

INSPECTION REPORT

BOWESFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stockton-on-Tees

LEA area: Stockton on Tees

Unique reference number: 111540

Headteacher: Miss Emily Hodgeon

Lead inspector: Dr Brian Male

Dates of inspection: 6 - 9 October 2003

Inspection number: 255571

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 -11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	177
School address:	Northcote Street Stockton-on-Tees
Postcode:	TS18 3JE
Telephone number:	(01642) 393550
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J McGee
Date of previous inspection:	21 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This community primary school takes pupils from three to eleven years old, and is maintained by the Stockton-on-Tees Local Education Authority. At the time of the inspection there were 177 full time pupils in seven classes, including the nursery. Many pupils start school with standards of attainment well below those usually found. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is also well above the national average (35 per cent). There is a high proportion of pupils from ethnic minorities and at an early stage of learning English. The school benefits from a wide range of community schemes such as Neighbourhood Renewal, Single Regeneration Budget and the Local Education Authority's Family Literacy and Numeracy scheme. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for a few weeks only.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14806	Dr Brian Male	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, religious education, history, geography
19419	Mrs Sue Boyle	Lay inspector	
16492	Mr Bob Lever	Team inspector	English, art, design and technology, music, physical education
2759	Mr Derek Sleightholme	Team inspector	Special educational needs, mathematics, science, information and communications technology,

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is **satisfactory** overall with some strong features, but there are several areas that need development in order to raise standards of attainment. At the time of the inspection, a new headteacher had just taken over the school and had already identified improvements that need to be made, and was making a very good start. Overall standards of attainment represent generally **satisfactory achievement** for the pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There are strong links to parents and the community, and community provision is excellent
- The school is inclusive, and provides very well for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for children from traveller families
- Children receive a good start in the nursery and reception classes, and this is beginning to raise standards in the lower part of the school
- There is some good provision for the arts and for information and communication technology (ICT)
- Standards of attainment need to be higher, especially in English, mathematics and science
- The range of teaching and learning strategies needs to be wider to raise the quality of teaching
- Better use needs to be made of assessment information to focus teaching

The school has made generally **satisfactory** progress since the previous inspection but some aspects have declined. Standards of attainment have varied up and down, but the underlying level is similar to the previous inspection. Behaviour and attitudes are now only satisfactory, when they were previously good. Most of the key issues raised by the previous inspection have been addressed, but assessment data still need to be used more effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Table based on school data

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

*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.*

Overall achievement is **satisfactory**. The 2003 results were unusually high in English and mathematics, and the present year 6 standards in these subjects are unusually low. These results have varied with the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each class. The general standards of years 3-6 are somewhere between these, being below the national average but representing satisfactory achievement considering the low starting point of many pupils and the numbers with special educational needs. Standards in science were below the national average in 2003, and have not improved this year. Standards in ICT, art and music are generally in line with the national average, whilst standards in history, geography and religious education are below average. The generally satisfactory teaching needs to be better in order to raise standards further and ensure consistency.

Many pupils start school with well below average attainment, but they make good progress through the nursery and reception classes, and standards are below average (rather than well below) by the time they move into year 1. Progress has been much slower through years 1-2. The results of national tests in year 2 were very low in 2003, and standards are still very low this year. To some

extent, these standards relate to high numbers of pupils with special educational needs, but also to the quality of teaching and the way in which special needs pupils in this class have been supported.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well supported, and their overall standards by year 6 are at least as good as other pupils. Travellers' children also receive very good support. There is appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and they make generally satisfactory progress.

Pupils' personal development is generally **satisfactory**. Attitudes and behaviour are both generally satisfactory overall. Most children are open, friendly, well behaved and keen to get on with their work, but there are a number of boys who have poor attitudes to learning, and whose behaviour is sometimes unsatisfactory. Pupils are generally managed appropriately but are not always valued and encouraged sufficiently as individuals to develop really positive attitudes. Children's attitudes and behaviour are generally very good in the nursery and reception classes where activities are interesting and children are very well cared for and valued.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching is **satisfactory overall** and **good** in the nursery and reception classes. The good teaching is associated with clear expectations and the involvement of pupils in interesting practical activities. In many lessons, pupils are expected to listen to a teacher for too long before becoming actively engaged in learning. This is usually when poorer behaviour occurs. The school has collected much assessment information but does not always use this to target teaching to different individuals and groups within lessons. Some good teaching of ICT and music has raised standards in these subjects.

The curriculum is enhanced by visits and visitors, but needs some revision in terms of its excitement and interest as well as the focus and level of challenge. The open-plan nature of the building does not make it easy to teach aspects of the national literacy and numeracy strategies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. Although the headteacher had been in post for a few weeks only, she had made a very good start and already recognised the need to initiate changes. The role of senior staff needs extending so that they play a full part in leadership and management, particularly in terms of evaluation and support for teaching. The governing body provides **good** governance for the school and has a strong view of the school's position with regard to inclusiveness and its role in the community.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive in their views of the school and there is no area where a significant number would like to see improvements. Pupils are also positive about the school, although a number have concerns about behaviour and feel that lessons could be more exciting.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by increasing the range of teaching and learning strategies used
- Make better use of assessment information to focus teaching on groups and individuals with lessons
- Raise standards of attainment especially in English, mathematics and science

