

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tooting

LEA area: London Borough of Wandsworth

Unique reference number: 101057

Headteacher: Mr R Brading

Lead inspector: John William Paull

Dates of inspection: 3–6 November 2003

Inspection number: 256433

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary with Nursery
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	403
School address:	Hillbrook Road Tooting London
Postcode:	SW17 8SG
Telephone number:	0208 672 3957
Fax number:	0208 767 1081
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Jonathan Dixon
Date of previous inspection:	2 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school is part of the *Excellence in Cities* initiative.
- The school has an *Investor in People* award (2003).
- The LEA has given the school *Accreditation for self-evaluation*.
- Hillbrook is a large inner-city primary school (403 on roll, including 47 part-timers and 15 full-timers in its own Nursery).
- A wide range of ethnic groups is represented. The main groups are white, Afro-Caribbean and families that originated in Asia.
- Thirty-two pupils are from families who are refugees or asylum seekers.
- Nearly 50 per cent of pupils are from backgrounds where English is not the main language at home (very high). Fifty-nine of these pupils are at early stages of learning English.
- Nearly one third of pupils (above average) are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Nearly 25 per cent (above average) are pupils with special educational needs (most have learning difficulties and others have emotional and behavioural difficulties).
- About 2 per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (broadly average).
- The school has a high level of mobility of pupils – in the last year alone, 34 pupils joined the school and 25 left at other than the usual times.
- Attainment on entry is well below average and socio-economic circumstances in the area are below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
627	John Paull	Lead inspector	Foundation stage Art and design Music Design and technology
256	Gail Ellisdon	Lay inspector	
528	Abul Maula	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education
678	Sybani Raychaudhuri	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Geography History Religious education
3323	Vivien McTiffen	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hillbrook Primary is an effective school, at which many pupils achieve well. Its success is based on satisfactory teaching that has many good features. Support for the many pupils with English as an additional language or with special educational needs is good, and pupils generally learn effectively. **Good value for money is achieved.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is very good provision for young children in Nursery and Reception classes.
- Teachers use their good knowledge of pupils' progress to meet the needs of all individuals.
- Links with parents and the community are used well to enrich what is taught.
- Attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is below average.
- Poor attendance interrupts learning for a significant number of pupils.

The school has improved well since its last inspection. The quality of education has risen owing to significantly less unsatisfactory teaching and more very good teaching than before. The curriculum is managed and monitored more effectively now than in 1998.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A top 5% nationally; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E* bottom 5% nationally*

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

By Year 6, many pupils achieve well compared with their starting points. In 2003, attainment in English, mathematics and science was, however, well below average. These results were better than those of 2002, when attainment in English and science was in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. The school's records show that a large number of pupils in these year groups left the school in the years leading up to the tests and others replaced them. Several of the pupils who joined the school came directly from overseas and others had results in Year 2 that were not as good as those of the leavers. These factors had the effect of reducing the school's test results considerably, even though these pupils made good progress. This high level of mobility amongst pupils is an ongoing feature of the school. Nevertheless, the work of the present Year 6 is below, rather than well below, average. In several other subjects, including information and communication technology, standards are as nationally expected. Lower down the school, in Year 2, current standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well below average. Again, however, pupils' overall achievements are good, because many of them are making good progress from very low starting points. Compared with the goals that they are expected to reach at the end of Reception, children do well in creative development and physical development, although many are well below what is normally expected in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world, which reflects their knowledge and skills on entry to the Nursery. The attitudes and social and personal development of pupils of all ages, including their **awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural factors, are good**, and pupils nearly always behave well in school. Attendance, however, is well below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, but with many good features. Teaching is stronger for the older age groups. Teaching and learning are very good in both the Reception and Nursery. Teaching is good in mathematics and information and communication technology. Other significant strengths include the use of teaching assistants, the contributions of learning mentors and teaching of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. The curriculum, guidance for and care of pupils are good, and many strengths exist in links with parents and the community. Taken together, these strengths enhance the quality of learning well and so pupils' achievements are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a very clear view of how the school can be improved and communicates it well to the staff and governors. Governors are committed and supportive. Management and monitoring of subjects are good, and all staff, including the assistant head, deputy head, cluster managers, and the headteacher, support new staff strongly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Nearly all parents at the meeting and in their responses to questionnaires were pleased with the school. Parents believe that teaching is good, that their children make good progress, and that behaviour is good in school. They are pleased that the school provides good opportunities for their children to perform at festivals and concerts, especially the *Annual Multi-Cultural Event*. Inspectors largely agree with parents' positive opinions. However, parents of older children expressed the view that the local authority's system of secondary transfer does not offer them enough places at the nearest schools.

Pupils, in their questionnaires, are generally supportive of the school and its teachers. Nearly all of them trust adults in the school and are confident that they would receive help if ever they faced a personal difficulty.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop a focus on uses of standard forms of spoken and written English, in order to help pupils improve their work in English and across the whole curriculum.
- Continue to seek improvements in mathematics and science.
- Raise the profile of good attendance – for example, with the use of weekly awards and more frequent information for parents about how attendance is going in different classes and nationally.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Compared with their knowledge and skills when they first join the school, pupils generally achieve well. Overall, standards in English, mathematics and science are below average in Year 6, while the results of the 2003 National Curriculum tests were well below average in both Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high proportions of pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well because of good teaching and support.
- National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 are higher than at the time of the last inspection in 1998, although they have fallen from a peak in 2001.
- Weaknesses in general vocabulary and uses of standard forms of spoken and written English are barriers to raising attainment.
- Children settle and achieve very well in Nursery and Reception classes.

Commentary

1. Even though teaching is satisfactory and has many good features, several important factors keep attainment at low levels, compared with those attained nationally. Mobility amongst pupils is high. In the year groups that left the school in 2002 and 2003, records show that many pupils had arrived in either Year 4 or Year 5, and that several came directly from overseas. Although the school's assessment procedures indicate that nearly all of these pupils made good progress, they did not have sufficient time to attain results at the expected levels for their age. Other pupils, who were on course to reach the expected level left the school before they took the tests. Very good records of assessment are kept in English and mathematics, and the headteacher, assistant headteacher and deputy head use them well to track the progress that pupils make. These records indicate that pupils who remain at Hillbrook throughout their education make at least satisfactory progress and several do very well. This feature is evident in the results of 2003, so pupils' achievements are often good. For example, the proportion of pupils who attained at a higher than expected level increased in English, mathematics and science in comparison with 2002. Furthermore, nearly all of these pupils had been at the school at least since Year 3.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.1 (22.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.1 (24.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.9 (25.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002

2. Currently, standards of work in Year 6, in English, mathematics and science, are below average, rather than well below. The improvement indicated by the 2003 test results is therefore being maintained. A high proportion of pupils come from backgrounds where English is not the home language. Specialist teaching of English as an additional language is good. Support is directed where it is needed and teachers and assistants frequently sit with groups in classrooms, ensuring that these pupils know what to do to make good progress and, as a result, they achieve well. However, their attainment across the curriculum is understandably delayed until they speak English with reasonable fluency. Furthermore, many other pupils also

use fairly restricted patterns of speech that are typified by short answers, containing few extended sentences with adverbs and adjectives. These weaknesses in spoken English are reflected in what pupils write, limiting its quality. Nevertheless, standards in subjects across the curriculum, including information and communication technology and religious education, often match what is expected nationally. Teachers use computers well, showing pupils how to seek and save information in, for example, history and geography lessons. Pupils' skills in the use of CD-ROMs and the Internet to gather information are good. What was seen in art and design, design and technology, and physical education also matches what is expected by the time pupils leave the school.

