their decisions and then monitor carefully its impact on financial planning. They ensure the school spends its resources wisely and seek to obtain best value when improving teaching and learning resources. Educational priorities are supported very well through good financial planning.

The school uses its funds to support developments in the school and these funds are used very effectively for their designated purposes. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards, the headteacher and staff with the support of the governors, should now:

- Raise standards of writing further by exploiting all opportunities to develop pupils' range of writing skills across the curriculum.
- Ensure that opportunities for multicultural education are included more directly when planning the curriculum.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING,

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**. Teaching and learning are consistently good and often better across the school. Teachers' planning takes account of the full range of ability in any one year group and assessment procedures are effective.

The main strengths and weaknesses:

- Strong speaking and listening skills developed well in class work.
- Standards of attainment are above national expectation in both reading and writing at age eleven.
- Teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching observed.
- Support for pupils with special educational need and for the small percentage of bi-lingual pupils is good overall, and their achievement is carefully monitored.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their learned writing skills in other subjects are not fully exploited.
- The range of languages, other than English, spoken by pupils is not acknowledged sufficiently in the school.

Commentary

43. The school encourages pupils to develop good speaking and listening skills in the English curriculum and in all other lessons. Pupils are given good opportunities to talk together, share their ideas and explain their thinking in all subjects. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson pupils discussed the distress felt by Little Miss Muffet at the arrival of the spider. They used journalists' interview techniques to find out why she had such a phobia and drew on information about her notorious father, who used spiders as a remedy for illness. They spoke with confidence and good humour, holding on to the journalistic style required for the task.

44. A significant number of pupils are reading above and sometimes well above the level expected for their age. They are keen to read and talk about characters and plot, and what they think might happen next. They are able to summarise the story so far and express preferences for authors or book types. Such confidence is encouraged and supported by a well-tried teaching method called "guided reading", which allows pupils and teachers to study a particular book, exploring its ideas thoroughly. Other very positive initiatives include the upgrading of the library facilities and the reading 'buddy' system in the school. Both these systems have encouraged pupils to share their reading with others and have had a significant impact on improving pupils' standards and enthusiasm for reading. Teachers direct pupils' attention to sentence structure, punctuation and choice of vocabulary to help them draw extra meaning from their reading.

45. Standards in writing are also good, though they fall a little behind the standards in reading by age eleven. This is due in part to the reduced opportunities pupils have to practise their learned writing skills in other subjects across the curriculum. For example, in a good science lesson, pupils first predicted what would happen when different solids were dissolved in water. They then wrote up what actually occurred. The scientific investigation allowed pupils to understand the learning objective on materials but pupils were not then given enough support to enable them to write up the task well. By using the future tense of prediction and the past tense when describing what actually happens, pupils are able to consolidate their knowledge about the grammar of English in a real situation.

46. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Planned activities are effectively adapted to allow each pupil to make progress and achieve the lesson

objectives. Less confident pupils are well supported by teaching assistants who have been carefully briefed and are able to help pupils achieve their targets.

47. Teaching is good overall and often very good. In all classes teachers extend pupils' skills and strategies to read and write for an appropriate range of purposes. In reading pupils are being taught how to use tables of contents and indexes to research their topics or to answer questions. Teachers mark pupils' written work well and include appreciative comments. However, the good practice of giving pointers to help improve their work is not consistent across the school.

48. The school has a very effective curriculum manager who works with pupils in different ability groups to boost their performance in literacy. He also works to support the most able pupils in all year groups in cross-curricular projects to provide challenging work. The subject manager has analysed pupils' test results and has drawn up an action plan aimed at raising standards in writing. He regularly visits classrooms to check teaching and learning and the quality of work produced by pupils. Such activities have had a significant effect on the quality of teaching in English. The school's analysis of pupils' performance and target-setting has enabled them to provide equal opportunities for every pupil through careful curriculum planning.

Language and Literacy across the Curriculum

49. The school has introduced the national literacy strategy well and through careful planning has modified it to meet the needs of pupils. The school is offering some opportunities for them to write at length for different purposes in lessons and in writing workshops outside the statutory school day.

50. Pupils' literary skills are not always given sufficient emphasis, however, particularly in other subject areas.

GERMAN

The quality of provision in German is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good teaching results in effective learning and leads to good achievement.

