

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLLYMOUNT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Raynes Park, London

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102633

Headteacher: Mr Stuart Stonehouse

Lead inspector: Mr Geoff Cooper

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 November 2003

Inspection number: 256468

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	214
School address:	Cambridge Road Raynes Park London
Postcode:	SW20 0SQ
Telephone number:	020 8946 0454
Fax number:	020 8947 1076
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judy Cake
Date of previous inspection:	11 May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hollymount is a one-form entry primary school with about thirty pupils in each year group from the reception class through to Year 6. The nursery admits up to 52 children part time. Since its previous inspection the status of the school has been changed from a two-form entry first school. This school year is the first time the school has had Year 6 pupils. A Schools Achievement Award was given to the school in 2003 in acknowledgement of consistently sustained high National Curriculum test results for its seven-year-olds. The school's social and economic context is favourable. Very few pupils are entitled to a free school meal. When children are first admitted to school their range of skills and knowledge is above that expected for their age. A little more than half of the pupils come from a White British background. Other pupils come from a wide range of ethnic origins, although many of these pupils are British born. More than twenty different languages are spoken in pupils' homes; 26 pupils are supported through ethnic minority achievement grant and eight pupils are at the early stages of acquiring English as a new language. Of these pupils, the commonest mother tongues are Korean, Japanese and Urdu. Funding for this is devolved to the school. There is a part-time teacher but no bilingual support for pupils learning English as a new language. Relatively few pupils are identified as having learning difficulties. Most identified special needs are in the areas of moderate learning difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. However, the school admits a small number of pupils with specific and quite profound learning difficulties. Now that the school's phased reorganisation is over, almost all pupils join or leave the school at the usual time of admission or leaving.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23647	Mr GW Cooper	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology French Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
9465	Mrs E Cooke	Lay inspector	
16773	Mrs R Arora	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Geography History Religious education
11419	Mrs PJ Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Music Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Hollymount Primary School is a good and very effective school, providing good value for money.** Standards are above and sometimes well above the level expected for pupils of similar age. Because they acquire good skills, which they use very effectively, pupils achieve well. Teaching is good, leading to good learning. Leadership and management are very good. Governors play a full part in the work and life of the school. The curriculum is good. Good care is provided for pupils. Parents are very positive about the life and work of the school. This lends impetus to achievement. The school is very good at listening and responding to the views of pupils. Few pupils find learning difficult but the school admits a number of pupils with very specific barriers to learning and achievement. There are more than 20 different languages spoken by pupils in their home. These pupils achieve as well as other pupils when they have become familiar with the English language. Although the school spends more money per pupil than most schools, all its strengths culminate in the provision of good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well, especially in English and art; standards are above average in mathematics, science and information and communication technology, and well above average in English when pupils are seven and eleven; children get off to a very good start in the nursery class;
- The range of activities in the reception class is not broad enough;
- The teaching and learning are good, overall, with a large proportion which is very good;
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and key staff are very good;
- Good use is made of home backgrounds and family values to provide good opportunities for personal development; this results in very good behaviour and attitudes to school;
- The curriculum is good, and very well enriched, which has a positive impact on achievement;
- All pupils are included in the full range of opportunities that the school provides;
- There is good support and provision for pupils with more profound learning needs; however, the targets on some plans for individual learning are not sharply focused;
- There is scope to provide greater celebration of the cultural diversity of contemporary society.

**This is the school's first inspection as a primary school.** Previously it was inspected as a first school. Some key issues of previous inspection no longer apply. Although the school will have no National Curriculum test results until 2004 to monitor the standards of its oldest pupils against, there are good indications that higher-attaining pupils will reach their potential. Good strategies are in place to monitor teaching, planning and standards through the work of subject leaders and the senior management team. Since the previous inspection, the school has been very well led and managed by both the governing body and staff during a very difficult period of reorganisation. Overall, there has been good improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A	A	A*	A*
writing	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A	A*	A*

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

**Achievement is good, overall.** Nursery and reception class children are well on course to achieve or exceed their expected goals. Throughout the school, pupils exceed the standards expected of those of similar age. Standards are at least above average in key areas of the curriculum. Pupils

make very good use of their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and this supports their good achievement. In the table above, A\* reflects standards in the top five per cent of schools nationally. High standards for seven-year-olds have been maintained over the past three years.

**The school makes good provision for the personal development of pupils.** This results in very good behaviour and attitudes to school work. More needs to be done to promote pupils' understanding of life in an ethnically diverse society. **Attendance is above the national rate of attendance.** Pupils are very punctual.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education is good.** Children in the nursery and the reception class get off to a good start in their learning. Good learning in Years 1 to 6 makes the most of this early start. The curriculum is good and very well-enriched. This gives impetus to the interest shown in lessons. Careful records of progress are kept. The information is used well to encourage further progress.

**Teaching is good.** Particular strengths are in the way additional help is used in the classroom, especially in nursery and reception classes, an insistence on very high standards of behaviour and the use teachers make of their subject knowledge. Those working in the classroom are very skilled at encouraging pupils to do well. This ensures that pupils stick to their tasks, achieving well in the acquisition of and very good use of basic skills. Teachers have good pupil management skills, ensuring that little time is wasted. Relationships are very good. Activities are interesting, engaging pupils well in their learning. Teachers do well to include all pupils in the learning opportunities. Those who find learning difficult make good progress and achieve well. Those who find learning easier also achieve well. There is room for even greater expectations of the highest-attaining pupils.

**The curriculum is good.** It is well calculated to interest and engage pupils, supporting the development of their skills. The curriculum is very well-enriched through visitors into school, visits out of school and activities out of school hours. The school knows its pupils well. They get good care, support and guidance. Parents have a great deal of confidence in the school, with a vigorous home and school partnership. Many positive factors in the school's provision have a beneficial effect on pupils' achievements.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management are very good.** Governors have a very strong effect in shaping the direction of the school. The headteacher leads the school very well, ably supported by other senior staff. Very effective management makes for a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils' achievements benefit a great deal from the quality of leadership and management.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

**Parents have a good understanding of the considerable strengths of the school.** They know that their child likes school, that the school is well led and that teaching is good. They recognise that their child achieves well. **Pupils enjoy their school life.** Their views are important to the school.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

**In this very effective school, there are no major weaknesses to attend to. The most helpful things it should do to improve are:**

- Provide more structured opportunities for pupils to discuss, debate and explain;
- Capitalise on the good teaching in the reception class, providing a richer range of activities for children to build upon the good start made in the nursery;
- Make more provision for the celebration of the diversity of contemporary British society;
- Provide targets for pupils with special educational needs that are more focused and achievable;
- Ensure that more is done to improve the attainment of the school's highest-attaining pupils.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good** throughout the school. Standards in English are **well above average** and **above average** in mathematics, science, ICT and art and design.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children and pupils achieve well across a wide range of well-developed skills;
- Children in the nursery and reception classes are well on course to match or exceed the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup>;
- The school has maintained high standards in reading, writing and mathematics in National Curriculum standard tests for seven-year-olds over recent years; those standards are maintained into Years 3 to 6;
- Very good use is made of basic skills and of pupils' ICT capability to enhance learning in a range of subjects;
- Pupils achieve well in art and design;
- Pupils with learning difficulties and those for whom English is a new language achieve well;
- Higher-achieving pupils achieve well overall; more can be expected of the most gifted and talented pupils.
- Boys and girls achieve equally well.