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards of attainment as pupils leave the school at eleven years old have varied widely over the last three years. 2003 standards were unusually high, and present standards are unusually low. The general overall standards are somewhere in between, but are below the national average. Taking account of the low starting point of many pupils, the high number with special educational needs, and the number for whom English is an additional language, the overall standards represent **satisfactory achievement** for the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Present standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average in both year 2 and year 6
- Children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes
- Some very good support enables pupils for whom English is an additional language and travellers' children to achieve very well
- Achievement is good in ICT
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in history, geography and religious education

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (25.8)	26.52 (27.0)
mathematics	27.1 (24.6)	26.58 (26.7)
science	27.4 (26.6)	28.38 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002

1. The school's scores in national tests at the end of year 6 in 2003 were in line with the national average in English and mathematics, and above the average of similar schools. This was unusually high for the school. Present standards in these two subjects in year 6 are well below the national average. This is mainly because of the high number of pupils with special education needs in that year group. It is also associated with a number of boys whose poor attitudes to learning hinders their progress, and disrupts the progress of others. Standards in science were below average in 2003 and have not improved this year.
2. The underlying standards through years 3 to 6 are between these two extremes. Standards in years 4 and 5 are potentially higher than year 6, and although year 3 pupils had low scores in the 2003 national tests they have the potential to do much better. The generally satisfactory quality of the teaching through these years is sufficient to ensure that average pupils attain the expected levels, but the quality needs to be better to ensure more pupils attain these standards, and that overall standards are more consistent. Standards in the present reception and year 1 classes give some indication that the present good provision in the Foundation Stage is beginning to raise standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	11.5 (12.8)	(15.8)
writing	11.5 (12.5)	(14.4)
mathematics	12.5 (16.0)	(16.5)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The school's scores in national tests at the end of year 2 had been showing a rising trend since 2000, but fell sharply in 2003, and were in the lowest five per cent nationally in all three aspects tested: reading, writing and mathematics. These standards were well below the average of similar schools. These standards have not improved this year. The lower standards are associated to some extent with a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs, but also with the quality of teaching and the level of support for those with special educational needs. Standards in year 1 are particularly high for the school, as almost all pupils have entered the class having already attained the nationally expected goals for this age.
4. Standards in ICT, art and music are in line with national expectations and represent good achievement for the pupils. Standards in history, geography and religious education are in line with expectations at year 2, but below average by year 6 because expectations are too low and there is not a sufficiently systematic approach to the curriculum.
5. Many children start in the nursery with standards well below those usually found, especially in terms of language development and social skills. The good quality of the teaching ensures that they make good progress through the nursery and reception classes. When pupils transfer to year 1, standards are still well below average in the language and knowledge aspects but below average in the other expected areas of learning.
6. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well supported, and those who start school at an early stage of learning English make very good progress. Their overall standards by year 6 are at least as good as other pupils. Travellers' children also receive very good support and make good progress. There is appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and they make generally satisfactory progress. The support for pupils capable of higher attainment enables them to make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are generally satisfactory, and good in the nursery and reception classes. Most children are open, friendly, well behaved and keen to get on with their work. However, there is a number of older boys with poor attitudes and behaviour. Attendance rates are satisfactory, although too many pupils arrive late at the start of the day.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are open, friendly, well behaved and keen to get on with their work
- The school has been effective in increasing attendance rates
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds integrate well with each other and in school life
- The school is developing effective opportunities for pupils to contribute to school life
- The youngest pupils enjoy their lessons and behave well
- The attitudes of some older pupils are poor
- The behaviour of some boys sometimes disrupts lessons
- Not all staff are good role-models in their relationships with pupils

Commentary

7. The school quite rightly prides itself on its multicultural nature. All pupils play an active part in school life, and friendship groups are often composed of children from different ethnic backgrounds. The comments below apply equally to all the various groups represented in the school.
8. The school council is now in its second year, and the new councillors are undergoing training. They are being exceptionally well prepared for their role. An important feature of the planning is to ensure that when the council is fully up and running, pupils will be able to impact on what happens in school. There are some responsibilities in school that are carried out by adults, that could just as easily be done by pupils, such as the running of the fruit tuck shop.
9. Generally, pupils behave well around the school, and lunchtimes have improved in recent weeks, and are now pleasant social occasions. However, in lessons, the behaviour of some boys sometimes causes disruption. This is because teachers are constantly having to tell them to behave. The methods teachers use for getting children to behave are inconsistent across the school, and are not always effective. Sometimes there is an emphasis on things that are not really poor behaviour, such as expecting pupils to stand in a straight line before going into school, or to sit up straight on the carpet. These requirements do not ensure that more learning will take place or make for effective relationships. Sometimes, when they are expected to work by themselves, some pupils do not behave responsibly.
10. The very youngest children are often enthused by all they see around them, and because they find it difficult to concentrate are easily distracted. However, they respond well when asked and try to do what has been asked of them. Some of the older boys, particularly in year 5 and year 6, are often unwilling to work, and have poor attitudes to learning.
11. Some staff have established very effective relationships with pupils but there is a tendency on the part of others to be dismissive and overly harsh. Pupils need to have consistently good models of ways of relating to others to help them in their own relationships. Pupils generally get on with each other but there are times when they snatch things from others and are not prepared to share tasks with other pupils.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.4	School data	0.4
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.