Commentary

51. Pupils' achievements at this early stage in the school year are good and the books of pupils who were in Year 6 last year show that a broad range of language was covered. Over the course of the year, pupils learn the words for colours, animals, some parts of the body, rooms of the house and food. They also learn to use simple sentences with basic grammatical constructions.

52. Current Year 6 pupils can already count in German, greet each other and hold a simple conversation involving questions about their name, age and where they live. Having been taught the pattern for constructing German numerals, many pupils can recognise and say very high numbers including hundreds and thousands. They enjoy speaking to each other in German and many are beginning to do so with confidence. Most are also developing a sound standard of pronunciation. Pupils work well together in pairs and cheerfully practise their questions and answers with a partner. Many are confident enough to present these dialogues to the rest of the class.

53. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and good use is made of a learning support assistant who is also learning German through her work with the classes. Each lesson includes some activities which practise and consolidate earlier learning and others which introduce new language. In this way, pupils grow in confidence by learning in small steps and going over vocabulary and phrases already met. The teacher skilfully guides the learning by drawing attention to errors in a sensitive way and provides many opportunities for pupils to self-correct or re-

think their answers. More use could be made of German by the teacher to affirm correct answers, give praise and for general classroom instructions.

54. Although not a languages specialist, the subject leader has a good basic knowledge and competence in German and other modern languages. Good use is made of worksheets and ICT to consolidate and reinforce learning. The subject is well managed and taught, although consideration should be given to the non-statutory national curriculum guidance in order to provide a more secure structure to the teaching programme. The good quality of provision and pupils' achievements have been maintained since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good. All aspects of mathematics are well taught throughout the school and pupils make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are good and above those found nationally.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to work and behave very well in lessons.
- Teaching is good.
- Assessment procedures are very good.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

55. The standards attained by Year 6 pupils in the 2002 national tests taken were similar to the national average. The pupils currently in Year 6 are reaching standards above those expected for their age and the school is on track to meet the very challenging target of having 85 per cent of pupils attain the nationally expected level. The consistently good teaching is a significant factor in helping pupils reach such high standards. The good quality additional support given to those pupils who are identified as being at risk of not achieving the expected level assists many of them in reaching it successfully. This is also the case for the more able pupils who are given challenging work to help them reach a higher level than expected.

56. Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in all areas of numeracy and mathematics as they move through the school. Their exercise books and folders show that the work they are given is closely matched to their prior attainment and designed to move them on smoothly to the next stage in their learning. The books of the pupils in Year 5 last year are particularly good and show that they were very well taught all aspects of the subject to an appropriate depth. These pupils, now in Year 6, continue to achieve well and have a very good understanding of mathematics that they are able to use well in problem solving.

57. Teaching is good overall with much that is very good. Lessons are well planned and help pupils make good progress by giving them work tailored to meet their needs. Teachers manage their pupils very well and have very high expectations of them at all times. They constantly encourage them to improve their skills and understanding and challenge them to do their very best. This brings a very positive response from pupils who work hard and are very eager to do well. In a very good Year 5 lesson about percentages two boys worked with intense concentration and application so that they could move on to the extension work provided, and learn even more in the time available. They were justifiably proud of their efforts. In all lessons pupils behave very well and have very good relationships with their classmates and adults. Teachers use the skilled learning support assistants very well to help pupils who need more individual help make good progress and be fully included in lessons.

58. The subject is well led and managed. There is a very noticeable commitment to high standards and every possible avenue likely to help raise pupils' achievement is thoroughly explored. The assessment procedures are very good indeed. The information gleaned is used to track individuals and groups of pupils as they move through the school and check that they are making

suitably fast progress. If they are not then it triggers action to help them improve. Analysis of pupils' responses to test questions is used to find areas of learning that strengths and those that are in need of improvement. Again, action is taken immediately to address any problems found.

