

INSPECTION REPORT

LAWRENCE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 130395

Headteacher: Mrs J Greasely

Lead inspector: Mr F Carruthers

Dates of inspection: 28th June – 1st July 2004

Inspection number: 256708

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 482

School address: Lawrence Road
Liverpool
Merseyside
Postcode: L15 0EE

Telephone number: 0151 733 3558
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Taylor

Date of previous inspection: 27th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lawrence Community Primary School is much bigger than the average of primary schools nationally and is situated in an inner area of Liverpool with well above average levels of social deprivation. Fifty-nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Since the last inspection in 1998, the school has seen significant changes in its pupil population, with an increasing diversity of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, many of whom are learning English as an additional language.

About 40 per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. These include Black African, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese and Yemeni children. Some pupils (about 10 per cent) are from refugee families or are seeking asylum. Thirty per cent of pupils have additional support to learn English as an additional language and 96 of them are at early stages of learning English. This is very high compared to schools nationally. Their first languages include Bengali, Bangladeshi, Arabic and Somali. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average at about 27 per cent. The pupils' needs include specific and moderate learning difficulties, emotional or behavioural difficulties, speech and communication, hearing impairment, physical difficulties or autism. The attainment on entry to nursery of most children is very low. Pupil mobility¹ is a very significant factor by the end of Year

¹ The proportion of pupils who start at the school at times later than in the reception year or who leave before the end of Year 6

6. Since the last inspection, the school moved from its old building to temporary accommodation and then into the new building that it now occupies. The school has gained awards, including *The Healthy Schools Award*, *Investors in People* and a *School Achievement Award*. It is part of the *Excellence in Cities* initiative and other projects relating to the education of minority ethnic groups.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Lead inspector	English Geography History Modern foreign language (Spanish)
9728	Mr A Dobson	Lay inspector	
31012	Mrs A Welch	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Music
19041	Mr R Linstead	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language
32800	Mrs E Calvert	Team inspector	Religious education Physical education Provision for special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Lawrence Community Primary School is a good school, providing good value for money. It is very well led and managed, the quality of education is good and pupils achieve well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching, which meets the needs of pupils of greatly varied capabilities and backgrounds well
- Very good support for pupils learning English as an additional language, which means they achieve very well and have very good opportunity to be included in everything the school offers
- Good support for pupils with special educational needs, which helps them to make good progress
- Standards in English, mathematics and science in national tests, which, though they compare favourably with similar schools, could be higher
- Leadership by the headteacher, which is excellent and very well supported by governors and the senior management and middle management teams
- The school's very good celebration of the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of its pupils
- The very high level of care and support that pupils receive, particularly in their personal development
- The new building and its surrounding areas, which provide a very good environment for learning
- The very good links that the school maintains with parents.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The school has responded well to challenges brought about by changes in its population and takes pride in its international character. Because of these changes, it is difficult to compare the school's results in national tests now with then. However, it is possible to compare pupils' progress. Pupils were judged to be making sound progress at the time of the last inspection. Evidence from the current inspection shows most pupils, especially those at the school the longest and those learning English as an additional language, are making good or better progress. There is now more good quality teaching than previously. Information and communication technology (ICT) was a key issue for action at the last inspection and improvement has been very good. The teaching of Spanish has been introduced for older pupils. Improvements in levels of staffing to support pupils with special educational needs, those with behavioural difficulties and those with little English, as well as in levels of resourcing, have made a significant impact on how well pupils do.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003

English	E	E	E	B
Mathematics	E	D	C	A
Science	E	D	D	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 This comparison is used here because it is considered to be the measure that best reflects the school's circumstances.*