#### Commentary

1. There is good achievement throughout the school, at least in part because children and pupils are interested in their schoolwork and enthusiastic about the different activities offered to them. This enables them to make good progress and in many cases achieve their full potential. In the Foundation Stage classes<sup>2</sup>, children settle well. Having brought many learning skills with them on entry to school, they quickly establish good standards throughout the areas of learning of the Early Learning Goals. The rich range of activities in the nursery supports the good progress of the youngest children. By the time they are ready to move into the reception class, they have a good knowledge and understanding of the world. They achieve well in the basic skills in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Although the range of activities in the reception class is not as varied and rich, children continue to make progress. They are well on target to achieve, and in many cases exceed, the goals set for them by the end of the reception year. The table below shows that pupils have achieved standards that exceeded those of schools nationally in 2002 and 2003.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.2 (19.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.6 (16.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.4 (19.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Although results for 2003 are not quite as strong as those for 2002, results have remained consistently well above average compared with all schools nationally and compared with

<sup>1</sup> Early Learning Goals: goals set nationally for the learning and achievement of children at the end of the reception year.

<sup>2</sup> Foundation Stage: classes for children in nursery and reception.



schools with a similar proportion of free school meals. Some results in recent years have been very high, among the top five per cent of results nationally for similar schools. There are no figures for the oldest pupils in the school, because this is the first time there has been a Year 6. However, inspection evidence suggests that pupils have maintained the impetus of their progress and that the Year 6 group of pupils is well on track to achieve the targets set for them. In the work seen during the inspection, in Year 6, towards the end of their time in the school, standards are well above national expectations in English, especially in reading and writing. Standards are above expectations in mathematics, science, ICT and in art and design. Other subjects were not inspected in sufficient depth to make secure judgements about standards. However, all the work seen was at least in line with the standard expected, with much that was above the expected level for pupils' ages.

3. Pupils acquire valuable skills in literacy and numeracy and put these to good effect in subjects across the curriculum. There are accomplished pieces of pupils' poetry to be seen. Throughout the school, work in history, geography and science is displayed that makes good use of English skills. Pupils use their accurate mathematics skills to collect and analyse data in science investigations. ICT skills are used confidently and ICT is used to support learning in English and mathematics. Good use is made of ICT as a tool for research. These factors combine well to enhance standards, overall, and to add to pupils' achievements. Also prominently on display throughout the school is a good range of pupils' artistic accomplishments. The work pupils complete uses a variety of media, such as pencil, charcoal, crayon, pastel and paint. Pupils have a very good sense of colour, tone and line. Much of the work is very aesthetically pleasing. Again, ICT is used to good effect for painting tasks. Pupils are adept at creating their own pictures in the style of many famous artists.
4. Overall, throughout the school, pupils achieve well. This is the case for higher-attaining pupils and for those for whom learning is difficult. Many tasks are imaginative and challenging and this motivates all pupils to want to do well. Higher-attaining pupils consistently work at a standard above that expected for their age. Very good achievement in English and art and design is the result of very well-constructed curriculum, good enrichment to pupils' experience and very good use of teachers' skills and subject knowledge. Because there is well-targeted support for those who find learning more difficult, these pupils frequently achieve at least the standard expected for their age and occasionally achieve a higher standard. However, some targets set for these pupils are too general, are not met within a reasonable space of time and need to be repeated. While progress is sometimes slow for pupils who have come recently from a non-English speaking environment, pupils learning English as a new language make good progress once they begin to understand the language of the classroom. Some of these pupils are among the highest attainers in the school. Opportunities are missed to extend the learning of the highest attaining pupils, especially where tasks are not specifically designed to stretch their attainment.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

**This area of school life is a strength of the school.** Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance is **good** and above the national average. Punctuality is **very good**. The school makes **good** provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents and the school work very well together to promote good attendance and ensure that lessons start on time;
- The school makes very good provision for the social and moral well-being of pupils;
- Pupils respond very well to the school's very high expectations of behaviour;
- Interest in all school activities is high;
- Relationships are very good; a particularly strong feature of relationships is the Year 6/Year 1 'buddy' system;

- Because they bring good attitudes to learning from home and because the school makes good provision to capitalise on this, pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem and in their willingness to be eager learners.

### Commentary

5. A strong support to learning is found in pupils' good attendance and in the fact that they come to school on time. The home and school partnership is an asset in this. Regular attendance at lessons ensures that there are few gaps in pupils' learning. Prompt arrival at school ensures that teachers are able to make a brisk start to the school day.

#### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

6. It is very clear to all those working in the school, and to all pupils, that the school expects a high standard of personal conduct and behaviour, both in lessons and beyond them. The school is very successful in helping pupils to achieve this high standard. All staff know, respect and work well towards the school's values, clearly expressed in the school prospectus and in the development plan. School values are very well expressed through policies and plans, and through personal, social and health education lessons and assembly. This very good provision ensures that pupils respect the school's position on discriminating between right and wrong, understand what is and what is not acceptable, and increasingly understand mature social behaviour. The influence of the home and the school's influence have a very strong impact on relationships. During the inspection, there were no incidents of fragile relationships and many examples of positive relationships. For example, all Year 6 pupils have a Year 1 'buddy' in whom they take an interest, sharing experiences, being friends, sharing reading. These relationships are close and at times quite touching in their supportive intensity. One feature of very good behaviour and positive relationships is that there is no history of school exclusion. The school has good strategies for promoting pupils' growing understanding of art, the history of past eras, aspects of the environment and settlements. However, less obvious is the way the school seeks to capitalise on the very good relationships between pupils from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. The celebration of the rich diversity of contemporary British society is an area for further development.
7. The school provides a good range of stimulating and motivating activities, both through lessons and increasingly through activities out of school hours. Because pupils have a good range of interests and learning skills, they respond very well to these activities. They willingly take an interest in additional sessions for sport and music, for chess and other languages, as well as showing a strong interest in their lessons. Pupils know that they are successful, because the school has good strategies for acknowledging success, both publicly in assembly and through praise in lessons and when work is marked. This is a great support for pupils' self-knowledge, their self-esteem and confidence. It provides a great stimulus to their learning. The school is even-handed and fair in the way it treats all its pupils. As a result, all pupils get the encouragement they need. This is a great support for those who are learning English as a new language and for those who find learning difficult.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education is good.** Teaching and learning are consistently **good**. The curriculum is **good** and **very well**-enriched by a range of stimulating activities. The school provides **good** care for its pupils. Links with parents are **good**. Parents have a great deal of confidence in the school. There is a very positive atmosphere for learning.

### Teaching and learning

**Good teaching ensures that all pupils learn well.** Teachers keep track of the progress pupils make through effective strategies for questioning and marking.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff bring a broad range of skills to their work and use their skills well;
- Throughout the school there is a consistently high expectation of behaviour;
- Pupils get a great deal of encouragement in their learning and this ensures that they are motivated and focused on their work;
- Teaching methods are used effectively;
- Where available, classroom support staff provide a good range of skills, especially in the nursery and the reception classes;
- Because they are well taught, pupils try hard and get through a good volume of quality work;
- While pupils rapidly acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding, the most outstandingly gifted and talented pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to benefit from tasks and opportunities specifically planned for them.

### Commentary

The table below illustrates the quality of teaching seen during the inspection.