12. The initiatives to increase attendance have worked well resulting in a steady increase in attendance rates over the past three years. Present rates represent satisfactory attendance in the school's context. There has been less of a focus on punctuality, but the school does recognise this as an issue and has plans to address it.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and good in the nursery and reception classes. Pupils' work is assessed appropriately, but the information gained is not always used effectively to plan learning and involve pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, and often very good, in the nursery and reception classes because there are high expectations and a good range of practical activities
- There is some good teaching of ICT and music that has raised standards in these subjects
- The range of teaching and learning strategies used in years 1-6 is too narrow
- There is very good support for travellers' children and for pupils for whom English is an additional language
- There are too many lessons that do not capture the pupils' interest, and this impacts negatively on pupils' attitudes
- Relatively little time is allocated to the teaching of reading
- Assessment information is not always used sufficiently to focus teaching

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	3 (7%)	17 (37%)	22 (47%)	4 (9%)	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. The good teaching is associated with clear expectations and the involvement of pupils in interesting practical activities. For example, there was high challenge in a very good reception class lesson when children were describing the lengths of plasticene 'snakes' as long or short, The teacher challenged children's concepts of what was 'short' by producing a very tiny 'snake' that the children realised was even shorter, and thus moved them on to careful comparisons of their own. Rolling out the actual objects was very valuable here, and comparing each other's snakes was fun.
14. Pupils have access to a good range of equipment in ICT and enjoy using it. Explanations are often very clear using the projector screen, and followed by immediate practical experience. For example, a very good year 1 lesson moved pupils very quickly on to the second stage of using a 'paint' program to make pictures. The clear explanations enabled them all to paint backgrounds and then select pictures to insert. A very successful music lesson gave pupils good opportunities to explore the sounds of different instruments in order to compose a piece redolent of the movement of different animals. The pupils responded very well to the independence given to them.
15. The school allocates relatively little time to the teaching of reading considering the low standards in this area. There is a good start in the nursery and reception classes, but the focus is not maintained through the school. In some classes, there are extra sessions for guided reading, but whilst these are successful for the pupils working with the adult, they do not extend the skills of those reading individually. Standards of both speaking and listening are poor across the school and pupils need more structured opportunities to develop these skills.
16. In many lessons, pupils are expected to listen to a teacher for too long before becoming actively engaged in learning. This is usually when poorer behaviour occurs. Teachers are conscious that some pupils have difficulty in understanding certain activities, but longer explanations are seldom as effective as immediate practical experience followed by support. This is exacerbated in many classrooms because there is no convenient place for pupils to sit to listen to the teacher. The quiet areas are far too small and the other areas open to the inevitable noise and distractions from other classes. These conditions are particularly adverse for lessons such as personal, social and health education (PSHCE) where a quiet and calm atmosphere is essential.
17. There are some challenging pupils in the school who are not always managed effectively. Where lessons were unsatisfactory, the approach to managing pupils was the factor. An insistence on high standards of behaviour is essential, but it is not helpful for this to become too negative, or for a situation to be created where pupils do not feel valued. A fussy insistence on details of

behaviour sometimes gets in the way of learning. In many cases, the poorer behaviour is associated with lack of interest in the lessons and pupils' low self-esteem. These would be best tackled by a wider range of interesting learning activities and a valuing approach that built on successes and raised self-esteem. Above all, lessons need to excite and enthuse pupils, and engender a sense of fun.

18. There is some very good quality support for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for children from traveller families. This is detailed in the specialist section below. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils' individual education plans (IEP's) are drawn up and reviewed regularly and include clear targets for action. Teaching assistants provide some good support. For example, in a year 2 lesson the improvement in pupils' ability to listen to letter sounds was directly the result of the positive input by a teaching assistant using a literacy game.
19. There is some good assessment particularly in subjects such as design and technology, where it is not usually found. The school has collected much assessment information but does not always use this to target teaching to different individuals and groups within lessons. In some cases, the expectations of lessons are too low, and do not take account of what pupils have already learned. In other lessons, expectations may be right for some pupils but not others because learning objectives are not sufficiently specific for different groups.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is satisfactory and is enhanced by a good range of extra curricular activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extra-curricular provision is good.
- Good use is made of visiting specialists to enhance the curriculum and make it more interesting
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively to match pupils' needs
- The school grounds provide good facilities for the curriculum, but the outdoor area for the nursery and reception classes is too small
- The layout of the interior accommodation creates problems for teaching and the curriculum

Commentary

20. A good range of extra-curricular activities led by teachers, teaching assistants and community workers provides for a wide range of interests. The present range includes football, drama and a 'Kidz Club' to promote sports. Visits and visitors are used well to make a positive contribution towards extending pupils' learning experiences. For example, pupils have visited a mosque, followed a science trail, taken part in music workshops and learned about the dangers of transport when the railway police visited the school.
21. All National Curriculum subjects are covered satisfactorily, but the new headteacher is aware that timetables need to be improved, with the work in some subjects delivered more efficiently than at present. For example, opportunities to write at length tend to be regarded as an English activity rather than featuring in other subjects such as history.
22. Teaching assistants provide some good support for pupils with special educational needs. However, the present deployment of assistants reflects a wish to provide support to each year group as evenly as possible rather than being based on the needs of different classes at different times.
23. The outside accommodation for the curriculum is good and has recently been enhanced through the provision of the new 'Arlington Park' specialist all weather sporting facilities. However, the

outdoor area for the Foundation Stage is small and offers limited facilities. The interior layout poses challenges for teaching that include difficulties in sound transmission from one class to another and the movement of pupils through other classes during some lessons. The site manager makes a particularly good job of maintaining the large grounds and ensuring that they are attractive.