3. In the past few years, overall attainment on entry to the Nursery has been very low. When they first start, many children's skills in communication, language and literacy, using English, are very low. Skills in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are also lower than usually found. Provision in the Nursery and Reception is very good. Teachers are very aware of children's needs and they plan work that meets their requirements very effectively. As a result, progress and achievement are often very good. Nevertheless, the time that children spend in these classes is not enough for them to make up the deficit. Furthermore, just as in older classes, movement in and out of the school is relatively high and, in recent years, has become characteristic in the area that the school serves. For these reasons, standards in the important areas of speech, literacy, mathematical development and general knowledge do not reach the goals that are normally expected before children begin the National Curriculum in Year 1.
4. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' knowledge and skills develop satisfactorily and they achieve well in comparison with their low starting points. Currently, overall standards in Year 2 are, however, well below average, although, in English, standards are higher in reading and listening than in speaking and writing. These levels of attainment are different from the results of the 2003 tests, which indicated a higher standard in writing than in mathematics or reading. These differences are because of differences in the characteristics of the two year groups. Current standards of attainment are also well below average in mathematics and science. Low attainment on entry and mobility of pupils are contributory factors to low standards at the end of Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.0 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.4 (13.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	12.5 (14.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2002

5. Throughout the school, provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good. Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils' needs well and help them to do what is required to meet their targets. As a result, these pupils nearly all achieve well, albeit at levels lower than those normally expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes towards school and their behaviour in lessons are good. The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Nursery and Reception is a strength and pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is also generally good through the school. Attendance, however, is a weakness.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are nearly always attentive in lessons.
- Pupils respect each other and usually work together well.
- Pupils enjoy school and trust their teachers and other adults.
- Unauthorised absences are considerably higher than the national figure.

Commentary

6. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting commented that staff at the school promote a strong moral code and present a policy of fairness and equality. They are pleased with their children's behaviour at school, noting that when visitors enter the building, pupils hold doors open for them and point the way to the offices. Inspectors agree with these positive opinions. Arrangements for promoting pupils' personal development are strong. For example, moral values are powerfully promoted in assemblies, contributing to pupils' thoughts and feelings about the world and their part in it. This teaching also includes understanding of right and wrong. Lessons often introduce thinking beyond the facts of subjects, and lead pupils to make judgements about the possible motives of the main characters in, for example, stories or historical situations. Planning in religious education displayed similar features about what could be learnt from religions. Pupils know the rules by which their classrooms will operate, including issues of personal morality.
7. Pupils in the school respond favourably to teaching about their own and each other's cultural heritage. When pupils are given the opportunity to form groups for themselves, the result is frequently of mixed gender and ethnicity. A group of pupils explained to an inspector that they had not experienced any racist behaviour at school and they were totally certain that it would not be tolerated anyway. These same pupils explained that they enjoy school and many were just as enthusiastic about lessons as they were about playtime. Although a few parents raised concerns about bullying, parents were also sure that any reported incidents are taken seriously and followed up thoroughly. This view matched that of pupils. No incidents were witnessed during the inspection and systems for monitoring this type of anti-social behaviour are good. All pupils who were asked were also sure that they knew a member of staff whom they trusted enough to confide in, even with personal information.
8. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good, sometimes especially so, which contributes strongly to learning, as they listen and concentrate well on what is taught. The needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are well known to classroom staff, so these pupils are dealt with effectively. As a result, they rarely cause difficulties that prevent others from learning. It was noticeable that pupils knew what was expected of them and that teachers set and establish routines for their classrooms well. Pupils respond to this approach confidently and helpfully.
9. Children in the Nursery and Reception also have a good knowledge of the behaviour that is expected and co-operate well with adults. A powerful contributory factor is the very good teaching of this age group. Teachers, Nursery officers and teaching assistants alike establish friendly and purposeful relationships with the young children in their care. The children respond with confidence and willingness.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.7
National data	0.4

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

10. Both authorised and unauthorised absence is higher than in other primary schools and attendance, which is well below the national rate, is poor. Although high mobility amongst pupils is a factor, as it takes time to remove pupils from the registers after they leave, it is not the whole picture. While senior managers have drawn to the attention of parents the importance of good attendance, a significant minority are still not taking the education of their children seriously enough. Learning mentors and the education welfare officer for the area have been involved in working with pupils whose absences are unacceptable. However, initiatives to raise the profile of good attendance amongst pupils as a whole are not sufficient, given the extent of the issue. For example, awards for good attendance and punctuality were not evident in a *Good News Assembly* that was observed. Displays of charts and graphs to focus the figures were not apparent in places where parents and pupils could see them.

Exclusions

11. It is the governors' policy to use exclusions only as a last resort. Governors understand the need to apply principles of natural justice on occasions when exclusions are used, either for a fixed term or permanently. No permanent exclusions were necessary in the last full year.

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	55	2	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	25	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	51	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	23	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	35	1	0
Black or Black British – African	22	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	10	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	10	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	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

Overall, the quality of education is good. Teaching and learning have improved well since the last inspection. It is a very inclusive school, which seeks to provide equally for all its pupils who are drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds and ethnicity. What is taught meets statutory requirements and is adapted well for pupils of different prior attainments.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and includes many good features. Overall, assessment procedures are used well to establish what should be taught, when it should be taught and how.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use resources and artefacts effectively to help pupils to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Teaching assistants and learning mentors make very good contributions to the quality of teaching and learning.
- Teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils receive equal opportunities to learn.
- Teaching and learning are very good in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not quite as high in Year 1 as in other age groups.
- Teachers do not always put sufficient emphasis on standard forms of spoken English. As a result, colloquial and short answers to questions are too easily accepted.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4 %)	12 (23%)	16 (31%)	20 (38%)	2 (4%)	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.

12. Although the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, it includes many good features, especially in Years 3 to 6. Furthermore, specialist teaching in music, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs, and of those with English as an additional language are all good. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception classes are consistently very good. Overall, these strong elements, together with pupils' own good attitudes to what the school provides, enhance the quality of learning, so it is good overall. As a result, pupils achieve well overall.
13. More good teaching was observed in Years 2 to 6 than in Year 1. The main reason for this difference is that pupils are often managed better in the older age groups, with greater insistence on good behaviour. As a result, their work-rates are higher and learning is consequently more effective. On rare occasions, tasks are pitched incorrectly and do not match pupils' prior understanding well enough. When it occurs, this weakness results in unsatisfactory teaching and learning, as it prevents pupils from acquiring skills and knowledge adequately. In classes throughout the school, teachers use resources well. This feature is excellent in the Nursery and Reception classes. Adaptations of work for pupils with special educational needs, as well as the direct teaching and support that they receive, are of good quality. This teaching helps them to learn and progress at rates that are similar to those of other pupils, albeit at lower levels of attainment, especially in the case of those with identified

learning difficulties. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is also good. Specialist teachers work in effective partnership with class teachers, sometimes taking the lead in teaching the whole class in situations when the use of their expertise would be advantageous. Their support is nearly always given in the classroom and is closely linked to what other pupils do. A good example occurred in Year 4, when a specialist teacher of English as an additional language led a lesson on writing poetry. This arrangement was very well planned and contributed strongly to the linguistic development of all pupils.

14. Teaching and learning in literacy and science lessons are satisfactory, although many good features that reflect the school's strong inclusive policy remain apparent. In mathematics, teaching and learning are good overall. Information and communication technology is largely taught well and relevant programs that support pupils' work in other subjects are available and understood by teachers and their assistants in each age group. A weaker element is that teachers are often too willing to accept pupils' first answer to questions. Pupils' responses are often short and colloquial, containing few uses of explanatory clauses and adjectives. Opportunities to extend such patterns of speech are frequently missed. Nevertheless, examples of good practice in this respect do exist, so the school is well placed to make improvements, by spreading such practice to all teaching. For example, in a good design and technology lesson in Year 5, pupils reported that one loaf had "...bits in it and stuff like that". The teacher immediately stopped them and pointed out that this expression contained "...no words that tell me what I need to know..." and the answer had to be "...far more specific". Her insistence on better descriptions resulted in pupils' use and learning of more appropriate modes of speech. In a very good lesson in the same class, this time taken by the headteacher, a similar very strong emphasis on speaking skills was observed. Furthermore, in the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers, nursery nurses and assistants alike keep up a constant barrage of conversation and talk. This emphasis on spoken communication exactly matches the need to extend children's vocabulary and encourages them to speak longer and more flexible sentences.
15. Overall, teachers' skills of ongoing assessment, featuring their marking of work and information given to pupils about what to do to improve it, are good, although these aspects are better in the Nursery and Reception classes, in which they are very good, and in classes for older pupils than in Years 1 and 2. For example, in Year 1, teachers were not always sufficiently clear in explaining to pupils what they needed to do to make progress and the match of tasks to prior attainment was inexact. Generally, however, teachers through the school are specific with their requirements and talk to pupils in language that is easily understood. Teaching assistants also know pupils well and make a good contribution to their work, helping individuals and small groups to understand what they should do to make progress. Assessment is used well in English and mathematics to track pupils' progress and to set clear targets of work and tasks to match individuals' needs.