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0 %)	13 (34 %)	21 (55 %)	4 (11 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

8. The teachers are very skilled, and this is a considerable enhancement to the standards achieved by pupils. Their subject knowledge is well used. It means that lessons are planned and taught with confidence. This is the case in many areas of the curriculum but particularly so in English, mathematics, science, art and design and in ICT. All teachers are consistent in expecting the most of their pupils. This is evident in the very high level of good behaviour during lessons that is a significant benefit to the environment for learning in classrooms. Teachers and other classroom staff are quick to praise pupils when appropriate. This encouragement is a strong feature in the motivation of pupils. Pupils want to do even better and focus very strongly on their tasks.
9. There are strengths in the use of teaching methods throughout the school. Teachers bring their own learning and enthusiasm to bear. They teach with pace and vigour. Many lessons have different activities for pupils at different levels in their learning. Tasks cater well for those pupils who find learning difficult and for higher-attaining pupils. However, a few pupils, those with the greatest potential for learning, are not fully challenged in this way. Teachers use a great deal of positive praise and give good feedback to pupils through the marking of their work. Equally, teachers are skilled at the quiet word of admonition on the rare occasions that it is

necessary. Although the school does not provide an additional member of staff in every classroom in every lesson, where such support is available it is well used. This is particularly the case for the youngest children in the school. Support staff are well-informed, skilled and well-targeted on children's and pupils' needs. Where needs are most profound, the support is very sensitive and insistent. Support staff make very good relationships with the pupils in their care. Support given to pupils learning English as a new language is good. However, not all teachers plan specifically for the learning needs of these pupils and are not always aware of best practice in teaching such pupils.

10. Pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive. They know that they are expected to work quickly, present their work tidily and focus strongly on the meaning of their tasks. They are successful in this. Concentration is at a high level. Very good behaviour means that there is no wasted time and a good quantity of work is completed. Because teachers are enthusiastic about using their own skills, pupils are eager to develop their skills. Very good application of skills enables them to be good at finding out, whether from books, from discussions with adults and friends or through the use of computers and the Internet. This extends their knowledge and understanding and enhances their achievements. While there are frequent opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to be challenged in their tasks, some of the highest achievers find tasks too easy at times. However, the school does identify and endeavour to provide for those pupils with very specific gifts and talents, for example, in art, music and physical education. An example of such provision is that talented young mathematicians are entered into the Mathematical Association's '*Mathematical Challenge*'.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **good**. Extra-curricular activities and enrichment are **very good**. The accommodation and learning resources are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A broad range of worthwhile learning opportunities is provided, together with a very good programme of enrichment through visits, visitors and extra curricular activities;
- All relevant statutory requirements are met;
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with examples of very good pastoral support and effective support within lessons; however, the targets on some individual learning plans are insufficiently specific;
- The school provides a good personal, social and health education that incorporates teaching about sex and relationships, and the avoidance of drugs and alcohol misuse;
- The accommodation is good, with attractive grounds and the valuable addition of an all-weather sports court.

### **Commentary**

11. The curriculum allows all pupils to achieve well and is broad and balanced. Learning experiences are interesting to pupils and there is a strong emphasis in many subjects on learning through practical activities. This motivates the pupils and makes them more willing and eager to learn. All relevant statutory requirements are met, including the provision for religious education and collective worship. National strategies for literacy and numeracy are implemented successfully. Teachers provide a broad programme for personal, social and health education, including sex education, and lessons on drug and alcohol abuse. However, the scheme has only recently been introduced so the school has yet to assess its effectiveness. The school is inclusive in its approach to offering all pupils access to activities and equality of opportunity.
12. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The school uses successful strategies for identifying needs and provides tasks that are specifically prepared for

these pupils. Where possible, pupils with learning difficulties have well-targeted support from additional adults working in the classroom. This support, and valuable intervention from teachers, helps to keep these pupils well in touch with what they need to learn next. However, individual plans for these pupils' learning are sometimes too general and when reviewed, need to be repeated. A clear distinction is made between pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of pupils with English as a new language in all school activities.

13. In all subjects, planning for the year and the term helps to promote the learning of relevant knowledge and skills. In some year groups subjects are "blocked" in pairs, for example, history and geography or art and design and design and technology. This ensures that throughout the year sufficient time is allocated to each area. Throughout the planning teachers endeavour to make meaningful links between the various subjects: for example, art and design and history, music and history or geography.
14. Teachers provide a rich and varied programme of learning opportunities for all pupils, including a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which is a particular strength of the school. The range of activities includes sports such as football, cricket, netball and badminton, choir, instrumental tuition, chess and computer clubs. These are open to boys and girls from reception to Year 6. It is unusual for a primary school to provide extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2. During term-time enrichment opportunities include learning French, residential visits for both Year 3 and Year 6, visiting theatre groups, and musicians. Other regular visitors include the local vicar, who often leads assembly, the '*learning dome*' and the '*animal man*' (zoologist). All these enhance pupils' experiences and understanding of the world around them.
15. The quality and quantity of the accommodation and resources are good. There are sufficient members of well-qualified staff to teach the curriculum. Very good use is made of support staff, which benefits those with special educational needs. Recruitment and retention of teachers is managed effectively. The addition of an all-weather sports court allows pupils access to games throughout the winter and enables the school to host inter-school matches more easily. Good use has been made of spare capacity to create a music room for instrumental tuition and class lessons, a reading recovery room and a room where pupils with English as an additional language can be supported and find resources.

### **Care, guidance and support**

**The school has good arrangements for pupils' care, guidance and support.** There are very good strategies for seeking the views of pupils about the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Secure procedures ensure that the school is a safe and healthy environment for pupils;
- Care for pupils is provided effectively
- Pupils are regularly asked about their views of the school through questionnaires and through the school council;
- Because there has been no Year 6 until this year, the school has had no need for induction arrangements for its oldest pupils; one or two parents have a concern about induction from the nursery to the reception class.

### **Commentary**

16. The school has suitable strategies for ensuring that it protects pupils from all possible risks. There is a suitably trained named person for child protection and all members of staff are aware of the procedures to be followed. The school is maintained in a clean and tidy condition. Within the curriculum, pupils are given good information about healthy living and how to guard against risk. Staff know pupils well, are aware of their specific needs, including medical needs

and any challenges to learning because of acquiring a new language or identified difficulties in learning. The school is thus in a good position to provide effective care and support. Very good strategies are in place to canvass the views of pupils about the school. All pupils take part in a 'review of the year' questionnaire with opportunities to say what they like about the school and what they would like to change. The school takes these views very seriously, implementing a number of changes as a result. The school council is an effective channel for pupils to debate school provision.

17. The school has suitable strategies for tracing the progress pupils make, including an analysis of standard test results to review the curriculum and alter it as necessary. There are effective strategies for identifying those pupils who are having difficulty in their learning and giving them the necessary support to maintain their progress. Similar strategies are in place for tracking the progress of pupils with English as an additional language. Pastoral care for both pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as a new language is good. Pupils with English as a new language and those with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the care and provision they receive.
18. One or two parents mentioned induction procedures to inspectors before the inspection began. One issue mentioned is induction from nursery to reception class at different times in the school year. A small number of parents whose children will move to reception later in the school year believe that they will not have the same induction opportunities as those who moved there at the beginning of the school year. The inspection team has no evidence to confirm or dispel this concern. Also mentioned to inspectors was the fact that the school has not had recent need for induction of its oldest pupils to the next stage of education. The school is aware of this new challenge. It is likely that the process will be complex because there are a number of different transfer possibilities.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

**The school has strong links with parents, other educational establishments and the community.** Parents play an influential part in their child's learning at home and at school. The school benefits from a wide range of links with other educational establishments. Links with the community are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Because parents are well motivated towards their child's learning, they give a great deal of support to their child's learning;
- The school benefits from the links it creates with other schools and educational establishments.