Care, guidance and support

The school has effective measures to ensure the health, welfare and safety of pupils. The support, advice and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to be more involved in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is particularly good support for children in the nursery and reception classes
- The school council is developing well and has the potential to be an effective vehicle for canvassing pupils' views
- Targets for work are not set in conjunction with pupils so pupils do not have a full involvement in their learning
- The breakfast club is very popular and provides good learning experiences
- The toilets need refurbishing

Commentary

24. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes are well supported. This is because the staff have created a caring, valuing ethos where children know they will be listened to and what they say respected.
25. The school council as noted above is not fully operational. It works particularly well for the councillors who are working within a very positive, valuing and supportive environment in which they can feel confident that they will be listened to and their views taken note of. The input of the Healthy Schools Scheme has been very valuable here. There are only eight councillors and, at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for consulting all children in the school had not been developed. There are good plans to ensure that there are effective arrangements for this, and that the council will quite clear about, for example, its budget. The school recognises that this is especially important if it is to function as a normal committee.
26. There are some academic targets for pupils, but these are not sufficiently sharp to be useful. Pupils are not consulted about targets and many are vague about what their targets are.
27. Staff running the breakfast club have worked well to provide games and equipment that appeal to children. The atmosphere is warm and friendly, although there is probably some scope for adults to be more involved in playing games with the children rather than operating in a supervisory role. The school has applied for the Healthy Schools Award. To meet with the requirements, it is now running a healthy tuck shop which only sells fruit and healthy snacks. However, pupils do not always choose the healthiest of foods for themselves and need to be reminded about the healthy options available at lunchtimes, and have healthier options at the breakfast club.
28. The toilets are in a poor state. Only one or two of the doors lock to allow pupils the appropriate privacy. Appropriate arrangements for adolescent girls are not in place. These are issues that are high on the pupils' own lists of priorities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, with other schools and with the community. These make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very positive in their views of the school
- There are very good courses for parents to enable them to support learning at home
- The school is now involving parents further in its work
- Very good use is made of community links to enhance the curriculum
- There is insufficient information for parents about the work children will be doing

Commentary

29. The family learning courses for parents are well attended. The classes are well run, staff are friendly and the group is supportive. In this setting, parents acquire the confidence and the skills to enable them to help their children with learning at home. The school has been particularly successful in attracting parents from the various groups within the community that it serves.
30. The new headteacher has already had meetings for parents to discuss the school's revised behaviour policy. The numbers of parents attending these meetings were very few, but the school has not been deterred. There are plans to consult parents further and to encourage their greater participation. Parents are very positive in their views of the school. A friends association has only very recently formed but this is a positive step towards the greater involvement of parents.
31. Few parents help their children with homework. The school recognises that parents do not always feel confident to help or have other commitments that make this difficult. New well-thought-out initiatives, aimed at parents of the children in the nursery and year 1, are well underway. Generally though, throughout the school, there is too little information given to parents, about what children will be learning.
32. The school makes some very good use of community links, such as those with the local church and mosque, to widen the experience of the children and enhance the curriculum

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The new headteacher is already providing good leadership for the school, although the role of other staff needs extending. Management of the school is now good and steps are already being taken to evaluate provision more rigorously. The governing body provides good governance for the school and has a particularly good vision for the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher is making a very good start and developing a good overview of the school
- She recognises the need to change the existing arrangements for the deployment of staff
- The role of senior staff needs strengthening
- Governors have a particularly good vision of the school's role in terms of inclusiveness and community provision

Commentary

33. Although the headteacher had been in post for a few weeks only, she had made a very good start and already recognised changes that needed to be made. The higher standards in national tests in year 6 in 2003 masked the fact that standards were actually declining through the school, and there had been no action plan to address this. The new headteacher has already identified the decline and is formulating plans to raise standards. She has also identified the need to address the attitudes and behaviour of a number of older boys.

34. The role of senior staff needs extending so that they play a full part in leadership and management, particularly in terms of evaluation and support for teaching. In the previous distribution of responsibilities, some junior staff had far too many responsibilities, whilst some more senior staff had comparatively few. The role of the deputy is far narrower than usual. In general, the arrangements meant that subject managers exert too little influence on their subjects. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator has little time to monitor and support the education of the above average number of pupils in this category, and so extra support for these pupils is not always well directed. The new headteacher is already aware of these deficiencies and is preparing the necessary reorganisation.
35. The new headteacher has already recognised the need to make changes to the existing arrangements for the deployment of staff. Many teaching staff were reallocated to different year groups for which they had little previous experience at the end of the academic year. They had not all been well prepared for these moves, and some were still making the necessary adjustments. Support staff time has been allocated equally between classes, rather than being directed by need. Therefore, there are some lessons where support staff are present but not needed, and others where they are needed but not present. The good quality specialist English as an additional language support is not always directed to those pupils learning English. Pupils with special educational needs do not always receive the good quality support that is available.
36. The budget table below indicates a substantial budget surplus, but income from various community projects makes the balance seem much healthier than it really is. When community items are excluded, the figures actually head towards deficit. The falling numbers of pupils in the school is reducing its income, and this is exacerbated by the very small year 4. Money is being saved this year by having one teacher take both reception and nursery classes for a term, but this arrangement cannot be sustained beyond January when the new intake starts and numbers rise. The interim arrangements have entailed the nursery and reception teacher shouldering a work load far greater than any of her colleagues. Unless the number of pupils rises, the school will have to consider reducing the number of classes in years 1-6 with the inevitable mixing of age groups.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	640631
Total expenditure	571096
Expenditure per pupil	2869

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	55038
Balance carried forward to the next	69534

37. The governing body has a particularly good vision for the school in terms of its inclusivity and community provision. Particularly good links have been created with the community and a wide range of provision and support has been co-ordinated for the benefit of the school. The family learning programme and the new 'Arlington Park' sports facilities are examples of this. The decline in standards was masked by some higher than usual year 6 results in national tests and so it is understandable that the decline was not apparent to governors. Nevertheless, there is a continuing need for governors to be rigorous in their evaluation of the school's provision and oversight of the school's planning.