The curriculum

The school provides a curriculum that is sufficiently broad and balanced to meet pupils' needs. It is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school is adequately staffed and has a good level of learning resources. It benefits from accommodation that is used well to meet requirements.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for information and communication technology is good.
- The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is effectively adapted and organised, helping these pupils to learn well.
- Extra-curricular provision is a strength of the school and an important means of extending pupils' interests and learning outside lessons.
- Specialist accommodation with a good range of resources creates a stimulating learning environment for pupils.

- The provision for developing pupils' knowledge of standard and formal modes of speech has not been sufficiently planned.

Commentary

16. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good. While it is based very closely on the nationally required areas of learning for children of this age, it is adapted particularly well to the needs of individual groups of children. In Years 1 to 6, the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and personal, social and health education. The governors' policy for sex education also meets statutory requirements fully. The relevant locally agreed syllabus is used successfully to plan religious education. Provision for information and communication technology is good. Elements of personal, social and health education are taught specifically in lessons that are set aside for the purpose, as well as in religious education, lessons known as *Circle Time* and during assemblies. The legal requirement of a daily act of collective worship is met well through opportunities for reflection in both assemblies and circle times, and in prayers during assemblies.
17. The school has improved its curriculum since the last inspection, fully implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, building further on Literacy Hours and developing its provision of information and communication technology. Literacy is supported well by a range of attractive books and resources. A suitable emphasis is placed on practical work, testing, investigations and problem solving in mathematics and science, and enquiry and research skills are featured adequately in history, geography and religious education. However, opportunities for developing pupils' speech have not been planned systematically enough, bearing in mind their often very low starting points in this aspect. Nevertheless, it is fair to point out that the headteacher, governors and staff fully acknowledge this weakness and are in the process of seeking ways to remedy it.
18. Opportunities for all pupils to benefit equally from what is taught are good. Senior staff consider the needs of different groups of pupils carefully, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Additional specialist support is often given to enable them to engage in similar activities to all other pupils. Provision under the *Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant* (EMAG) is good. Specialist teachers work closely with class teachers to plan work for the relevant groups. Overall, the curriculum provides a clear focus on supporting the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and social skills. A strong focus on the needs of individual pupils results in high levels of educational inclusion, as what is taught reflects a wide range of cultural backgrounds and shares pupils' own experiences with all other pupils. As a direct result, pupils are prepared effectively for an ethnically and culturally diverse society, which enhances the overall quality of learning strongly. Pupils are generally prepared well for secondary education, with opportunities to visit schools and, in personal, social and health education, sessions that introduce matters that pupils might face.
19. Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs and activities out of school hours. Sporting and musical activities give pupils many additional opportunities to demonstrate and develop their talents. Educational visits are also well linked to the subjects of the National Curriculum, providing strong enrichment. These opportunities also make a significant contribution to students' learning and personal development.
20. Although it is ageing, built as it was towards the end of the Victorian era, accommodation is used innovatively. For example, a specialist room for personal, social and health education has been established and is often used as a "special place" for circle times. A good music room has been developed and space is used effectively throughout the building. Learning is also enhanced with an appropriate range of resources. Pupils and staff alike take pride in their school, which is organised to good effect. The school has a nucleus of senior staff, who contribute well to stability and continuity of purpose. However, in common with many inner-city schools, mobility amongst other staff is evident. The headteacher and governors deal with this effectively, with good in-service training, support and induction procedures.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, health and welfare are satisfactory. Pupils receive good advice and guidance, which is based on the careful monitoring of their performance and individual circumstances, and good account is taken of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Foundation Stage staff provide the pupils with excellent pastoral support, focusing very strongly on their personal needs. Good support is evident throughout the rest of the school.
- Induction arrangements for new pupils are very good throughout the school and there are good links with local secondary schools.
- Governors have not ensured that all persons responsible for aspects of health and safety are appropriately trained.
- The pupils' lavatories are in a poor state and become smelly towards the end of the school day.
- While satisfactory, academic advice and guidance for more able pupils are not as strong as for others.

Commentary

21. The school is successful in its aim to provide a friendly, warm and caring ethos. Staff value and respect every pupil as an individual, whatever their academic ability, strengths or problems. Adults in the school are unfailingly caring and considerate towards all pupils. As a result, relationships are very good and nearly all pupils feel safe and secure and approach staff confidently. On their pre-inspection questionnaires, several pupils said that teachers were what they liked best about the school and nearly all agreed that adults will always help when they are in difficulty. Child protection procedures comply with national recommendations and are sensitively applied and the school has a system to ensure that pupils have access only to approved Internet sites.
22. Parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are fully consulted, and each child's needs carefully considered in planning their induction programme. Good links exist with local secondary schools and teachers provide pupils with clear advice about secondary education. These arrangements, together with such schemes as *Playground Pals*, ensure that pupils settle quickly and progress happily through the school. At the pre-inspection meeting, however, many parents expressed dissatisfaction with tests and procedures for secondary transfer, which are applied by the school on behalf of the local authority. Parents felt that these tests do not focus fairly on work that their children study in the National Curriculum.
23. Good tracking procedures in English and mathematics allow pupils' attainment to be carefully monitored and enable effective academic advice to be given. Analyses of pupils' work are regularly made and the resulting information is used to set targets and to determine those individuals who require extra support. This process is being developed for gifted and talented pupils with the help of materials prepared with support from the *Excellence in Cities* project. All staff know the children well and monitor their personal development carefully, which is very evident in general comments in pupils' annual reports to parents.
24. Pupils' views are taken seriously and valued well. A good range of methods exist, such as a School Council, a suggestions box and questionnaires, for seeking pupils' opinions. In addition, staff listen carefully to what pupils have to say in lessons and during occasions when they sit in a circle and discuss matters of personal and social importance. For example, pupils were consulted about their ideas for new playground equipment and a Year 4 class designed an adventure play area. Many ideas that came from pupils were incorporated into the final outcome. This good practice helps boost pupils' self-esteem and gives them a feeling of belonging to and ownership of their school, as does their contribution to the development of class rules.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established good links with parents and links with the wider community are very good. The school has good links with other schools and providers.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views about the school.
- Very good relationships are established with parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The school has established an impressive range of links with the local and wider community.
- Only a few parents are involved directly in helping in classrooms on a regular basis, although an active Parents' and Friends' Association provides considerable support in other ways.
- A few required details are missing from the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.
- Apart from one or two in Urdu, written communications are rarely translated into other home languages that are found in the community.