### **Commentary**

19. Parents of pupils at Hollymount recognise that a good home and school relationship brings benefits to the school as a whole and also to individual pupils. Parents play a role that is very strongly supportive of the school and its activities. An active Parent-Teacher Association has an important role in cementing home and school relationships but also brings resource benefits to the school. Significant numbers of parents help in the classroom. The school is good at identifying specific skills on the parent body and making use of those skills to support learning. Parents ensure that homework is completed and this, too, enhances pupils' achievement. Parents are satisfied with the information they receive – about what is happening in school and about their child's progress. Annual reports on progress are informative in the way they explain to parents what curriculum has been covered and how well their child has performed. However, reports are less helpful in explaining what else can be done to improve by setting new targets. The school is effective in creating a supportive partnership with parents of pupils with learning difficulties and with those who are learning English as a new language.

20. The school has strong links with a range of other schools and colleges. Student teachers benefit from opportunities for work placements. Students from local schools get work experience opportunities. There is a particularly strong link with a local independent school, whose students support Hollymount in ICT and in sporting opportunities. The school takes part in a range of sporting competitions with other local schools. Because no pupils have been transferred to local secondary schools until this year, links with such schools are at a developmental stage.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good at all levels of the work of the school.** Governors are central to the school's development. The headteacher has the full confidence of parents. Other staff consistently show strong leadership qualities. The school is very well managed in the way it presses for high standards and creates an effective environment for learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's leadership is instrumental in setting a model for other staff and pupils; his work sets high expectations of pupils' all-round achievement in and out of lessons;
- Governors play a very significant part in the life and work of the school; this has a significant impact on its calm management and good learning environment;
- Members of staff with leadership roles carry out their work very effectively;
- The school has a clear vision of the high standards it expects, and knows how to achieve its goals;
- All pupils are included successfully in all that the school has to offer;
- Self-evaluation is very good; the school knows its strengths very well and has a good understanding of what it needs to do to become even more effective;
- There are very good strategies for monitoring the work of the school, for celebrating its many strengths and for putting into place strategies for improvement;
- The school has been very well managed through a difficult period of re-organisation;
- Strong management ensures that the school provides good value for money.

### **Commentary**

21. At their pre-inspection meeting with the inspection team and through responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents expressed their great confidence in the work of the school, singling out the role of the headteacher as a key factor. Inspectors confirm that the role of headteacher is very effective in the school. There is a very well communicated and clear sense of what the school should be like. This sense of vision is fixed on raising achievement and providing rich learning opportunities for all pupils, giving a strong sense of direction to the school. Included in this is the school's strategy for reading recovery, where pupils in Year 1 who are experiencing difficulties with literacy receive a carefully structured individual programme of support.
22. Governors play an equally important and strong role. They share the headteacher's understanding of how good the school should be. They are at the forefront of the important decisions that need to be made in the school. For example, they take a leading part in school development planning. They work very effectively in committees preparing the ground for the decisions that have to be made. Budget planning is a significant part of their role. Governors have a very wide range of experience and skills, bringing this strongly to bear in supporting and shaping the future direction of the school. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are of high quality, showing the effect of their background and skills. There is commitment and determination to get the best possible provision for their school.
23. The role of the senior management team and of subject leaders is equally strong. Some staff are new to these roles but have already made a good start to the work in their subjects. Well-

established subject leaders play a very full role in scrutinising planning, in sampling pupils' work, in auditing aspects of subject provision and managing a budget effectively. The only caveat about the subject leaders' role is that until now, few subject leaders have had the opportunity to see lessons in their subject. This is now arranged within development planning with imminent time priorities. All subject leaders have clear plans about how to use their time for this efficiently. The deputy headteacher and senior management team have had opportunities to see other teachers' lessons and, along with the regular observations by the headteacher and termly professional development discussions, this has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The senior management team share the headteacher's day-to-day running of the school through their weekly meetings with him. There are good arrangements in hand for the management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as a new language. A strong feature of this well managed school is its smooth administrative procedures. Efficiency in the school office ensures that staff and pupils are able to concentrate on educational matters.

24. School development planning is clearly established on realistic goals and priorities. This is part of the shared vision of the headteacher, governors, members of staff. The views of parents and pupils are also taken into account. This ensures that the planned targets are well calculated to move the school forward effectively in the best interests of pupils. This includes the interests of those pupils who find learning difficult. The school provides very effectively for them, although some targets set are not yet sufficiently precise. It includes strategies for encouraging those pupils who are high attainers, despite the fact that the school does not formally identify its gifted and talented pupils. It includes effective provision for those pupils who are learning English as a new language. There is also a well-calculated and successful endeavour to promote the interests of both boys and girls to prevent any imbalance in achievement. The school goes out of its way to find interesting activities that stimulate and motivate different pupils. It is little wonder that parents believe very strongly that their child likes school.
  
25. A strong feature of the work of the school is that it has very effective strategies for self-evaluation. Because it knows itself well, developments are set on a sure footing. There is a strong commitment to the continuing professional development of all staff. This supports them in identifying and celebrating their strengths and provides further opportunities for training. The governing body regrets that there is less funding for this at present because of other budget priorities. Except for reasons of promotion and the further development of individual members of staff, the teaching team is stable and some members of staff have had a very long and successful career at Hollymount. However, the school has good strategies for the recruitment of skilled teachers and has no difficulty in appointing new staff. The school is now enjoying the fruits of its complex and lengthy period of reorganisation from a two-form entry first school to a one-form entry primary school. This has been a difficult and sometimes painful process, for pupils and parents particularly, but also for staff and governors. The school is now well set to capitalise on its new status.
  
26. The table below gives an indication of school finances based on the financial year 2002-2003. There is apparently more money in the category carried forward than is usual or expected. This was due to vigorous fund raising by parents and staff of the school. Scrutiny of current school spending shows that much of the apparent underspend was committed but had not yet gone through the school accounts. The amount of money available per pupil is higher than in most schools but not unusual in the context of London schools. Given the quality of its provision, its strong management and the good standards achieved by pupils the school provides good value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	655,588	Balance from previous year	96,868



Total expenditure	664,303
Expenditure per pupil	2,584

Balance carried forward to the next	88,153
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# **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, AND SUBJECTS**

## **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The nursery is a stimulating and exciting area;
- The quality of teaching is good;
- A very good range of activities is provided in the nursery;
- Very good relationships exist between staff and children;
- Very good use is made of the skills of nursery nurses and other classroom assistants;
- There is insufficient formal planning between the nursery and reception and not enough sharing of good practice;
- Children in the reception class do not get enough opportunities for independent writing and writing for different purposes.