COMMUNITY PROVISION

The school makes excellent community provision and works particularly well with a wide range of providers to ensure this level of provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of community provision is outstanding
- The Community Liaison Officer is very successful in making provision responsive to the community's needs
- There are particularly good links to pupils' achievement through family learning
- The local education authority is particularly effective in arranging courses and other events
- A wide range of support and providers is very well used
- The community is benefiting significantly from this provision
- The new sports facilities are a very valuable community asset.

Commentary

38. There is a particularly effective system in which a Community Liaison Officer works in the community, identifying needs and encouraging participation. She then arranges for the Local Education Authority (LEA) and other providers to run courses and other events. The closeness of the liaison means that the courses really fulfil a need and so are well attended. The Local Education Authority, through its Curriculum Manager for Family Literacy and Numeracy, is particularly effective in reacting quickly to needs and making very good quality provision. A strong feature of the provision is its continuing nature that leads to 'life-long learning' and national accreditation. For example, some parents who came to an early course on ICT have gone on to gain the 'European Computer Driving Licence'.
39. Another particularly effective feature is the link made to pupils' learning. Many of the family learning courses involve pupils learning alongside their parents, and the curriculum of these courses is very well devised to link with the particular learning needs of the pupils. Provision is not confined to courses, and a wide range of 'fun days', drama, 'summer schools', sports and visits cater for a wide variety of needs. The range is particularly valuable, not just for its variety, but for the focus on learning that permeates the approach.
40. The new 'Arlington Park' sports facility with its own support staff had only just been opened at the time of the inspection, but was already having an impact on pupils' learning. It is also proving to be a valuable asset for the community through its use by other schools and community groups.
41. The school has been particularly effective in ensuring that a wide range of 'funding streams' is drawn upon to make the best quality provision.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

The school makes very good provision for these pupils, and their standards of attainment are well in line with those of other pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some very good quality support from a specialist teaching assistant
 - The positive and inclusive approach of the school encourages these pupils to do well
 - The specialist teaching assistant is not always deployed to assist these pupils
42. The positive ethos and quality of the support enables these pupils to make good progress. By the time they are eleven, few pupils have severe difficulty with English and their overall attainment is in line with the rest of the school. This represents very good progress.
43. At the time of the inspection the children in greatest need of support were in the nursery and reception classes. The bilingual support is being used very well here to check whether children's understanding is being hindered by lack of English or by the concepts themselves. The children are helped to use the appropriate English terms and so develop understanding and vocabulary.

Very good modelling of language by the teacher, and repetition of phrases, helps pupils become immersed in English.

44. Elsewhere in the school, there is good support from a part-time specialist for children newly arrived from other countries. This support is helping these pupils' language and their confidence, and so helping them settle into school.
45. The bilingual assistant is not always timetabled to classes on a basis language need and so often ends up working with pupils for whom English is not an additional language. This is not the most effective use of her time.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS FROM TRAVELLER FAMILIES

The school makes very good provision for these pupils, and they are well integrated into the community. Overall attainment is not as high as other groups as some of the children have missed considerable periods of schooling and a high proportion have special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some very good quality support from the Traveller Support Service
- The positive and inclusive approach of the school encourages these pupils to do well

Commentary

46. The Local Education Authority's Traveller Support Service's provision is very well planned to fit in with the school's curriculum and to reflect the targets on pupils' individual education plans. One-to-one support is provided in reading and this is impacting positively on learning.
47. The school's positive ethos helps these children integrate very well into the school community, and teachers ensure that they are well supported in class.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is **good**. This is because of the good quality teaching and the range of activities for the children. Many children enter the nursery with well below average standards, but make good progress, particularly in the mathematical and physical aspects. Taking account of the very low starting point of many children, the number with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, the standards attained represent **good achievement**.

At the time of the inspection, both classes were run by one teacher and a teaching assistant. The teacher's skill and dedication enabled this arrangement to work well, but the burden on her in terms of time and commitment was significant.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although overall standards are well below average, children make good progress and achieve well
- Very good relationships are formed, and very supportive staff make each child feel valued.
- Teaching of groups is very good and expectations are high
- Children are involved in a good range of activities that capture their interest well
- The outdoor area is too small and does not allow sufficient focus on learning in the outdoor activities

Commentary

Personal, social and emotional development

48. Most children enter the nursery with poorly developed personal, social and emotional development, particularly in terms of co-operating with others. The good relationships that prevail, together with some good structured activities, ensures that children make good progress in this. By the time they reach year 1, most children work and play reasonably well together, co-operating, taking turns and sharing. Some pupils need more specific teaching of methods of sharing, and how to use phrases such as, "Please could I have that when you've finished", which would increase their range of strategies. Behaviour is invariably very good. There are very good opportunities for children to select activities, and many children are becoming independent and responsible.