Commentary

25. A large majority of parents, whose views were obtained during the inspection process, expressed satisfaction with all aspects of the school. They particularly applaud the school's inclusive social and educational policies, and its positive attitude towards cultural and ethnic diversity. Parents and pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups confirm that the school does not tolerate racism, and they praise its provision. Many parents were very positive about the school's *Annual International Week*, which focuses artistic and cultural contributions of people from different ethnic and social backgrounds who live in the community. Parents also like the way that staff expect their children to do their best and work hard. Parents believe that their children are making good all-round progress. Inspection evidence generally supports parents' positive opinions of the school.
26. Parents agree that they are kept well informed about general matters through a range of written communications and parents' noticeboards. Governors, however, should ensure that all documents contain all required information. Though translation can be arranged, written communications are not generally available in languages that are represented in the community. Nevertheless, information about the curriculum is good. In addition to details in the prospectus, staff send parents useful information about the topics that they teach each term and display their teaching timetables outside the doors to their classrooms. Special events such as *School Book Week* and *Maths Workshop* give parents further opportunities to find out about what and how their children are taught and learn, and several attend such occasions conscientiously and to the benefit of their children.
27. From the Nursery upwards, the headteacher and staff encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning. Many parents hear their children read at home on a regular basis and help them with spellings and other homework, which supports learning and progress well. Parents appreciate teachers' willingness to exchange comments with them in their children's reading records and homework diaries. Many parents are pleased that this practice gives them an ongoing opportunity to raise concerns and to clarify information about their children's work. Pupils' annual reports and records of achievement also provide useful information. Parents confirm that they find it easy to approach teachers, including the headteacher, with concerns about their children's personal and academic progress and that they are listened to sympathetically.
28. The staff of the school greatly appreciate the work of parents in the Parents' and Friends' Association. This association raises funds for such things as improvements to the grounds and around the building. It purchases gifts for pupils when they leave at the end of Year 6, and initiates joint home-school projects. For example, it arranged a questionnaire to parents

about school uniform, which has since been introduced. The association also played a pivotal role in establishing a very successful parents' workshop, at which parents can meet socially to produce and borrow learning resources for their children.

29. The school has very strong links with many local schools and other organisations that are effectively used to enhance learning. Sporting, religious and musical links are especially good, and contribute greatly to pupils' physical, artistic and personal development. The school is also in partnership with *Roehampton Institute*, providing and developing places for the training of student-teachers. The headteacher and governors are also very committed to offering facilities to a range of outside groups and societies, including an after school centre and holiday clubs for children. The school has also been commended highly for its willingness to provide opportunities for community service to teenagers and young adults in the *Youth Offenders' Scheme*.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed, based on the headteacher's very clear view of how the school can be improved, which he communicates well to the staff and governors. Other leadership roles, including those of deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and mentors, are clearly defined, and the holders of these posts make valuable contributions to improvement and development of provision. Management and monitoring are good, and the school runs smoothly. Governors are committed and understand their role adequately.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads with a strong sense of purpose and very clear vision.
- All staff and governors are highly committed to providing equality of opportunity and a socially and educationally inclusive environment.
- The staff work well together, supporting each other as a team.
- The quality of self-evaluation is good, so all staff know the school's strengths and weaknesses well.
- The induction programme for newly qualified teachers and those new to the school is good.
- Administrative support is good.
- Governors have a strong sense of commitment to the school and the community it serves.
- Despite good leadership and management, standards of attainment remain stubbornly low.

Commentary

30. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have a sensible structure of committees to manage aspects such as finance and the curriculum, and use link governors well to liaise with staff and to keep abreast of what is happening in the school. The chair of governors supports the senior management team well and is keen on developing the role of the governing body beyond simply fulfilling its statutory responsibilities. Arrangements are currently under way to develop governors' monitoring role, so they are enabled to gather information about the school for themselves.
31. The headteacher provides a very clear direction to move the school forward. He is committed to helping pupils reach their highest attainable standards within a context of concern for their welfare and personal development. He has high expectations of all members of the school community and the part they play in its daily life. As a direct result, inclusivity is a very strong feature. The staff encourage pupils to talk about their cultural heritage and to share it with others. Co-ordination of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCo), who is a member of the senior management team, ensures that pupils are assessed accurately and receive the type of support that they need. The headteacher has built a firm foundation of continuing

development through a strong senior management team. These other leadership roles, including those of the deputy head, assistant head, cluster and subject managers, are clearly defined, and the holders of these posts make valuable contributions to improvement and development of provision.

32. Systems for appraisal, performance management and professional development of staff, including the induction of newly qualified teachers, are good, and have contributed positively to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
33. The headteacher and senior managers motivate staff and pupils equally well. This strength is evident from the hard work that everyone is prepared to commit to improving the quality of education. The school's procedures for monitoring teaching and what is taught are sufficiently robust to provide good information about what needs to be done to improve provision. The local authority endorses the quality of these procedures in its accreditation of the school's thoroughness. The information that this monitoring produces is used to work with teachers and other staff to develop their skills and sharpen their performance. The school has earned the award of *Investor in People*, which is recognition of this aspect of its management. The strength of these systems has been only partly successful in maintaining and raising standards of attainment. Four main reasons have been identified for this finding. First, mobility amongst younger staff is relatively high, matching what is often the case in inner London. As a result, although senior managers induct and support new staff well, the benefits of this development are lost when they move on and are replaced with other new teachers. Nevertheless, ideas to improve the retention of staff are good, including the recent exploration of providing accommodation in conjunction with the local authority. Secondly, attainment on entry to the Nursery is often very low, so pupils' good achievements are from a low base and many do not make up the deficit sufficiently to equal the normally expected levels in the National Curriculum. Thirdly, mobility of pupils is high and many leave before they take National Curriculum tests in Year 6. Other pupils replace them. Finally, insufficient emphasis is sometimes placed on the development of pupils' limited linguistic skills. Nevertheless, since the last inspection, the headteacher has worked continuously with the whole staff and governing body to plan and implement changes that are having a positive impact on what the school provides. Furthermore, the teaching and improvement of speaking skills have recently been identified as aspects in need of a strong developmental focus throughout the whole school. Inspectors agree fully that this issue is key in raising standards.
34. Finances are managed effectively. In recent years, the school's status has changed from Grant Maintained to Foundation, which means that considerable alterations have occurred in the way that it is funded. At first, extra transitional grants were made to assist with the change, but these have now ceased. The governors' finance committee, together with the headteacher, have managed this situation well. Careful planning, close checks of expenditure and careful monitoring are used successfully to ensure that the principles of best value are absorbed into practice. The headteacher and chair of finance display a very clear sense of purpose, related to the use of finance to raise standards and provision.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,363,068
Total expenditure	1,329,733
Expenditure per pupil	3,455

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	- 23,213
Balance carried forward to the next	33,335

35. The management of subjects is good overall. Management of provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good and, as a result, what is taught meets children's needs very effectively.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The school has two half-day Nursery classes; one operates in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Altogether, 73 places are available and 13 are reserved in each class to provide this number of full-time places. Children are admitted to the Nursery at the beginning of the term after their third birthday. Admissions are staggered, so staff can concentrate on settling children into the class smoothly. Two full-time Reception classes are also provided with up to 30 places available in each. On entry to the Nursery, a wide range of ability is apparent. Children enter from a wide range of differing social and ethnic backgrounds, and with different experiences prior to school. Overall, personal, social, and emotional development is a little lower than usual at this stage, whereas the areas of physical and creative development are about average. However, skills in the important areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are well below what is usually found. The main reason is that a large number of children come from backgrounds in which English is not the language spoken at home. Many of them have only recently come to England and their general knowledge of the locality is therefore understandably lower than is usually the case. However, these are not the only reasons, and many children from indigenous families use forms of English that are characterised by responses of only one or two words.

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children's achievements are therefore good. The staff have a very clear understanding of the needs of the particular groups of young children in their care and very good knowledge of what they need to teach them. For example, teachers, Nursery officers and assistants alike use talk and conversation constantly and very effectively to extend children's linguistic skills. A further strength is the way that staff work as a team. They are very good role models of co-operation, kindness and collaboration. The deployment of all staff is effective, with each adult being responsible at times for specific areas of learning. A variety of appropriate strategies is employed to ensure that children feel confident and valued, enabling them to work with purpose and develop a sense of achievement. Very good relationships are established between the children and staff, who know and understand individual children very well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**. All staff are very caring and emphasise attributes such as co-operation and sharing. Nearly all children thrive in this climate.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants establish a friendly, thoughtful environment that sets a standard from which children learn to co-operate and help each other.
- The establishment of very clear routines supports children's development strongly.