59. There has been a good improvement in the provision since the last inspection. Standards have risen, teaching is much improved and the management of the subject is now good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. The pupils' skills in mathematics are used in other subjects of the curriculum and this helps reinforce their understanding of mathematical concepts by using them in practical and relevant ways. For example, in science investigations pupils often measure quantities and time events such as parachutes falling and in design and technology they measure lengths and weigh ingredients. Links with information and communication technology (ICT) are particularly strong. Pupils use programs on the classroom computers designed to improve their mathematics skills and sometimes have their numeracy lessons in the ICT suite. There they use programs such as Logo to learn about position and direction and use data handling programs to create graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**. The programme of work follows national guidance which has been adapted to meet the pupils' need and is backed up with a good range of activities and resources. This enables pupils to learn the subject in a logical way.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of science are good and above those found nationally
- Pupils have very good attitudes and show keen enthusiasm for the subject
- Teaching seen during the inspection is consistently good or better.
- Practical investigative work and scientific enquiries are well established.
- Teachers questioning and discussions with pupils show their good knowledge of the subject

Commentary

61. In 2003, standards in the national tests rose significantly. This is a considerable improvement on the findings of the last inspection report. These improvements are being maintained and some pupils currently in Year 6 are already producing work above the standards expected nationally. Pupils come into school at the beginning of Year 3 with levels of attainment close to the national figure. Through the good and very good teaching, pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, as do pupils for whom English is an additional language. Their success is due largely to the way in which teachers use questioning to draw out extended answers from pupils and help them to learn successfully.

62. Pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well so that by the age of eleven most pupils plan investigations methodically and present information using descriptions and clearly labelled diagrams. Pupils draw conclusions and evaluate their work. For example, a Year 6 class contrasted the effectiveness of different materials and shapes they had used to make a parachute. They used appropriate scientific vocabulary, such as air resistance, and understood how this affected the rate of descent and impact. Scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that by the age of eleven, pupils know the major organs of the body and their functions, they can name the parts of plants, and have a good knowledge of reversible and irreversible changes. They can explain how to separate solids from liquids, make sensible predictions and understand how to set up a fair test.

63. Successful action has been taken to improve teaching, learning and attainment in science since the last inspection. This includes significant improvement in the quantity and quality of investigative work. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning are good. Lessons, in Years 4, 5 and 6 were judged to be very good during the inspection with pupils learning well and making good progress. In the lessons observed, pupils were engaged in practical investigations and there

is plenty of evidence in their books to show that this is common practice. The best teaching is lively and holds pupils' attention. Teachers form good relationships with their pupils and in their turn, pupils are very well behaved and receptive to what their teachers are teaching. Pupils use their knowledge well. Lessons are well structured, taking good account of pupils' needs, and ideas are explained in ways that pupils can feel confident in trying to test their ideas and investigate further. This happened in a Year 5 lesson on electricity. The children were given the task of trying to find ways to make a light bulb dimmer. After a thoughtful discussion with the teacher, pupils set to work to test their ideas and find the best solution to the problem. The task also ensured that higher attaining pupils were challenged to extend their own understanding of the work. At the end of the lesson the children reported their results to the rest of the class. They explained their results using correct terms and expressed their thinking and ideas confidently, showing clear understanding and knowledge of the task and the scientific principles involved. In these good and very good lessons, all pupils develop good understanding and are able to express their ideas clearly because the teachers give time to encouraging pupils to express their ideas in different ways. Older pupils have developed a style of writing appropriate to describing scientific investigations because the teachers encourage and praise succinct oral and written expression.

64. Teachers share their high expectations of behaviour. Because of this, pupils enjoy science and produce work of good quality. The brisk pace of most lessons maintains pupils' interest and increases their work rate. Behaviour is good and in some is very good. Pupils are motivated and remain focused on the activities for considerable lengths of time

65. The subject co-ordinator provides very good leadership and manages the subject well. She is enthusiastic and works hard to help colleagues although there is no allocated time to monitor lessons. Thorough monitoring of teacher's plans and checking pupils' work has ensured that the planned curriculum is being consistently taught. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of attainment data and has an accurate picture of standards throughout the school. Assessment procedures are good. The co-ordinator is keen to develop further a new assessment record which will add significantly to her good cumulative knowledge of the subject and how to track pupils' progress across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is very good. Pupils are well taught, use high quality resources and their attainment meets national expectations. There has been an excellent improvement in the provision since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils learn at a good rate.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and behave very well.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The resources are very good.
- There are few assessment procedures in place.
- Pupils' keyboard skills are weak.

Commentary

66. At the end of year 6 pupils reach standards in ICT that are similar to those found nationally. Over the past few years national expectations have risen considerably and the school has worked hard to keep pace with new developments and is now in a position to move on to even greater heights. All aspects of the subject are taught throughout the school with multimedia presentations a particular strength. Pupils' keyboard skills are relatively weak and only a few pupils are able to type text at an acceptable rate. This frustrates pupils and limits their output in the allocated time.