Communications, language and literacy

49. Speaking and listening skills on entry to the nursery are very low, with many children speaking only single words and some none at all. A number of children speak no English. Very good support enables these pupils to make quick progress. For example, the bilingual teaching assistant was able to ascertain that two children understood the mathematical concept of 'longer' and 'shorter' in their first language, and was able to teach these terms in English. By the time children are ready to enter year 1, good progress has been made, although their speaking and listening skills are still well below average. Greater use could be made of story tapes and listening centres, some in home language, that would help model language and extend vocabularies.

50. When they start school, many children have little knowledge of books or writing. There are some very good opportunities for pupils to develop these skills through play and the range of written information in the room. For example, the role-play medical centre has lists for appointments and doctors' notes, and the 'doctors' carry clipboards as well as stethoscopes and send letters to their patients. This is very good provision indeed. Letter recognition and sounds are taught and

reinforced effectively through the reception year. However very few pupils have reached the expected levels by the time they move to year 1, and overall standards remain below average.

Mathematical development

51. Most children have little knowledge of numbers when they begin school. By the time they reach year 1, most can count to ten and recognise numbers. Well-planned activities built into play ensure good quality learning. For example, children have to count and sort in role-play, and number rhymes and songs are used effectively to enhance understanding. There is some very good direct teaching of groups with high expectations that promotes very good progress in this area. An example has previously been given in the teaching section. Children make particularly good progress in this area and standards are only slightly below average by the time they move into year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. Most children enter the reception class with very little knowledge of their local area or of the world at large. They are introduced to a wide variety of experiences to widen their understanding. For example, they explore the environment through visits within the local area such as to the local church, and by having visitors within the school. The models made of the boat following a river-trip are particularly good. They use computers effectively to develop a wide range of skills such as using the mouse and saving their work. The classroom environment provides the wide variety of experiences that these children need to develop their understanding of the world and they make good progress. However, few children attain the expected levels by the time they move into year 1

Physical development

53. Children's physical development when they enter the nursery is more advanced than other areas. Most are able to use the large toys with appropriate skill and use the equipment provided. Many are already able to kick a ball with some skill. Finer skills, such as using a paintbrush or pencil are less well developed. There is some good teaching of skills, such as throwing and catching, but teaching is generally satisfactory in this area rather than good because learning objectives are not so precise as in areas such as mathematics, particularly when children are using the outdoor area. A greater variety of large and small construction kits would help here, and also carry over into aspects of knowledge and understanding.

Creative development

54. Many children have experienced very little to develop their creative skills or imagination prior to starting school. They make significant progress in their learning through the nursery and reception classes. There are good opportunities for painting and other picture-making using a variety of materials. Role-play is particularly well developed because of the well structured facilities for this, and because adults take part and move the learning on. However, the vast majority of the children leave the reception class still well below average in this area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**. Children enter the school with low levels of English. By the age of seven standards are low and by the age of eleven have been very variable. At present they are low. The underlying level of attainment is below average and achievement overall is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment have been variable, and at present are low in all aspects of English
- There is good achievement for the many pupils for whom English is an additional language
- There are too few opportunities for writing across the curriculum
- There are too few structured opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills

- Pupils need more opportunities to listen to stories to develop reading and writing skills
- The co-ordinator needs more time to carry out her role effectively

Commentary

55. Standards in all aspects of English (reading, writing, speaking and listening) are low across the school. Standards in year 1 are more in line with expectations and this shows a trend of rising improvement through the early years.
56. There are not sufficient opportunities for speaking for a range of purposes to an increasing range of audiences. There are limited opportunities for role-play beyond year 1 and teachers have a limited range of strategies for developing speaking and listening skills. Some use is made of paired discussion, but this is seldom structured sufficiently to allow the skills to develop. A good number of pupils attend the drama club, and the school reports that this is improving their confidence and skills. In other subjects pupils learn appropriate technical vocabulary but find describing what they are learning difficult.
57. Across the school, but particularly in the older classes, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Some lessons need a much sharper focus and higher expectation of what pupils could do. Where expectations are higher, pupils make better progress. For example, in a year 5 lesson the teacher made good use of a text from 'Crummy Mummy' to teach the conventions of a play script. The level of challenge was realistic and pupils learnt well. They readily took part in a dialogue and followed stage directions. In a successful year 1 lesson, the teacher made good use of computers to write a story to provide a model for the pupils before they wrote their own. They concentrated well and made good progress in writing and in using their ICT skills.
58. Although many pupils have low standards of reading, not enough is done to compensate for a lack of experiences at home. The extra guided reading sessions are effective for the group supervised by an adult, but do not always develop the skills of pupils who are reading by themselves. In one lesson, some pupils just sat and chatted and some did not even bother to open their books. There are too few opportunities for pupils to listen to stories read by a teacher, or to share books and listen to taped stories. There are good resources for group reading and a good supply of big books. The library has a satisfactory range of fiction and information books but the room is too small. This restricts whole class use. Class libraries are not so good and there are few places where pupils can browse and enjoy books. There are no listening areas where pupils can share taped stories. There are too few books or taped stories in the home language for children for whom English is an additional language.
59. Good quality support enables pupils for whom English is an additional language to make good progress and achieve well. By the end of year 6, their standards of attainment are at least in line with other pupils.
60. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, committed and knowledgeable, but has limited time to monitor work across the school. Assessment arrangements are in place but data are not well used to focus on what needs to be done to move pupils on a level. There has been no monitoring of how well particular groups of pupils are doing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. There is some use of subjects such as history and geography to develop writing skills, but these are generally rather limited with few opportunities for extended pieces. Speaking and listening opportunities are usually restricted to question and answer sessions with the teacher where pupils are called upon to give simple answers to straightforward questions. Much more could be done to use other subjects to extend language and literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