### **Commentary**

27. Although the nursery is an exciting and stimulating place for the children, the reception classroom lacks a readily available range of activities to promote learning in all areas. Children usually join the nursery during the year when they are four. Admission to the reception class is either in September, for children who will be five between September and March, or January for the others. As the nursery takes up to 52 children and the reception class only 30, about half the children have to leave and attend reception classes in other schools. There are presently 43 children attending the nursery: 22 in the morning and 21 in the afternoon. There are 15 children in the reception class, with another 15 starting after Christmas.
28. The nursery is a very attractive area with plenty of space. It is a lively, exciting room with many displays of children's work and a very good range of activities always available. Children are happy and well-adjusted to the demands of the school. There is a secure outside area where children currently explore wheeled toys. Part of the area is grassed and is not used in the winter when it is very wet. As well as sharing this area, the reception class also has a small enclosed area. A future priority is to plan joint activities. The reception classroom, although containing interesting displays of children's work, lacks a range of activities that is easily accessible for children to choose. Attainment is above expectations on entry to the nursery and children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes so that, by the end of reception, the majority will have achieved or exceeded the early learning goals in all areas of learning.
29. The quality of teaching is good, overall, with some very good teaching in the nursery. Within the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse plan together but in the reception the teacher tends to plan on her own. It would be helpful if the nursery and reception classes planned as a unit, thus ensuring progression of skills and continuity. Planning is closely linked to the early learning goals (the expected levels in the six areas of learning achieved by the end of the reception). All adults know exactly what they have to do because they liaise closely with the class teachers. Teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm motivates the children to succeed and ensures that tasks build on previous experience and skill so that children develop appropriately. However, in the reception class too many activities are teacher directed and leave little freedom of choice or the opportunity to develop independence. An area for development is the sharing of the good practice seen in the nursery with the reception teacher. Questioning is used effectively to ensure full involvement in tasks and to extend children's knowledge. The use of day-to-day assessment is good and ensures that children are challenged, be they higher or lower attainers.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**. This is reflected in the way children are learning to respect one another, share resources, take turns and play together.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development, and the majority of children are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the reception year;
- Children achieve well because of good teaching and high expectations set by staff;
- Very good relationships are being established so that children feel secure and happy.

### Commentary

30. The personal, social and emotional development of the present intake is already good and, for some, better than is generally expected for their age. Most children find it easy to conform to the high standards set by the staff. Children already know the routines well, settle to tasks with the minimum of fuss and behave sensibly. The very good teamwork of the adults in both classes gives children very good role models for co-operation, and a calm working atmosphere. Most children are well focused and interested in what they are doing, concentrate well, even when not directly supervised, and are eager to learn.
31. In many activities adults encourage children to explore and develop their vocabulary as they participate in role-play. Often adults provide a role model to help children learn the social skills of relating to one another and playing together. This has a positive effect on their learning, as children in the reception are becoming more articulate and confident. For example, a small group of children were observed playing doctors and nurses in the '*hospital*' busily bandaging a '*patient*', taking his blood pressure and chatting about his problems! A few of the youngest children tend to play side by side but many are already playing happily together in the '*castle*' play area or sharing construction kits and jigsaws. In all group sessions children are encouraged to wait their turn. The majority of the reception children do this but a few of the younger ones are very keen and call out. Teachers expect the children to listen to one another and share their thoughts. All children are keen to respond to teachers' questions. They are friendly and take a pride in their work. Because of the supportive relationships children feel secure and confident to ask for help when required. Consequently, children enjoy coming to school and are happy and settled.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given many opportunities to develop and extend vocabulary;
- There is great encouragement to share books and listen to stories;
- Very limited opportunities are given in the reception to write independently or to explore writing for different purposes.

### Commentary

32. Early indications are that the majority of children are on course to meet their expected goals in this area of learning and many will exceed them. Already, children are making good progress as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. All staff take every opportunity during activities to develop children's vocabulary through probing questions and insistence that they listen to one another's contributions. In the nursery, children were mixing corn flour and black paint with their hands and then the following day were feeling foam.

Throughout, the support assistant chatted to the children, asking them to describe what the mixture felt like, extending their vocabulary. Many of the children are already confident and articulate speakers, willing to express their thoughts and answer questions. In the nursery, children enjoy books and often wander into the quiet room to 'read' a book. Children enjoyed the story about a baby panda and readily responded to the teacher's questions. Some found the story amusing and 'clapped' to show their pleasure. In the reception, children joined in the story of Red Riding Hood, saying the well-known words '*Grandma what big eyes you've got*' and '*All the better to see you with*', carefully adding a different voice for each character. A 'big book' version of the story would have made the pictures more accessible to all the children. Most children express pleasure in reading and are beginning to recognise familiar words. The lower attainers sound out letters but as yet struggle to put the sounds together to make words. The higher attainers read fluently with some expression and sound out unfamiliar words. Children use the pictures to help answer questions about their books but not always to help them with unfamiliar words.

33. When children in the nursery draw a picture they '*write*' a sentence about it. They know that marks on the page convey meaning and, even if the letters are not yet recognisable, they know what their writing says. However, in the reception class, children have very few opportunities to develop their independent writing skills: they are told what they have to do, have little opportunity to choose, and there is little freedom to write for themselves. Children write their names and letter formation is developing well.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Activities are well planned to support children's learning so they achieve well;
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical development.

### **Commentary**

34. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Most children are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels. Children in the nursery are given appropriate tasks to challenge their understanding. Some are secure in counting to 10, and in one-to-one matching, whilst others are counting beyond ten. They enjoyed using the pairs of animals from the ark to count in twos. Children in the reception are investigating shape and already know the names of some two-dimensional shapes. They transfer this knowledge when looking at three-dimensional shapes. They are interested and keen and the teacher's enthusiasm promotes good learning.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**. Many opportunities are taken to invite visitors to talk to the children.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of activities and visitors is planned to promote learning in this area;
- Staff use questioning effectively to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them;
- Children have many opportunities to use computers both in the classroom and the computer suite.

## Commentary

35. Teaching and learning are very good and the majority of children are on course to reach or exceed the levels expected. A good variety of activities, visitors and visits are planned to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. For example, children in the nursery explore black and white patterns by looking at zebras, cows and pandas. They are fascinated by the range of patterns on the animals and by the life style of a panda. Some know that pandas are found in China and eat bamboo. One child feels sorry for the panda only eating bamboo! Activities in other areas of learning are planned around the theme of black and white. Children in the reception watched the '*animal man*' and were amazed by the animals he had brought. They recalled many interesting facts about the animals when questioned by the teacher. However, the follow-up activities were teacher-directed and left no room for the children's own imagination to recreate their favourite animal.
36. Children experience computers both in the classroom and the suite. All are developing good mouse control and an understanding of what a computer can do. Relevant programs are used in the classroom to enhance children's learning.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of outdoor equipment;
- Joint planning of activities for this area is not currently a high enough priority.

## Commentary

37. Children are given many opportunities to develop physically. The nursery children enjoy sessions in the outdoor area, confidently riding on the wheeled toys, whilst the reception children were observed during a hall session. Most children are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels. Reception class children are developing good body control and spatial awareness as they move around the hall. They balance and move along a bench in a variety of ways, walking, crawling or pulling themselves along. Some children are skilled at '*bunny jumping*' across the bench. The correct way to put back the apparatus safely is taught and children wait patiently whilst this is done. Other skills are developed through colouring, cutting and sticking activities. Tools are used with play dough, rolling pins and shape cutters. Most children hold their pencils correctly and form recognisable letters.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**, overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children explore effectively a range of media from collage to play dough;
- Every opportunity is taken to develop children's role-play skills.

## Commentary

38. Children in the nursery enjoy exploring paints and mixing colours. They carefully weave black and white paper – not an easy task – with great success. Reception class children make a robot, but have too few opportunities to explore paint or create for themselves. All children enjoy singing familiar rhymes and number songs. During a music lesson, reception children demonstrated how well they could keep in time to the music and how tunefully they could sing.