Commentary

36. Adults in the Nursery work hard to ensure that all children understand what is required of them at school. Very good teaching, including appropriate praise and encouragement, results in good progress and sensible social routines being established. Owing to these patterns in the day, pupils with little English quickly recognise those occasions when they should co-operate

by sitting still quietly at a table or in a circle. In this way, they learn the required social behaviour, where to sit and what to do. A lot of emphasis is placed on being kind to each other and sharing toys and resources. In a very good session outside, for example, it was very clear how well the space is used as an extension of the classroom. Adults were directly involved with groups, offering ideas and, at the same time, encouraging children to take turns well and to help each other.

37. Very good teaching continues in the Reception, with very similar uses of indoors and outdoors. Continuity of approach is therefore a major strength of what is provided. As a direct result, children learn to co-operate well. They begin to respond more confidently, taking the initiative to approach adults and each other. By the time they enter Year 1, nearly all children are likely to match or be close to the goals that are expected for their age. Their achievement is therefore very good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Innovative ideas are used well to help young children to want to read.
- Plenty of talk and conversation is encouraged.
- Opportunities to use pencils and crayons to put marks on paper are developed very well into early writing skills.

Commentary

38. In the Nursery, very good teaching, based on some excellent ideas, is resulting in an early interest in books and children who are beginning to recognise their own names in text and other simple words. The most telling example of the use of innovative ideas occurred in a short session at the end of a morning. Children were seated in a circle and the teacher played *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, who do you see?* She held up a book, covering up a photograph of each child in turn. On the same page, their name appeared. Each time, attention was drawn to the text, while the cover was removed from the photograph. In this way, children “read” their name and, at the same time, learnt that pictures in books can give clues to the meaning of text. Such clever methods are developing children’s skills in a very enjoyable way. At the same time, success is assured, which is also raising self-esteem. Plenty of opportunities are available for children to use pencils and paper to make marks and to attempt letter shapes.
39. Very good teaching continues in the Reception classes. An overarching theme is often used to link what is taught across all areas of learning. During the inspection, this theme focused on *Light and Colour*. It was used in a strongly inclusive way that reflected the range of children’s cultural backgrounds. For example, children could link this theme equally well to celebrations of *Diwali* or to displays of fireworks that they saw on *Bonfire Night*. In a very good session, good planning produced a lesson that was similar to Literacy Hours in the National Curriculum, with examples of tasks that were adapted to the needs of groups with different prior knowledge and understanding. This type of approach prepares children well for what they will meet in Year 1. Children used their knowledge of the sounds of letters to make plausible attempts at spelling words for themselves. Other groups worked on activities that taught them how text in English goes from left to right and from top to bottom. A few highly-attaining children showed that they are beginning to write sentences, producing captions such as “I went to see the fireworks” for their drawings. Nevertheless, many children are starting from low levels in this area. Despite the high quality of provision, it is therefore likely that, by the end of the year, only a few children will reach the goals that are normally expected.

40. Owing to the high proportion of children at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, specialist teaching is allocated to all Nursery and Reception classes. Although this support is adequate, in a session that was focused, it was less effective in offering constant talk and vocabulary than that of the regular Nursery and Reception staff, whose skills in providing good models of English language and encouraging speech are excellent.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many resources are available and adults use them well to promote counting and naming of shapes.
- Children enjoy counting.
- In Reception classes, previous learning is used well to develop understanding further.

Commentary

41. Very good planning in the Nursery shows how children's understanding of number is developed with the strong use of resources and available objects. Opportunities to count toys and to match objects into groups of different shapes and colours are frequently used to help children understand the nature of numbers and counting. A good example occurred when children played *Find a Fish*. Very good adult interventions ensured that they matched colours and objects and counted how many fish that they collected. Shapes of objects in the environment are frequently pointed out and named. Very good management has ensured that even storage and toyboxes are numbered, so going to them can be used as an opportunity to increase children's awareness of numbers in the world around them.
42. In Reception classes, ideas such as "one more", "one less", "smaller" and "larger" are frequently introduced. A few higher-attaining children are present and they go much further. They are taught how to make simple calculations up to ten, adding and taking away, and sometimes going further still. Most children recognise written numbers and numbers in text, at least as far as ten, and they know the names of simple regular shapes. Records show that, while most children attain the goals that are expected by the end of the Reception year, a significant number do not. Therefore, despite very good provision, overall standards are well below what is usually found when children enter Year 1. The main reason is that standards on entry are often very low and the time spent in Nursery and Reception classes is not enough to make up the difference.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of good resources is used to stimulate children's interest in the world around them.
- Progress is good, because interesting activities are planned.
- Children use computers very skilfully.

Commentary

43. In all Nursery and Reception classes alike, a stimulating range of activities is provided to develop children's natural curiosity and enthusiasm. A high standard of enriching and varied experiences and very good teaching enable children to achieve well. Through the use of toys,

such as road layouts, simple construction kits, toy animals and similar items, children learn about historical and geographical ideas, such as “far off”, “long ago” and “the locality”.

44. In the Reception classes, teaching builds very effectively on what has been done in the Nursery. In this older age group, what is taught becomes more specific and focused. For example, children are introduced to scientific ideas about light. Nevertheless, the same use of the outside area to extend what happens in the classroom remains evident. For example, in a very good session, ideas and specific vocabulary of travelling on a bus were introduced, when very good adult intervention resulted in the use of exterior equipment to promote role play.
45. Computers are available in all classes and many children are adept in this aspect of their work. For example, several of them were able to access the title page of programs that they were using, clicking the mouse on the correct buttons to find this information when they were asked.
46. For the same reasons as in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, overall standards at the end of the year are likely to be well below what is normally expected, although many children are likely to meet those goals that are specific to information and communication technology.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many children are likely to meet the national goals for physical development.
- Challenging activities help children to exercise skills in running, jumping and balancing.
- Good hand and eye co-ordination is encouraged in a variety of activities that require the use of small hand tools, crayons, pencils and many others.

Commentary

47. In all classes for children of Nursery and Reception ages, teachers provide activities that develop skills and improve co-ordination. The school has safe, exterior spaces for both age groups, so children have daily opportunities to run, jump and practise their balance, and to use moving toys. Teachers, Nursery officers and assistants encourage children to use their initiative and imagination. During very good sessions in both age groups, which were based on careful planning, it was clear that nearly all children enjoy activities in the outdoor area. They explore space confidently, moving in a variety of ways. Children experiment with different ways of using the apparatus. Teachers effectively show them skills and strategies to improve their performance. Health and safety issues are always at the forefront of teachers' minds as they challenge and support children while they use the equipment. Planning shows clear development from activities in the Nursery classes to what is expected in Reception classes.
48. The outdoor provision is very good and provides an exciting learning environment where children can explore its features and initiate new ideas of their own. Children develop in confidence as they try out their ideas, with adults working alongside them. A very good feature of teaching is that adults see the time as a further opportunity to talk to the children about what they are doing, extending their language and vocabulary. This practice has a particularly good impact on children for whom English is not the main language at home and those with less well developed patterns of speech.
49. Co-ordination of children's hand, finger and eye movements is frequently encouraged with the use of a range of small tools and malleable materials. For example, during the inspection, children of Nursery age were seen using paintbrushes, crayons and similar equipment very effectively. In Reception, they used clay to make *Divas* for the celebration of *Diwali*.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning ensures that children's achievement is addressed very well and, as a result, many are likely to meet the nationally set goals for creative development.
- Good use is made of role-play.

Commentary

50. Children's creativity is developed well in all Nursery and Reception classes. Planning indicates that through the use of art, role-play, songs, rhymes and stories, children develop creative skills and use their imagination successfully. Teachers give children time and scope to select materials for themselves and to experiment with them. Teachers, Nursery officers and assistants intervene actively to teach specific skills.
51. Role-play is a strength of the provision because of the enthusiasm and skill of the staff who offer the children challenging ideas and are willing to enter into play at appropriate times. For example, on one occasion, children jumped on the "bus" and travelled excitedly to the "shops". Opportunities to paint, make models and artefacts, and to sing songs and chant rhymes are also provided. Often these activities are linked well with other areas of learning. For example, a wide repertoire of number songs is taught. Children in the Reception class also receive a weekly lesson from a specialist musician.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systematic tracking of progress and a focus on individual needs enable pupils to achieve well by Year 6.
- A range of additional support by skilled staff enables pupils with diverse needs to make good progress.
- Although improving, pupils do not get sufficient planned opportunities to develop speaking skills or to practise good examples of spoken English.
- High-attaining pupils are not always challenged to work at the limits of their capabilities.