The school makes **satisfactory** provision for mathematics. Standards have varied over the last few years, but generally represent satisfactory achievement for the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of basic skills in year 2 and year 4 is good
- Good use is regularly made of resources for elementary number activity
- In some lessons the work set is not matched appropriately to pupils' ability
- The co-ordinator needs to monitor lessons more regularly

Commentary

62. The teaching of basic skills is addressed by all teachers and reflects the national numeracy strategy satisfactorily. At the time of the inspection, the most successful lessons were delivered to pupils in years 2 and 4. These teachers ensured the content they were delivering was suitably matched to the pupils' range of abilities, they had good strategies for ensuring that pupils' attention was focussed on the work and they used methods that kept the pupils interested and engaged. In a year 2 lesson, where pupils were practising adding numbers to ten, the teacher effectively used simple resources and ensured all pupils were engaged in answering simple questions about numbers. Each pupil was asked "What do you think?" and each responded well. Their interest was maintained because the teacher could show them clearly and simply how to do the sums, and when those capable of harder work were ready to move on, they were enabled to do so. The teacher's clear explanation and use of standard English also helped these pupils' speaking skills improve. By contrast in a lesson for older junior pupils the learning was unsuccessful because although the teacher had spent considerable time preparing the work, it was not matched successfully to the level of understanding of most pupils; therefore, many lost interest and became disruptive.

63. Some teachers are using marking regularly to help pupils improve with recognition of pupil's success, and also in providing direction on how to improve. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Although test results have been analysed and records of pupils' progress are retained there has not been for some time a regular programme of monitoring lessons to enable the co-ordinator to identify areas of good practice and matters to address.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. There is some good use of mathematics in science which helps pupils apply their knowledge and skills, but in general these sort of opportunities are limited. Some good use is made of ICT to teach mathematics particularly in data-handling and early number skills, but more use could be made of this, especially for pupils who have special educational needs.

SCIENCE

The school makes **satisfactory** provision for science. Standards are below average but represent broadly satisfactory achievement for the pupils, although some (especially higher attainers) could do better.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The best lessons give pupils some independence in carrying out practical investigations and so promote their interest
- Discussions in science lessons contribute well to pupils' gains in literacy as their range of vocabulary is extended
- Introductions to lessons and explanations are sometimes unnecessarily prolonged.
- Lessons do not always challenge pupils sufficiently

Commentary

65. Pupils enjoy the opportunities provided in science lessons to carry out practical work, particularly when they have some independence and topics are matched well to their interests. In some lessons, however, teachers spend far too long explaining things. Pupils often lose interest at these times, behaviour can be unsatisfactory, and this significantly limits the scientific learning that was planned to take place. In some other lessons, the expectations do not challenge all pupils sufficiently and there are groups of pupils, often those capable of higher attainment, who do not make all the progress they could. Sometimes this is because teachers do not monitor the work of different groups sufficiently, and sometimes because they are not sufficiently clear what the next steps should be.

66. Where work is interesting and practical, pupils work well. For example, pupils in year 1 enjoyed looking at books about animals and their young. They found out how animals changed as they became older and they learned the meaning of the terms 'young, adult and elderly'. In a year 5 lesson, the teacher circulated around the groups and through good questioning helped the pupils to understand that bubbles in water are pockets of air, and helped their range of scientific skills to improve. This practical work engaged their interest with some pupils becoming more confident in understanding the concept of a 'fair test' when they set up experiments.

67. Subject co-ordination is overall satisfactory but limited by the absence of an organised programme of lesson observations. Consequently the subject leader is not able to establish the reasons for low standards in a subject that many pupils enjoy. The new headteacher is aware that this important aspect of subject leadership requires improving.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The school makes **good** provision for ICT. Standards of attainment are generally in line with national expectations and this represents very good achievement for the pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well and make good progress in the acquisition of ICT skills.
- Teachers confidently use the good ICT resources in the specialist facilities at the school.
- Pupils' attitudes to ICT are good and they enjoy using computers.
- ICT is being used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects.
- The leadership of ICT is good.

Commentary

68. Most pupils enjoy opportunities to use ICT and they make good progress in the acquisition of skills that they can use in many subjects. By year 2, most pupils have learned how to control the mouse well and can draw using an art package satisfactorily. By year 6, pupils are entering data, designing a page for a newsletter and creating graphs.

69. Teachers have responded positively to the opportunity to improve ICT experiences through accessing specialist training and are becoming confident in using computers. They teach well a

range of skills such as simple word processing, working with spreadsheets and mixing text with images in documents. The pupils enjoy the opportunities for them to become more independent in their learning and to work together collaboratively. The good resources of the ICT suite, including the large projected image from one computer, helps teachers to explain the techniques they expect pupils to learn. In a good lesson for pupils in year 5, the success of teaching was linked to providing activities that built successfully on the work of the previous lesson. This enabled pupils to learn about entering data into a spreadsheet, and the confidence of the teacher in using ICT to demonstrate clearly each stage of the process enhanced pupils' understanding. A lesson for year 3 pupils confirmed the opportunities now taken to use ICT as a key element of learning in other subjects. Pupils practised their two-times table by engaging in a simple mathematics game from a numeracy software program. They then used ICT to improve their understanding of shapes by answering the questions that were put to them. A very good lesson in year 1 provided high challenge to the pupils in using a new element of a program. Pupils were able to rise to the challenge because the teacher's explanations were so clear.