67. The quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Two lessons seen were very good and showed the very good subject knowledge of the teachers. The confidence that the teachers have in using ICT themselves enables them to teach

new skills very effectively. Their use of the overhead data projectors and good troubleshooting skills makes for effective teaching and rapid learning. The very good Year 6 lesson using the PowerPoint program was a good example of how a skilled teacher can motivate pupils so that they are all enthusiastic learners. At the end of the lesson the pupils were reluctant to end their work. Teachers manage their pupils well in the ICT suite despite there being some difficulty in seating the large classes comfortably. Pupils are very attentive, thoroughly enjoy all the work and behave very well in lessons. They handle the equipment with care and work together very well, sharing tasks equally and often supporting each other in their learning.

68. The subject is well led and managed. The headteacher is currently overseeing the subject and has many exciting plans for the future. Teachers and support staff are well trained in using the equipment and this is an ongoing process as the school updates and improves its resources. Assessment procedures are not yet developed sufficiently to help teachers and the co-ordinator know the exact standard that each pupil is attaining and to track their progress as they move through the school. Some work is kept in pupils' folders as hard copy but this is rarely dated to help teachers assess progress.

69. The school is very well resourced for effective teaching of ICT. The new computers in the suite are of high quality and the pupils were amazed when they first saw them. A small suite has also been established for use with specific groups of pupils including those who have particular gifts or talents. A bank of laptops is also available for use in classrooms and classroom computers are used regularly to reinforce skills and support learning in other subjects.

70. The provision of ICT was a Key Issue in the last inspection. The improvements since then have been remarkable. The subject knowledge and confidence of staff is now very good and pupils are well taught. The resources have been improved considerably and standards are much higher. All of the criticisms made have been fully dealt with.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The pupils' knowledge and skills in ICT are used in other subjects. This not only helps extend and reinforce skills in ICT but also makes learning more relevant and fun. For example, composing tunes on the computers adds a new dimension to their music lessons. Pupils use the Internet and CD ROMs to find out more about topics they are studying in subjects such as history and science. In English they use word processing skills for writing and in mathematics they use suitable programs in their data handling work. When appropriate some numeracy and literacy lessons are held in the ICT suite. Pupils' PowerPoint presentations are of a high quality and involve them in learning many new skills in a range of subjects.

HUMANITIES

72. In humanities work was sampled in geography and no lessons were observed in the week of inspection. The provision for geography is satisfactory. Planning shows that geography is taught on rolling programme with history over the year so no judgement can be made on standards achieved. General classroom resources for geography are not always available and this limits opportunities for pupils to refer to maps or atlases of the world or the United Kingdom. Older pupils are offered an opportunity in the Easter holidays to visit Belgium as part of their World War I study.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is good. Lessons are planned carefully and resources are well used to support pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers carefully plan lessons to make them interesting. They give clear explanations.
- Very good use is made of illustrations, videos and artefacts to help pupils' understanding of other faiths and traditions.

- Good teaching in classes promotes pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject.

Commentary

73. It was not possible to see many lessons during the inspection period because of the school's timetable arrangements. Judgements are informed by interviews with pupils, an examination of teacher's planning and scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around the school. This shows that by the end of Year 6, standards are on track to be in line with those in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress and are interested in the subject. There are two main reasons for this. Pupils remember well some of the factual information they have met in their lessons. Older pupils in particular are able to deal with the more abstract ideas often met in religious education lessons. They develop the speaking and listening skills to discuss and consider these issues effectively. Secondly, the nature and very high quality of the assemblies, where different religious beliefs and traditions are highlighted and provide pupils with a good knowledge and understanding of the major faiths and the influence these have on the traditions of individuals and societies.

74. At the end of Year 6, pupils have a very wide factual knowledge of religious education issues, and a developing grasp of more abstract ideas. They can identify a number of religions, such as Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism, and are very clear about the practices and lifestyles of those people who belong to them. They know that Christmas and Easter are important to Christians and reflect on the meaning of important events such as Remembrance Sunday. They have a good understanding about places of religious importance, such as churches, synagogues, mosques and mandus, and know how they are used. Their overall understanding in religious education is at least in line with that expected for their age.