Commentary

52. Overall standards are below average in all aspects of English at the end of Year 6. At the end of Year 2, they are well below average in speaking, listening and writing, but not quite as low in reading. The 2003 National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 indicate significant improvement compared with 2002, whereas results at the end of Year 2 have fallen year on year, reflecting lower standards on entry than a few years ago. Pupils start Year 1 with well below average standards. Many pupils do not have English as their home language and a relatively high proportion are at early stages of learning English. Standards are frequently affected by pupils joining the school at various times during the school year, many of whom have little English. Several join the school directly from overseas and a small but significant number have suffered disruption to their education. In the current Year 6, something over a fifth of the pupils joined the class after Year 3. Given an increasing pattern of mobility amongst pupils, their achievements are good by Year 6. Rigorous monitoring of their progress contributes to effective target setting and allocation of appropriate support for all individuals. This good quality of support enhances a basically sound quality of learning to levels that are good overall. As a direct result, the relatively high proportions of pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, achieve well because of strong specialist support and adaptations of the curriculum that are made available to them.
53. Teachers pay close attention to the development of skills in literacy. Bearing in mind their low starting points, sound focus on the teaching of phonics and a good range of books help pupils to achieve well and reach better standards in reading than in writing. Nevertheless, overall standards are below average by the end of Year 2, where about two thirds of pupils read at the expected level and beyond. Pupils are heard reading regularly at school. Pupils continue to make sound progress in Years 3 to 6 and overall standards are at least maintained. However, mobility rates remain a factor in pulling overall attainment back, as newcomers often enter the school at a lower level than leavers. Higher-attaining pupils are often astute about the main points and themes of the books they read. Most pupils know how to find information from books. A weaker feature of teaching is that opportunities to focus on extended and standard forms of spoken English are often missed. Although question and answer sessions are used frequently at the beginning and end of lessons, examples of short, sometimes single word, responses to teachers' questions are frequent. Such responses are accepted too readily, instead of taking the opportunity to model more precise patterns of speech. Standards of spoken English at the end of Year 2 are well below normally expected levels. In Years 3 to 6, although pupils gain confidence and self-esteem through the school's strong focus on their personal development, standards in spoken English are still below what are expected for their age. A significant result of this weakness is the effect that it has on writing. Pupils' limited uses of vocabulary and grammar are often reflected in their written work. However, this feature has been identified in the school's own self-evaluation. It is well placed to make improvements

because, when teaching is sufficiently skilled, pupils are prepared to work hard to improve. The best example was seen in Year 5 in a lesson taught by the headteacher. Very good teaching used *The Wreck of the Zanzibar* as a text to develop descriptions of the sea. Pupils were encouraged to mime and act out the movements of the ocean while they brainstormed to find exciting adjectives to describe the turbulence of waves. This class responded with a great deal of enthusiasm and produced a wide range of words, including “violent”, “stormy” and “churning”, and descriptive phrases such as “rocking like a see-saw”, and nearly all pupils achieved very well.

54. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to write for a range of purposes, although standards are well below average at the end of Year 2. As pupils move up the school, their writing skills in English develop further and they learn to write in different forms using better grammar and punctuation. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils wrote poems on fireworks. Higher-attaining pupils used their imagination well and produced some good uses of adjectives. By Year 6, pupils write stories, descriptions, biography, autobiography and reports. Although their standards are below average, many are achieving well in comparison with their own starting point on entry to the school. Handwriting is often good, flowing evenly in a well-formed and joined-up style.
55. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with several good features. In general, planning is clear about what pupils are expected to know at the end and how resources will be used to help them. However, in many lessons, work is not sufficiently adapted to extend higher-attaining pupils all the time. Often these pupils begin with the same tasks as all other pupils and are only extended when, and if, they complete this initial task. As a result, they are not always learning at a high enough level. Conversely, teachers work well with teaching assistants and support staff, so lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well during activities and they make good progress. Similarly, pupils for whom English is not the main language at home are supported well and make good progress. Teachers know their pupils and manage them well, and consequently pupils’ behaviour is good. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory in English. Pupils are given opportunities to word-process their work and demonstrate skills such as changing fonts and sizes of text appropriately.
56. In the absence of the subject co-ordinator, it was difficult to make firm judgements about the past impact of leadership and management on standards in literacy. Currently the headteacher is acting as co-ordinator and this arrangement is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Language and literacy are promoted satisfactorily through subjects such as mathematics, science, history and religious education. Pupils learn to use specific language and technical vocabulary required in these subjects. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson on simple forces, pupils were encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary such as “pushes and pulls” and whether “squeezes”, “stretches” and “twists” were technically examples of the same force. Evidence was also available that teachers develop reading and writing skills in subjects such as history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Older pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning.
- Emphasis is placed on problem solving.

- Results are analysed to see where strengths and weaknesses lie and are used accordingly to plan.
- Good uses are made of assessment and procedures to track pupils' progress.
- The use and effectiveness of whole-class teaching at the beginning and end of lessons is inconsistent.
- Opportunities for the subject manager to monitor teaching and learning directly are too infrequent.

Commentary

58. Standards in mathematics are well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6, although, bearing in mind pupils' often very low attainment when they begin the National Curriculum, achievement by the time they reach Year 6 is good overall. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, for example, several pupils gained a level higher than that normally expected for their age. These results rose considerably from the previous year.
59. Inspection findings suggest that, in spite of considerable barriers to progress, such as high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language and high mobility of pupils, the school provides well in enabling the development of mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills. As a consequence, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory by Year 2 in basic number concepts, though a significant minority are unable to identify basic patterns in addition and subtraction. By Year 6, pupils achieve well in developing aspects of mathematics, including number, shape and space. Recent strategies such as the introduction of setting in Years 5 and 6, and the use of mathematical games and quiz programmes, have started having an impact on pupils' learning and achievement, while raising the profile of the subject in pupils' eyes. Most targeted pupils with special educational needs, and those learning English as an additional language, make as much progress as others. All of this reflects the impact of teaching and learning that was observed. Both are good overall, although generally better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. This overall quality is an improvement since the last inspection and is characterised by very secure subject knowledge, clear planning of what pupils are expected to know at the end of lessons and good management of resources and pupils. Some very good teaching was observed, which combined all these elements with an emphasis on problem solving and opportunities for pupils to explain their own methods. This good overall teaching is producing a strong work ethic and concentration amongst pupils. As a result, pupils are enabled to gain the most from activities, so their learning moves at a brisk pace. Such an outcome was evident when older pupils calculated perimeters of simple compound shapes and when others explored the properties of triangles. Pupils are enthusiastic about problem solving, and many work well in groups, demonstrating their best behaviour. Contrary to previous findings, no significant gender difference was noted in pupils' learning.
60. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced successfully since the last inspection, although mobility amongst teachers calls for constant retraining with particular reference to the use of mental calculations and how the end of lessons is used. The adoption of a commercial scheme has improved the teaching of shape and space, which was identified for development in the previous report. Numeracy is well resourced and its leadership and management are strong, as are systems of assessment and tracking of pupils' progress. However, matching of activities to the full ability range remains an area for further development. The school has rightly included in its current priorities the development of information and communication technology in mathematics.

Mathematics across curriculum

61. Numeracy skills such as uses of graphs and time-lines in geography, science and history are evident, although not frequent. Opportunities aimed at consolidation and extension of these skills are not planned often enough.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- What is taught is well balanced, with a suitable emphasis on scientific enquiry.
- Cross-curricular links are good.
- There is a lack of effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress.