70. The co-ordinator has made a good effort to scrutinise pupils' work by compiling a structured portfolio of evidence to assess standards and progress in each year group. This monitoring, combined with further improvement in resources since the previous inspection shows leadership in this subject to be good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Teachers use a good range of opportunities to enable pupils to apply their ICT skills in other subjects; for example, art programs are used successfully by younger pupils. Good use is made of a variety of programs to promote early numeracy skills, and to develop more advanced mathematical skills such as data processing. There is some use of word-processing in English, but little to amend and improve writing.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision for religious education is generally **satisfactory**, but standards could be higher at the end of year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some good enhancement of the curriculum by visits and visitors
- There is good coverage of a range of religions and valuing of the various religions within the school
- There needs to be more focus on the higher levels of attainment for older pupils

Commentary

72. Pupils make satisfactory progress through years 1 and 2, and a good programme of visits and visitors enables them to meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They develop a sound knowledge of aspects of Christian ceremonies and beliefs as well as those of some other major religions.
73. There are also some good ways of involving pupils practically in understanding and appreciating a range of religious ideas and practices in years 3-6. For example, pupils in a year 4 lesson made Divali cakes. These sort of activities add to pupils' interest and enjoyment as well as their knowledge. However, there is not always sufficient focus on the higher expectations of the agreed syllabus so that pupils are not always able to relate their various bits of knowledge to an overall framework of understanding. Few are able to relate religious beliefs to their own lives. The work in pupils' books indicated that they have not always followed well structured units of study

that allowed them to explore topics in any depth, or use their developing writing skills to express ideas.

74. The school needs to ensure that medium planning makes clear the expected levels for different year groups, and the overall focus for different units of work.

History and geography

This was not a focus of the inspection, but a sample of work indicates a similar picture to religious education. Standards are generally in line with expectations at the end of year 2, but pupils do not attain the higher levels at the end of year 6. Pupils' work in years 3-6 indicates that topics are not studied sufficiently systematically or in depth, and there is little enhancement through visits, visitors or field work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

This area was not a specific focus of the inspection, but pupils' work and lessons were sampled across music, art and design, music and physical education. It is not possible to report on design and technology.

ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is **good** and there is some very good art work around the school, much of which has been inspired by visiting artists.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of outside specialists has led to some high quality work
- Subject management is good

Commentary

75. The use of outside artists and craftspeople has led to some particularly striking work in the areas of textiles, batik, ceramics and metals. Previous work in art is at a good standard but work presently being produced is in line with expectations. There is some good use of ICT in art and design to produce pictures in the styles of famous artists. Good examples of this are work based on David Hockney and Paul Cézanne. Pupils are learning appropriate vocabulary to describe their work. The subject is well managed by an experienced and skilled co-ordinator. He gives good support to colleagues and has ensured appropriate resources and materials to support the subjects.

MUSIC

There is **good** provision for music. Pupils enjoy the subject and achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good specialist teaching in years 4-6 has led to good achievement
- Pupils enjoy music and sing enthusiastically

Commentary

76. Pupils sing enthusiastically in lessons and assemblies. They enjoy using musical instruments but find composition difficult. They use the correct musical terminology from the beginning which helps their language development. They use a keyboard which records and compose using computer software. An African drummer and dancer enthused and excited pupils on a recent visit, but there are limited resources for Asian music.
77. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She has good knowledge of the subject and provides good quality teaching to years 4-6. She manages these lessons well and her enthusiasm leads to good behaviour and attitudes from the pupils. They enjoy the lessons and achieve well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

There is **good** provision for physical education, and this has been much enhanced by the new Arlington Park facility.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good facilities and resources in the school
- The Arlington Park initiative is a very valuable resource

Commentary

78. The school provides a full curriculum for Physical Education and has good resources and facilities, which are enhanced by the Arlington Park initiative. Here skilled coaches, provided by the local council with Sport England funding, teach pupils a range of sports and enhance their skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Provision for PSHCE is generally satisfactory, but suffers in some classes where the ethos is not sufficiently supportive.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a well-thought-out program of study
- The school's ethos does not sufficiently value pupils
- Some pupils do not behave well and many do not listen well

Commentary

79. There are some good programs of study, and teachers are tackling issues that are very relevant to pupils, such as racism. What is lacking from most of the lessons is the positive, valuing, approach to pupils that would contribute to their personal development by raising their self-esteem and confidence. The accommodation is not helpful. Some lessons are taught in the open plan part of the classroom which means that it is difficult for pupils and the teacher to hear what others are saying. Such an open space makes it unlikely that anyone would feel comfortable sharing something of a more personal nature. Some lessons are taught in small rooms off the classroom, but these are far too cramped for pupils to be able to sit in a comfortable circle. Consequently it makes games of co-operation difficult and pupils fidget. Pupils are willing to share their ideas, but their poor listening skills, and, on some occasions, the behaviour of some boys, detract from the effectiveness of the lessons.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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