75. The quality of teaching was good or better the lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers use resources effectively to illustrate their teaching and to gain pupils' interest. They plan well and speak knowledgeably about the subject. Pupils are challenged to think hard about their answers, and lessons often include some very good moral teaching, as the pupils are encouraged to respect and understand the values and beliefs of others. This, together with the very positive attitudes which pupils bring to the subject, supports their progress very well. Questions are well focused and build well on pupils' knowledge and understanding. The tasks set are varied, interesting and appropriately challenging, maintaining pupils' interest and enabling their learning. This aspect of the teaching was particularly strong in Year 3 where pupils were asked to write down some main points, as it would appear in a newspaper, following the story of Joseph. They responded enthusiastically and reflected thoughtfully on aspects of loyalty and friendship as they wrote and illustrated their newspaper articles. The pupils make good connections between the story and aspects of their own experience and produce some thoughtful ideas and writing. Relevant links are made with other curriculum areas and school assemblies also make a good contribution to the teaching of RE in the classes. As a result, RE makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

76. At present, the headteacher has taken on temporary responsibility for the subject until a member of staff becomes the subject manager. Teachers keep notes about pupils' attainment and sample pupils' work to ensure standards are appropriate and match the planning. Resources are good, and classrooms have interesting displays of artefacts linked with the current religious education topic.

HISTORY

Provision for history is good. History is taught mainly through topics and planned alongside a rolling programme with geography.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school
- Good teaching which is interesting and enthusiastic.

- A review of the use of resources is needed.

Commentary

77. In all classes in the school, pupils are attaining standards above that expected of pupils of similar ages. This means that attainment by the end of Year 6 has improved since the previous inspection report. Pupils' progress in history is good and they achieve well. This is the result of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Pupils who learn English as an additional language make good progress because teachers are aware of their needs. There is good support in most lessons for pupils with special educational needs, and this enables them to make good progress.

78. History is taught in alternate half terms. Lessons were only seen in Years 3, 4 and 6. Judgements are also based on discussions with pupils and teachers, an examination of pupils' work from the last school year and a scrutiny of teachers' planning files.

79. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was good and in Year 6 it was very good. Teaching is enthusiastic and interesting. Teachers generally have high expectations, and they develop pupils' knowledge systematically. Tasks are carefully matched to pupils' abilities and needs, so that higher attainers are challenged and pupils who need additional help are well supported. At the start of the lesson, pupils are asked to recap the work covered the previous week. This is very effective in that vocabulary and facts are regularly repeated and reinforced. Teachers have good subject knowledge and pupils' written work shows a good grasp of relevant facts. In Year 3, pupils learning about the Ancient Egyptians and mummification listened intently to the teacher's explanations and watched the visual demonstration of wrapping in bandages with considerable relish! Their teachers have clearly brought history to life for them, by including fascinating details, for example, about the lives, food and weapons used by the Roman soldiers. The children were able to discuss with confidence how they would have defeated the Celts if they had been in charge.

80. This enthusiasm and interest is sustained as pupils move up the school. By Year 6 pupils have a good grasp of aspects of different periods. Pupils gain a sound factual knowledge of the main events and people that they study. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils described, for example, the unhealthy conditions in Victorian times and compared the standards of hygiene and health then with those of the present day. They recognise that the differences between the lives of rich and poor people in Tudor and Victorian times, for example, and they use a range of different sources in their research. Activities are varied and written work is often lively and thoughtful. Pupils have good opportunities for individual research and some are sufficiently interested to do additional work at home. At this stage pupils have some sense of chronology, and are aware of the way that the past can be divided into periods.

81. Links with other subject areas are developing. However, pupils need more opportunities to use their literacy skills and to undertake more written work arising from their history lessons. Information technology is used appropriately for research. History is very well led in the school. The subject manager has a passionate interest in the subject and is very clear in her understanding of how to bring about improvements. Her monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' and teachers' work is good. Standards of work and teachers' planning are monitored regularly. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessment of individual progress in the subject although teachers' marking provides too little real formative feedback to help the pupil progress further. Visits and visitors are used well to support the history topics being studied but the use of shared resources is needed to enable pupils to revisit the ideas presented in the lesson. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

82. Owing to timetable arrangements it was possible to observe only two lessons in physical education, one in each of art and music, and none in design and technology during the inspection.

Other evidence came from school documents, teachers' plans discussions with staff, some recorded work in music and looking at after-school activities.