Commentary

62. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well below those expected nationally, although pupils make satisfactory progress from the time that they first start school. Good links with health education occur when pupils learn about healthy foods and what happens to their body during exercise. Pupils use their senses well to sort items into those they can see, smell, taste and hear. The main weakness that keeps attainment low is that skills in English are low, so pupils find it difficult to record work at the expected level. By the end of Year 6, standards have risen to simply below, rather than well below, those expected nationally. Overall achievements, bearing in mind the low starting points of many pupils, are good. For example, by this age group, many know the main differences between vertebrates and invertebrates after their work on skeletons, and they understand the use of this technical vocabulary. A good curriculum includes aspects of absorbency, evaporation and condensation, and many pupils understand about food chains and habitats. Pupils with special educational needs progress well because of the good support that they receive. Similarly, support for pupils with English as an additional language is good and the high proportion of pupils at an early stage of acquiring English make good progress. However, adaptations of what is taught are not as strong for pupils of high prior attainment. Insufficient opportunities are provided for them to carry out independent research or to select resources and methods for themselves. As a result, opportunities for these pupils to attain even better results than they do are restricted.
63. Improved planning since the last inspection has resulted in a more consistent approach to what is taught, with a clear focus on investigative work. Throughout the school, pupils engage in practical activities to find things out. Pupils present findings in various ways and, as they get older, learn to make predictions before testing. However, teaching methods are not consistent in helping pupils to build skills of prediction and recording.
64. The school is keen to strengthen scientific links with other subjects and to develop what is already in place. In work on recycling, pupils in Year 6 produced posters using their computing skills. As a result of a visit to the cinema to reinforce their learning on insects, pupils wrote interesting accounts of the film that they saw. In investigations, results are recorded using mathematical charts and diagrams. Pupils in Year 3 use information and communication technology to research information on magnets. All ages talk about their work, sometimes with partners. They listen well to their teachers and answer questions keenly. However, the opportunity for them to engage in more developed discussion is limited, which, bearing in mind their weaknesses in speaking, is a missed opportunity.
65. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but with some strengths. Lessons build well upon previous learning and pupils are routinely told what they will learn and how long they have to complete their work. Teachers expect good behaviour and ensure that all are involved, often in practical activities. They explain clearly and organise classroom assistants and resources well, although there is limited opportunity for pupils to develop their skills independently.

66. Science is adequately managed. A suitable system has been developed for teachers to assess and record the level of pupils' understanding and knowledge at the end of each topic. The subject co-ordinator offers valued support to teachers and has identified appropriate priorities for future improvement. However, methods of measuring progress over time are not rigorous enough to identify fully how well pupils are doing year-on-year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Effective timetabling, especially for older pupils, ensures that pupils have good access to the computer suite.
- Record keeping is effective.
- Good links exist with other subjects.
- Overall attainment is below the expected level in Year 2.

Commentary

67. Teachers demonstrate software and manage pupils and machines in the computer suite competently. Pupils are kept on task and well motivated. As a result, they concentrate on what they are doing, enjoy their work and make good progress. Their achievements are therefore good and, by the end of Year 6, they attain expected levels of attainment. Through effective questioning, teachers extend thinking and reinforce learning, often challenging more able pupils well by asking them to explain and demonstrate. Teachers check pupils' understanding and set different tasks matched to ability, especially in older age groups. Pupils are arranged thoughtfully so that the more skilled support the less advanced, which they do willingly. This arrangement works well for more able pupils too. It helps them to test their knowledge in order to pass it on to others. At the same time it challenges them to think quickly to solve problems that others run into. Teachers record success in pupils' *Achievement Booklets*, which provide valuable information on pupils' achievements over time. This level of provision is an improvement since the last inspection. Additionally, access to the suite is organised differently for some of the larger junior classes in order to allowing equality of opportunity to use computers.
68. Good teaching has a positive impact on standards. In Year 2, overall attainment is lower than expected but, by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, this good provision has raised attainment so it matches what is nationally expected. This is another improvement since the last inspection. In the infant classes, pupils log on to the school's network, open and close software and know the applications that are associated with a good number of icons, buttons and keys. Nearly all pupils know how to highlight and correct errors. Skills in word processing are developed well as pupils move through the school. For example, they learn how to combine aspects of different programs, inserting *Clipart*, for example, to enhance presentations. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils with special educational needs. Computers in class and the library provide extra support through group and individual activities. Pupils with English as an additional language are represented among the highest attainers in the subject.
69. The subject is well managed. A clear focus has been established on ensuring the quality of teaching and learning, and how to make the best use of resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Information and communication technology is well used in other subjects. In English, for example, pupils compose and individualise poems with attractive layouts and font choices. They transfer these skills to report writing, designing posters and explaining their working in science. In mathematics, pupils produce patterns, graphs and percentages with the use of relevant programs. During the inspection, Year 3 pupils expanded their musical knowledge of wind, string and percussion instruments by listening to sounds and grouping them with the use of a computer program. Year 6 pupils worked on *PowerPoint* presentations to finalise work on rivers in geography.

HUMANITIES

It was possible to observe only four history lessons and one in geography, so overall judgements have not been made. National guidelines have been adopted as the basis for planning in both subjects. It is also clear that a range of visits and visitors plays an important part in making the work interesting and relevant.

Geography

Commentary

71. Pupils in Year 2 develop a good awareness of features around their own locality and beyond. They know how to improve the environment by creating more parks, planting trees and flowers, and by making improvements to shopping centres. Their work entitled *Going Places* demonstrates good factual knowledge of the places that they visited and the forms of transport that they used to travel there. Examples of work in Year 6 also match expected levels of attainment, including their explanations of the water cycle and the main features of rivers. Specific geographical terms are often used well. Uses of numeracy are good. For example, pupils present elements of their work in diagrams and charts. Information and communication technology is also used well in geography. Examples included uses of the Internet, CD-ROMs and *PowerPoint* presentations to show what information pupils had collected. An example of unsatisfactory teaching occurred because the selection of task did not match pupils' needs well enough, so several were unable to make satisfactory progress.

History

Commentary

72. In lessons that were observed in history, teaching was satisfactory in two and good in both classes in Year 6. The teaching in Year 6 was better because pupils were encouraged to use their own skills of historical enquiry. Well planned teaching directed them to seek evidence of how the past influences the present. They found out about the effect of the Greek language in English. Pupils were reminded of their future visit to the British Museum to see the Elgin Marbles in relation to this study. In Years 2 and 5, teaching did not so effectively develop pupils' skills of asking questions of their own. Nevertheless, they used pictures and maps as evidence of the past. In these lessons, what pupils achieved was around the level that is normally expected for the age groups, suggesting that achievement is generally good, when pupils' starting points are taken into account. Teachers manage classes well, which contributes to effective learning. Attitudes to history and geography are positive and pupils behaved well in the lessons that were observed.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Over time, what is taught builds successfully on what has been taught previously.
- Teaching of religious education promotes respect and interest in different faiths and beliefs.
- A good contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development is evident.

Commentary

73. Analysis of pupils' work in Years 1 to 6 shows that the locally agreed syllabus is taught satisfactorily and that achievement is sound. Principles and beliefs of the main religions that are represented in the community are included well in what is taught. Teaching builds well on what has gone before. By Year 2, pupils appreciate the special objects in their own life and the personal value of them. Teaching extends this knowledge well to the special objects in religions. Pupils in Year 2 know the special books of the religions of pupils in their classes and how these books are looked after, which reflects the school's policy of inclusivity.
74. Older pupils are taught about the main principles of different world faiths. They have an understanding of the significant features of the major religions. The insight pupils gain into different cultures and religions contributes well to their personal and cultural development.
75. A strength of the curriculum is the way that it builds on and draws from pupils' knowledge of their own religious traditions and what they have previously been taught. Many examples were observed when pupils willingly shared their own religious knowledge and related teaching to what they knew already. The school organises a number of visits to local churches and places of worship, representing a variety of religions. It also invites speakers such as religious leaders in the local community, including regular visits from the Salvation Army. These links with the community help pupils to learn as they develop firsthand experiences.
76. Teaching was good in two lessons that were observed directly. Relationships and behaviour were good and support staff were used well to ensure that pupils with special educational needs were included fully. Teachers' expectations of work were generally good and pupils made good progress in these lessons.