Role-play areas reflect the topic or theme and are regularly changed. Children enjoy this and in both classes are often to be found either pretending to be a princess or a doctor.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well and standards are well above those expected;
- Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress;
- Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment;
- Teaching and learning are often good and sometimes very good;
- The current management is good and the support given to teachers is a key reason why teaching is good;
- There are too few planned opportunities to develop pupils' skills in speaking at length;
- In some lessons, tasks are not well-matched to pupils' abilities, and learning is less challenging for higher-attaining pupils.

#### **Commentary**

39. Standards in English at the age of seven and eleven are well above average. This represents good achievement for all pupils over their time in school. The work of the teacher employed under the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) is good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as a new language, make good progress throughout the school.
40. Speaking and listening skills throughout the school are above average. Focusing on specific language structures is a key feature of this work. Pupils begin to use complex and grammatically accurate sentences. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were extremely well-focused in learning names of some common star formations, for example, *Plough* and *Great Bear* and encouraged to interact with others. In Years 5 and 6, some pupils give lengthy explanations when asked a question, and know how to explain their opinions and ideas about stories in interesting ways. However, there are too few opportunities, such as debates, for pupils to speak at length and to use a variety of expression and vocabulary.
41. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain very good standards in reading. Most pupils read simple text fluently and often expressively showing good understanding. Most pupils make good progress as a result of an effective combination of direct teaching of phonics and other help aimed at developing pupils' vocabulary. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make frequent references to reading at home, which is well established and has a positive effect on pupils' interest and attainment.
42. The books read by pupils in Years 3 to 6 are generally appropriate to their interest and are often selected by pupils themselves. Most pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy as they progress through the school. They talk about favourite authors with discernment. The higher-attaining pupils enjoy more challenging text. While lower-attaining pupils still interpret their reading literally, most average and higher-attaining pupils show a growing understanding of more complex language and begin to identify the underlying meaning or appreciate the subtleties of text. Pupils are developing skills of skimming and scanning and making notes. They locate and retrieve information within the classroom, but the independent research and study skills of the majority of pupils are not fully developed through the regular use of the school library by all classes.



43. Standards in writing are well above average. This is a good achievement for the majority of pupils. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are extended to learn about letter combinations and common spelling patterns. The highest attaining seven-year-olds write very well and make appropriate use of punctuation. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have mastered these skills and are beginning to think about the setting, characters and plot when writing stories. However, more needs to be done to help pupils to master skills consistently to use the joined-up script in their work.
44. In Years 3 to 6, the scope of writing is extended well. Pupils write for a range of purposes and their competence in spelling and punctuation is well established. Very good examples of creative writing were noted in Years 3 and 6 in report writing. In one lesson, Year 3 pupils used powerful language, when writing '*an eye witness account*' of Mount Vesuvius erupting. For example, '*a shower of hot ash and rock*' and '*birds fell like hail, killed by fumes...*' There are good examples of sustained writing at length, with good attention to ambitious vocabulary in the work of Year 6 pupils. Standards of presentation are good. Most pupils write neatly and many develop their own personal style consistently using joined-up script.
45. Teaching and learning in English are good, overall. Teachers across the school have a very good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. They make sure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and how this links with what they have covered previously. Lessons are very well planned and organised. In Years 1 and 2, teachers promote speaking and listening successfully. In the best lessons teachers use brisk pace and constantly challenge pupils through probing questions. As a result pupils of all abilities are actively engaged. Most teachers use suitable methods and strategies to develop good listening and improve concentration and the pace of working. The management of pupils' behaviour is consistently very good.
46. Teachers know their pupils well, setting clear targets of work for individuals and groups of pupils. They have a very good relationship with them and encourage good manners and social skills. The management of English is good. The literacy co-ordinator is clear about future developments in the subject. The procedures for tracking and recording pupils' progress are satisfactory and the marking of pupils' work is generally helpful. In the best examples, teachers make constructive comments and provide suitable guidance.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

47. The school encourages pupils to make very good use of their language and literacy skills to support learning in a wide range of subjects. Because most pupils are encouraged to be researchers, they make good use of the growing reading skills to access information and data, for example, for science and geography. Teachers plan good tasks that make pupils think and use their continuous writing skills. As a result, both English skills benefit, but also pupils have many more opportunities to find out and to reflect on what they know and understand.

### **French**

48. French is taught as an additional non-statutory subject to the older pupils at the school. As such, the subject was sampled during the inspection but no overall judgements are made about standards, teaching and learning. The subject is taught to smaller groups of pupils and lessons are shorter than most in other subjects. The subject material is well designed to give pupils insight into aspects of life in France that match those at home, to support pupils in learning how to cope in French in everyday situations, for example, family, when travelling, when eating, when in school. In the lessons sampled, teaching was brisk and well planned, with good use of incentives for learning and good use of visual resources to stimulate the pupils' understanding. Good teaching strategies and skill in spoken French enhanced the pupils' learning. They were taught to speak with a good French accent following the good role model of the teacher. Although some of these pupils are at the very early stages of learning French, all managed to understand the teacher's questions in French and to make some



response. Those learning French for a longer period sustained a simple conversation with a friend using questioning structures such as 'Quel age as tu?' and 'Tu as des freres et soeurs?' Others were able to maintain a simple conversation in French about their pets.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are across the school;
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and teachers use questioning effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge;
- Lesson objectives are shared effectively with pupils;
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, so they are confident to explain their methods;
- Pupils work well together, sharing resources and ideas;
- Although work is usually well-matched to pupils needs, the highest attaining pupils are not challenged consistently;
- Marking is variable and not consistent in providing constructive helpful comments.

### **Commentary**

49. As this is the first year the school has had Year 6 pupils there are no data regarding National Curriculum test results in 2003. In the tests for Year 2 pupils in 2002, they attained very high results. The majority of pupils achieved the expected standard or above and three-quarters achieved above the expected level. The results for 2003 show a slight decline. Despite this, the school's standards in tests are well above those of schools nationally. However, the number of pupils achieving above the expected levels has fallen to just over half. This can be explained by the fact that the ability of cohorts can vary considerably, and this has an effect on the standards achieved. Year 6 pupils are at present on course to achieve above the expected level in the national tests.
50. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Many of these pupils are on course to achieve the expected levels by the end of Year 2 or Year 6. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also achieve well, as they receive good support to help them develop relevant language skills and access the curriculum.
51. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or better. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when some teaching was judged only to be satisfactory. All teachers have a very good relationship with their class and this gives pupils the confidence to respond to questions. Pupils are encouraged to explain how they arrived at their answers, which helps develop understanding and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to work together and share answers. This they do very well. A very good example was observed in Year 1 as pupils explored place value in pairs. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils and often revisited at the end of the session to see if they have been achieved. Most teachers begin their lessons with quick-fire mental tasks, which instantly engage the pupils' interest and help them focus on the tasks, promoting good learning. Occasionally, however, pace is more pedestrian and pupils are less well-focused on the task. Teachers use classroom assistants effectively, where they are available, for the benefit of those with special needs. They provide valuable support for these pupils and help to make tasks more accessible and to improve the learning opportunities.
52. Assessment procedures are good and targets are set for each pupil. However, although tasks are well-matched to pupils' needs there is insufficient challenge for the highest attaining pupils at times. Marking is variable and not always consistent. Where it is good, positive constructive

comments enable pupils to move on. Subject management is good, though some aspects of the role are underdeveloped. There is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who leads by example but has had little opportunity to monitor the teaching of others and share good practice. This is part of a priority highlighted for 2004. The co-ordinator has analysed the optional National Curriculum tests to find out weaknesses in pupils' understanding and this helps to inform teachers' planning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

53. Good use is made of mathematical skills across the curriculum. It is used effectively in the collection and interpretation of data in science and in ensuring accurate measurement of time, distance, quantity and temperature. Measuring and data-handling skills are also used in design and technology and in geography. Although little was seen during the inspection, there is work-sampling evidence that pupils use ICT to enhance their learning in mathematics.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average when pupils are seven and eleven; pupils achieve well because they acquire a very broad and wide understanding of the nature of scientific investigation;
- Teachers give great encouragement to pupils to use vocabulary that is specific to science; this gives pupils a good foundation for thinking and explaining their understanding;
- The teaching and learning is good and teachers have a secure scientific understanding;
- There are good strategies for ensuring that science lessons are practical and investigative; however, while many pupils show a good understanding of scientific principles and concepts, there is some lack of practical application of this;
- Although the subject leader is new, the subject is well led, well managed and monitored efficiently.