83. As the inspection took place during the first part of the autumn term there were only a few example of pupils' **art** work in displays around the school. Examples of pupils' past work indicate that work is generally of a standard in line with that expected of pupils by the end of Year 6. Pupils learn about the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh and produce their own versions of paintings in his style. All pupils have sketchbooks and these are used by all classes to enable pupils to practise close observational drawing and new techniques using pencils and colour. It was clear from the scrutiny of pupils' work that they are given opportunities to practise and experiment with different drawing materials and their attention was drawn to looking at objects from different perspectives.

84. Pupils in a Year 5 class created golden spiral patterns in the style of Klint and used blocks of colour and lines in the style of Mondrian in their work, which will be used later to decorate and design a container. They produced some very attractive and eye-catching patterns. They were enthusiastic and keen to share their ideas and work with others. The policy for art emphasises the teaching of skills in a progressive way as the pupils move through the school. The subject manager is keen to introduce a 40-minute period each week for all classes to use in order to improve the pupils' basic skills work. .

85. Evidence shows that all aspects of **music** are taught to pupils throughout the school. Pupils sing tunefully in assemblies and the CD made earlier this year of the whole school and the choir singing is of a high quality. Many pupils learn to play instruments such as the flute, violin, trumpet, clarinet, oboe and French horn with visiting specialists. Every pupil learns to play a tuned instrument. They are taught the recorder in class lessons as it is part of the music scheme of work for all year groups. There is also a very popular recorder club for pupils of all ages to join. The school choir gives pupils further opportunities to improve their musical knowledge and understanding. This is also open to all pupils and is often over 50 strong. Pupils listen to music at the start and end of assemblies to improve their knowledge of the works of famous composers and styles of music from around the world. In the one lesson seen the Year 4 pupils were well taught about the various sections of an orchestra. The music day is a huge success involving all staff, parents and carers, visiting musicians and pupils. It helps to raise the profile of the subject and inspire pupils to learn more as does the annual house music competition in which pupils can sing and play instruments. Pupils really enjoy all of these opportunities and are proud of their achievements.

86. Provision for **design and technology** is good. Planning shows that all aspects of design technology are taught throughout the school. The school has a recently appointed manager, who is keen to develop training opportunities and to raise staff expertise and confidence. She has produced a design technology framework to help staff understand the requirements and progression of skills in this subject and to help them assess pupils' performance. The school is trying out a planning and evaluation pro forma ("process diary") to help pupils record their learning and evaluate designs against specific criteria. The co-ordinator is also building up a portfolio of samples of pupils' work at different levels of attainment for each year group. The curriculum is enriched by a number of visiting specialists who run special events with the pupils, for example balloon-buggy workshops and robot control in Years 5 and 6. As part of the general curriculum innovation work the school aims to have a range of activities and enterprise projects, for example a design technology week with a "can you construct?" challenge for all pupils with a marketing dimension built in. The general curriculum planning in unit blocks allows pupils to see a process through from initial design to evaluation, and some photographs of work in progress indicate great involvement and high standards achieved.

87. **Physical education** is taught to all classes in the school and all aspects are covered including athletics and outdoor activities. Pupils learn to swim in Year 4 and most are able to swim 25 metres confidently. There are a lot of clubs for pupils to join run by teachers and learning support assistants as well as teams that play competitive games against other local schools. At various times of year the pupils can participate in clubs offering football, rugby, athletics and dance.

The two lessons seen, games in Year 5 and dance in Year 3, were both good and all pupils were actively involved. All pupils wore correct clothing and footwear and health and safety aspects were fully addressed. Pupils were well managed by the teachers and behaviour was very good. The school has an annual inter-house sports day that is much enjoyed by pupils and parents and carers. There are good links with the local secondary school and funding has been obtained to buy in visiting specialists and improve the provision further. Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have for physical education and are keen and eager participants.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHEC)

88. No PSHEC lessons were observed during the inspection period. The school has a named member of staff taking responsibility for developing this aspect of the curriculum. She has liaised closely with the religious education manager, headteacher and staff in order to plan a clear scheme of work for every year group to cover all aspects. The plan covers relationships, respect and self-esteem, health and safety and citizenship for all classes and provides different areas to be taught each term. Many of the aspects are covered in other curriculum areas, such as religious education, and the assemblies and special times set aside by teachers support the children's understanding and appreciation of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of their lives. All classes set aside some time each week for these discussions. In some classes it is called circle time but this term is not consistently used throughout the school.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	1
The effectiveness of management	2

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