Leadership and co-ordination of the humanities

77. Co-ordination of the humanities is satisfactory. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are monitored satisfactorily. In religious education, provision has been improved with the introduction of more advanced resources for older pupils to accelerate their learning. Assessment is based soundly on materials in national guidelines.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Owing to timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to focus in depth on art and design, design and technology or music, so overall judgements about provision have not been made in them. However, what was seen was broadly in line with what is normally expected in the age groups that were observed and, particularly in art and design and music, it was above. Examples of work on display, or photographs that were seen, demonstrate that what is taught follows each particular subject's special characteristics closely.

Art and design

Commentary

78. Current displays of pupils' work around the school show that pupils' artistic skills are used well in subjects across the curriculum. The work demonstrates that they use their observational skills well and reproduce what they see with care and accuracy. This careful observation builds well as pupils move through the school. Pupils in Year 6, for example, used frames as viewfinders to select a cityscape and their resulting paintings demonstrate good effort and good, detailed observations. Three-dimensional work that was observed, collage in Year 1 and clay in Year 2, was also of good quality.
79. The co-ordinator's file shows that what is taught is usually well planned and includes many opportunities to learn from studies of the skills of famous artists. However, unsatisfactory teaching was observed in one lesson, where a poor selection of tasks meant that work did not match the pupils' levels of development. As a result, their progress and achievements were limited. Nevertheless, their attitudes to the subject remained sound and they tried hard. Overall, pupils' attitudes to art and design are good and it is evident from their work that they take care and show pride in what they achieve.

Design and technology

Commentary

80. The subject's characteristic features of designing for a purpose, making a product based on designs, and evaluating both the effectiveness of the design and the final product or model are planned effectively. In a good lesson in Year 5, for example, all these features were apparent. Attainment in this lesson was at about the level that is found at this age group. This teacher addressed pupils' weaknesses in spoken English particularly well. A telling example occurred when a pupil explained that this bread "...is kind of hard bread – yeah – kind of!" The teacher immediately stopped the discussion and asked for more precision, asking the pupil what was meant by "kind of". In response, pupils were able to choose better phraseology, including more precise adjectives to clarify their meaning.
81. From displays around the school, it is clear that the development of skills is good as pupils move up the school. An innovative visit of an architect to pupils in Year 4 resulted in good designs and models of ideas for a new adventure playground, which is currently being developed.

Music

Commentary

82. A specialist teaches most music through the school and subject knowledge is accordingly very strong. Planning indicates that lessons contain all elements of the subject, with opportunities to appraise music of different styles, to compose and perform, and to practise a suitable repertoire of songs. Standard musical notation is introduced and used by the end of Year 5. Good resources have also been built up over the years and a good music room is available for lessons. In lessons that were observed, standards were always at least in line with what is normally expected for the age group. In a good lesson in Year 2, standards were above those that are normally expected. For example, pupils responded accurately to challenging pulses and rhythms and recognised different drums and, more surprisingly for their age, a flute that was accompanying pan-pipes. They performed different rhythmic patterns well, using variations of the words "cake" and "biscuit" to guide their work.

83. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to experience professional concerts, for example, an annual visit to the Royal Festival Hall to take part in the London Philharmonic Orchestra's *Schools' Concert*. Good opportunities to earn an instrument are available. The specialist teaches recorder groups; peripatetic teachers provide instrumental lessons in piano and violin, and another member of the school's staff provides "taster" lessons on the flute. Pupils perform concerts for their parents at Harvest, Easter and Christmas. Other religious festivals, such as Eid and Diwali, are celebrated in assemblies. Good multi-cultural education is therefore supported strongly with musical performances.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **good**, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good, especially in classes for older pupils.
- Dance receives a strong emphasis.
- There is insufficient opportunity for evaluation of each others performance
- An issue of whether all pupils have equality of opportunity arises, when those without proper kit do not take part.

Commentary

84. Standards match what is normally expected at the end of both Years 2 and 6. The school has maintained standards in physical education since the previous inspection. For example, in gymnastics, pupils in Year 2 successfully explored different ways of balancing. Several more able pupils, by adaptations of the positions of their bodies, interpreted their exercises in terms of "heavy" and "light". Older pupils demonstrate an awareness of the effect of exercise on their body by balancing on their back and shoulders. Some demonstrate good control of movement in making shapes such as dishes and arches with their bodies, and others have started combining different actions on floor and mat. Good teaching introduces new challenges that they cannot yet perform fully, such as performing their actions at different speeds and levels, or in different directions. There were good multi-cultural links observed in a lesson for younger pupils. They responded positively to African music, moving rhythmically to the beat.
85. What is taught in physical education is broad and balanced, and supported by generally good facilities both indoors and outdoors. The issue of insufficient time that was allocated to the subject has been addressed since the last inspection. The programme of out-of-hours sports, which includes football and netball for both boys and girls, benefits from a link with a local secondary school. Swimming is successfully included in what is taught and 46 out of 54 pupils who learnt to swim last year completed a full length of 25 metres. Athletics and adventurous activity takes place during the summer term.
86. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons that were observed were at least satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and often good in Years 3 to 6, and occasionally outstanding. Teaching of this overall good quality represents considerable improvement since the last inspection when a quarter of teaching in the subject was unsatisfactory. Teachers' secure knowledge and expertise motivate pupils and they achieve well in developing their skills in most activities. When teaching has outstanding features, as was the case in a lesson that the headteacher took, high expectations, linked with the use of very effective commentary about how to improve, inspired pupils to use their imagination in responding to music. Such features enhance the participation and enjoyment of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Some pupils of Afro-Caribbean background demonstrated a particular aptitude to dance and were given ample opportunity to express their talents. Pupils are very enthusiastic about physical education, which has a positive impact on their behaviour, involvement and achievement.

Leadership and co-ordination

87. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about leadership and management in these subjects, other than in physical education, which is well managed. However, each subject has a co-ordinator's file, which includes a specific and appropriate action plan for that subject. In physical education, for instance, a current focus is on improving the teaching of gymnastics and dance and enhancing the profile of athletics by joining the *English Schools' Athletic Association*. The involvement of parents is generally good. The school encourages them to help with the use of any expertise that they might have. In physical education an innovative venture is the proposed introduction of an after school fitness club for parents.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and in citizenship is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong climate of co-operation, respect for others and inclusivity, which provides a very good background for teaching personal development and good citizenship.
- Much of the school's provision in these subjects is made across the curriculum.

Commentary

88. Good cross-curricular links provide relevant teaching that meets pupils' needs. For example, in science, teaching about the human body and living processes offers pupils information about growing up. Information about how to look after the body and to live healthily provides a good context for instruction about hazardous substances and misuses of drugs. Pupils know that many substances can be used either for good or ill, and that many beneficial medicines are also drugs. They also know that these medicines should be used under the supervision of a doctor and, in the case of children, of a responsible adult such as a parent or an adult at school. Planning shows that this type of teaching occurs at appropriate times and levels, as pupils move through the school.
89. Planning in many subjects across the curriculum shows that pupils are given frequent opportunities to work together in groups. Good teaching ensures that the importance of successful collaboration is emphasised. Good examples were observed in, for example, situations as diverse as dance, design and technology and information and communication technology.
90. During the quarter of an hour or so when attendance registers are called and open, good opportunities arise for pupils to talk to adults about aspects of their lives and families that are important to them. Furthermore, lessons known as Circle Time, often led by a learning mentor, are also set aside for pupils to raise issues of personal, social or other interest or concern to them. At a whole-school level, a School Council provides a good opportunity for teaching about democratic principles and for pupils to raise issues of importance about the way in which the school is run. At a meeting prior to the inspection, these pupils spoke sensibly and positively about their role and what the school offers its pupils. They were very clear that their teachers listen to them seriously and take what they say into account. All of them were sure that they knew an adult in school in whom they could confide.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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