### **Commentary**

54. The work seen during inspection, in pupils' books, work in progress in the classroom and work discussed with pupils, shows a standard that is above average throughout the school. Several factors contribute to this quality of work: pupils' speaking and listening skills, their good behaviour, positive attitudes to learning, their concentration and perseverance. This is a great enhancement to pupils' achievement. Because they listen well, and because they have good fluent English, pupils acquire a broad working knowledge of the vocabulary of science. This puts them in good stead when the teacher challenges them; '*Explain yourself!*' '*Can you give another reason?*' '*Is there a clearer way of saying that?*' Pupils in a Year 4 lesson were very comfortable with the basic vocabulary of electrical circuits; power source, battery, connector, crocodile clip, bulb. They were able to explain at length why some circuits were viable and others not. Equally, Year 6 pupils were at ease with the technical vocabulary associated with solutions, evaporation and the separation of mixtures. As a result, they were able to withstand the teachers' insistent questioning that challenged the accuracy and precision of their answers. Teachers do all they can to give support and work is planned to prior attainment for pupils with special educational needs and for those learning English as a new language. This ensures that all pupils have good opportunities and feel included.
55. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was good. Consistent strengths were teachers' insistence on practical work, good behaviour and good use of teachers' knowledge of the content and direction of the science curriculum. Occasionally, lessons were quite noisy but the noise was confined to pupils excitedly discussing what they needed to do, making decisions about how to proceed and debating what their findings meant. There is a growing insistence as pupils pass from year to year that it is they who have to take responsibility for

shaping their investigations. It is good that teachers are able to be sufficiently relaxed to allow pupils to make mistakes and go up the wrong path and that they have the patience to discuss why with puzzled pupils. Given that pupils have a secure vocabulary and a good knowledge of scientific concepts in discussions, some lack the practical skills of investigation. For example, although very clear instructions were given about the importance of labelling solutions during an investigation, and although pupils had given good explanations about what makes a fair test in science, few pupils did so and when challenged could at first not see why a lack of labels could destroy the validity of their investigations. Similarly, pupils working with simple circuits were adept at creating viable circuits with more than one bulb but they were not able to make the intuitive leap that two bulbs in a simple circuit needed to share the battery power and would therefore burn less brightly.

56. While there are few pupils who are individually showing achievement well above that expected for their age, there are significant numbers exceeding the standard expected. Of particular note during the inspection, and adding a great deal to the quality of teaching, were the visits of a scientist-astronomer with his travelling planetarium '*The Learning Dome*' and of a zoologist who demonstrated animal life with real animals. Both these visits were of very high quality, being highly stimulating and motivating. Pupils learned a great deal from their presentations and teachers built well on the visits through well-prepared follow-up activities.
57. The subject has a new leader, only weeks in post. She has made a good start to her responsibility. So far her initial action plan has checked that the school is able to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. New resources have been ordered. She has monitored the coverage and quality of planning. The position gives her important priorities, such as managing a budget, sampling work to check on standards and seeing other lessons in her subject. This last and important strand of her work is to happen shortly for the first time. An urgent priority for the near future is revising the school's policy for the subject. It does not currently address the needs of the school's oldest pupils, now that it is a primary school. Nor does it give sufficient information and guidance about health and safety issues in teaching science. Tasks in science make good use of pupils' maturing skills in English and mathematics, for writing up investigations and for collecting and interpreting data. There is evidence of computers being used for research and for tabling and graphing the data collected.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and support assistants have a great deal of expertise that they use well;
- The subject has good resources, especially its well-used computer suite;
- Pupils are enthusiastic and interested and this helps them to achieve well;
- ICT is used well to support learning in a range of other subjects but it has a particularly strong influence in art and design;
- Although most pupils have adequate keyboard skills, there are some groups of pupils whose keyboard entry is slow and this impedes their success, particularly in word processing and when presenting their written work;
- The subject leader has a good command of the requirements of his role and a clear idea of how the subject should develop.

### **Commentary**

58. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and support assistants plan and teach good lessons that are often very good because they bring such enthusiasm and expertise to the subject. Lessons go vigorously and confidently. Staff working with pupils on computers are very well placed to help them quickly get over any practical and technical difficulties. Staff are knowledgeable about the demands of the curriculum. They use interactive whiteboards

extremely well to support learning. They teach pupils to use the digital camera and scanner effectively and the results of this are obvious in pupils' work samples. The school has the services of a skilled and knowledgeable ICT technician, who not only ensures that the technology is in good working order but who also gives well-informed and skilled lessons to pupils. The school makes very good use of its resources. The computer room can take a full class, although more usually half a class at a time has a lesson. The network system is good, enabling pupils to access a wide range of programs and make good use of the Internet under well-controlled conditions. The school has all the necessary computer hardware, peripheral devices and software to ensure that the full requirements of the National Curriculum are taught.

59. Pupils benefit from the expertise and enthusiasm of the adults working with them, becoming enthused and accomplished themselves. They frequently bring good skills from home, as most have access to a computer in the home. They get the opportunities that enable them to build upon prior learning and achieve a standard that is better than that expected when pupils are seven and eleven. For example, pupils are accomplished at presenting their work through desktop publishing programs. They access the Internet confidently. They send and receive e-mails through approved channels. Work of the previous Year 5 was seen where they had pursued personal lines of research and interest, presenting their findings using PowerPoint. Presentations had captions moving across the screen, changing colour and shape with animals moving into and out of shot. Because they get regular and frequent opportunities to work on computers, many pupils have rapid keyboard entry skills. However, a few are slow in entering data and text through the keyboard. They find this frustrating, especially when they need to enter a large amount of text.
60. The subject is very well led. The subject leader is well in command of the requirements of the job. He is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and in a good position to oversee the challenging demands of the curriculum and to support his colleagues. There is a comprehensive portfolio of pupils' work samples that give him a very secure understanding of the standards pupils are attaining and a good knowledge of their achievements. However, the samples of collected work have not been given a National Curriculum level and this would help the whole school understand precisely what is being accomplished and what can be done to make improvements. The subject leader has a very clear idea about his aspirations for the development of the subject. His work, knowledge and vision have a strong impact on the standards achieved.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

61. The school makes very good use of ICT across the curriculum, although it is not as obvious in some subjects as in others. It is well used to help pupils present and edit their written work in different subjects. It is very well used as a research tool in history, geography and science, through working with CD-ROMs and the Internet. Around the school there is a great deal of evidence of pupils' using a range of computer programs to produce some high quality works of art and design. For example, Year 1 pupils have beautiful symmetrical paintings on display, while in the computer suite there are accomplished computer-generated paintings in the style of a number of famous artists.

### **HUMANITIES**

In all, three lessons in history and one in geography were seen during the inspection. Two lessons of religious education were observed in Years 5 and 6. The only work in pupils' books was from the current term, and there was insufficient evidence, particularly in geography and religious education, to make secure judgements about standards and the quality of teaching.

The main strengths in the religious education sampled were the good understanding and respect for the many different faiths in school, and there was good teaching in the two lessons observed. Religious education is planned and taught in accordance with Merton's agreed syllabus. Teachers make good use of story-telling and discussion, and because of this pupils begin to develop their own ideas about appropriate personal responses to right and wrong and a basic knowledge of their own and others' religions. Religious education contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn to show respect for the beliefs and values of others. Pupils draw on class discussions to make simple comparisons with their own religious ceremonies and traditions. In a lesson, Year 6 pupils study the marriage rites of six major religions and discover many similarities and differences, thus showing increasing understanding of special events, people and customs. Pupils gain a lot of factual information through Internet research. A very good lesson in Year 5 offered stimulation with use of appropriate resources and an effective discussion to enhance pupils' understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam. Pupils in this lesson were able to extend ideas and increase their understanding of the overlap between some religions, for example, Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Most pupils show a positive willingness to talk about and share personal experiences.

The teaching of religious education makes little contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Resources are satisfactory in range and quality. The school has a suitable collection of multicultural artefacts and books about other religions of the world. Pupils often visit the local church. So far, there have been no opportunities to invite visitors from other religions or organise visits to places of worship other than the church to enhance pupils learning in the subject. School strategies for assessment in the subject are not well developed.

In geography, there was very little work available for scrutiny, and the analysis of what was available indicates a lack of challenge for the higher-attaining. Some work on mountain ranges by Year 6 is studied in appropriate depth, also using the computer for research. Pupils learn about aspects such as tourism, the climate and how mountains are formed.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of visits to places of interest;
- Teaching is good, lively presentations integrating the subject with literacy sessions;
- Teachers do not use assessments to plan detailed work for pupils.

### Commentary

62. On the limited evidence available, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils attain standards expected for their age in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' recall of facts about current topics is good. In a lesson, greatly inspired by their visit to the Fishbourne Roman Garden, Year 3 pupils talked with interest about different fruits, herbs and plants brought to Britain by the Romans. They also learnt their Latin names and were skilfully supported by the interactive and very attractive displays of Roman artefacts in the classroom.
63. The quality of teaching and learning, as judged in the three lessons observed, was good. Teachers made very good use of a range of resources and provided interesting activities, which motivated pupils effectively to achieve well. In a good lesson, Year 2 pupils studying The Great Fire of London were skilfully supported in analysing real historical sources, such as Samuel Pepys's diary, to gain insight into the causes of the spread of the fire. History teaching is also well integrated into some literacy sessions; for example, pupils in Year 3 wrote good quality, 'eye-witness accounts' of Mount Vesuvius erupting. There are also some good examples of well-presented, detailed accounts of famous Victorians by pupils in Year 5.

64. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator, aware of strengths and weaknesses in the subject, for example, the need to develop assessment in the subject, and monitor standards of teaching and learning.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Art and design**

The provision in art and design is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have very good ideas for the development of skills in pupils;
- Pupils consistently produce work of a good quality throughout the school;
- A very good range of art resources is well used;
- Very good use is made of computers to support learning in art and design and pupils benefit a great deal from visits out of school to galleries.

#### **Commentary**

65. Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching but the evidence of what pupils achieve in lessons is on display in every workspace and public part of the school. The implications are that teaching is at least good and at times very good. Teachers have very good ideas for how skills should develop. Much of the work is startlingly mature and thoughtful. Products are colourful, full of detail, sensitive to tone and mood. Pupils are aware of line and the way different painting mediums can be used. They use charcoal, pencil, paint, crayon, and pastels with equal skill. Additionally they use computers to '*paint*' with great skill. There are ample opportunities for pupils to work in materials and in three dimensions. The school has very skilfully adapted national guidance for art and design, taking the way basic skills are identified and building the school's Programme of Study around pupils' needs and teachers' expertise. This aspect of subject leadership and management has paid dividends in the work produced by pupils. Allied to this, is the way the school uses regular visits to art galleries to stimulate pupils. There are splendid examples of working in the style of famous artists, for example, the styles of Turner and Gainsborough have both been used as a source of inspiration.

### **Design and technology, Music and Physical education**

#### **Commentary**

66. No lessons were seen in design and technology and no judgements can be made about standards or the quality of teaching and learning. However, it was possible to access evidence of a large amount of past work throughout the school from the subject leader's photographic portfolio of samples. There is good evidence to suggest that provision is good. The volume of work seen was substantial and collated from the work across all year groups. A good range of resources and materials was in use, showing that the subject leader knows the needs of the subject and uses her delegated budget well. The fact that there is a comprehensive portfolio of work samples indicates that she has a good grasp of what pupils are achieving. There was limited evidence of pupils' planning, so it is not possible to say how well the design and make process is learned in all year groups, nor whether all pupils are systematic in planning and evaluating their finished artefact. However, photographs suggest well-made artefacts with appropriate finish quality. It is clear from discussion with the subject leader and from sight of the portfolio that leadership and management responsibilities in the subject are well met.

67. While there is sufficient evidence to imply that provision in music is good, there was no opportunity to observe music being taught. No judgement is made about standards. However, singing was heard as part of the assemblies and this was tuneful and enjoyed by all. Two new schemes of work have been introduced and these are giving support and guidance to the non-specialist teachers as they plan their lessons. The schemes are to be evaluated at the end of the year. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has increased the range of instrumental tuition available to pupils, particularly as the school has grown to become a full primary school, and implemented recorder lessons for all Year 2 pupils. Extra-curricular activities include one for reception and Year 1 pupils: rarely found in a primary school. The pupils sing in the community and perform in concerts, class assemblies and church services and, along with visiting musicians, these activities help to enhance the music curriculum and develop the pupils' understanding and appreciation of music.
68. In the work sampled in physical education, and from discussions and documentary evidence, provision in physical education is good. Pupils are well motivated and work well together. A wide range of opportunities is provided after school for pupils to participate in sporting activities. The lessons seen were well planned and taught. This is leading to pupils' acquiring knowledge and skills quickly. Pupils are well motivated and give of their best. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils worked together as a team, reflecting the good relationships between pupils and teacher. Throughout the lesson, pupils used appropriate skills, showing good co-ordination. Similarly, in another lesson pupils developed a dance sequence with great enthusiasm, sharing ideas and working very well in small groups. They really enjoyed this aspect of physical education. No overall judgement on standards can be made because no lessons were seen at the end of the infant phase (Year 2) or at the end of the junior phase (Year 6).
69. **Extra-curricular provision is very good.** On most evenings in the week, pupils have an opportunity to participate in different sporting activities. Unusually, some of these activities involve the younger pupils. The school teams also play inter-school matches, but, until recently, found hosting matches difficult. Now, with the all-weather pitch, such matches can more easily be held at the school.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Insufficient evidence was seen of the school's provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship to make any secure judgements. The scheme of work is very new. It covers all the necessary aspects of this area of learning to support pupils' personal development and their knowledge of self and others. There is an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff to point the direction of the subject. An appropriate amount of time is given over to lessons. The provision includes 'circle time' (where pupils sit in a circle and take turns listening to and speaking about their views, opinions and experiences) and lessons specifically designed to develop an understanding of relationships, awareness of healthy living and the benefits and risks of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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