Pupils' achievement is good. Children get off to a very good start in the nursery and reception classes from low levels of attainment on entry. Many pupils join the school late in their schooling, some coming as asylum seekers from other countries and many with little English. These pupils make rapid progress and those that stay at the school the longest reach levels expected of all pupils by the end of Year 6. Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 have generally been well below the national average but, as illustrated in the table above, compare favourably with similar schools. Nevertheless, there are shortcomings in aspects of the core subjects, English, mathematics and science, which require attention. For instance, improvements are needed in the development of pupils' writing, their achievement in mathematics and in their investigative skills in science in junior classes.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Levels of attendance are well below the national average but the school has very good procedures to improve them. In spite of the school's best endeavours, a minority of parents are not conscientious enough about sending their children to school every day and on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is very good in the nursery and reception classes and good in Years 1 to 6. Strengths of the teaching include successful teaching methods and the use made of classroom assistants and bi-lingual assistants. Consequently, pupils work hard and learn well. The quality and range of the curriculum are good, enriched by the teaching of Spanish to pupils in Year 5, as well as a good selection of activities and clubs outside lessons. All aspects of the care, guidance and support that the pupils receive are strengths of the school. Links with parents are very good; there are good partnerships with the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. Leadership by the headteacher is excellent and senior and middle managers in the school are very effective in their roles. The work of the governing body is good and all statutory requirements are met. Everyone is highly committed to the vision for the school as a place where all pupils should be given every opportunity to take part in the activities the school offers and achieve their potential.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive opinions of the school and how it is run. Parents particularly value how the school takes a real interest in pupils and their families and provides

support for those who are vulnerable or suffering stress. Pupils say they enjoy school and are proud of the new building and its many facilities both inside and outside.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Maintain the drive to promote good standards in English, mathematics and science.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Pupils achieve well. From very low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery, children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage² and pupils continue to do well in Years 1 to 6. Results in National Curriculum tests are well below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science but compare favourably with similar schools. Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress and those with special educational needs make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress and those who remain at the school reach the expected Level 4 or above by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a very good start.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good strides towards targets in their individual education plans because of good teaching in small-group situations.
- Most pupils overcome significant barriers to their learning to achieve well in relation to their potential.
- Standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science and there is scope for improvement.

Commentary

1. There are several factors that account for standards and achievement in this school. The pupil population has a very diverse range of needs. Most children enter the nursery with very low levels of attainment in the most important areas of development: personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy. Some start school with little English and limited attainment in their mother tongue. Because of very good provision in the nursery and reception classes, the children make very good progress and by the end of the reception year are close to achieving the expected Early Learning Goals in these aspects of development and physical development.
2. During Years 1 and 2, and throughout the junior years, more pupils join the school, a significant proportion of whom do not have English as their mother tongue, are from families seeking asylum in this country or have special educational needs. Especially in their early years at the school, pupils learning English as an additional language make rapid strides in their language learning but their reading and writing skills take longer to mature. As a result, although all pupils make at least good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of good teaching, standards by the end of Year 2 are well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because their needs are identified early, their progress is monitored well

² The Foundation Stage in this school is the nursery and reception classes

and there is good support in small-group and whole-class situations to help them to achieve clear, well-planned targets in learning and to improve behaviour. The school's performance is evident in the table below and is true of the standards in the current Year 2. However, compared to schools in similar social circumstances, standards compare favourably.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.6 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.0 (13.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.4 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- This same pattern of high pupil mobility, with some pupils leaving and even returning to the school, continues in the junior years, so that by the end of Year 6 up to half of the pupils in any one year group may not have been at the school at the end of Year 2 or have spent some time at other schools. A detailed analysis of how pupils perform who are at the school continuously shows that the majority achieve well, and those with English as an additional language do very well and black or dual heritage pupils do significantly better than such pupils do nationally. This success is the result of the positive impact the school has on pupils' self-esteem and self-motivation through its ethos of support for the individual and personal needs of pupils and their families. Results in national tests have been mostly well below average in English, mathematics and science in recent years and the same is true of the current Year 6. Nevertheless, when compared to schools in similar contexts, the performance of the school is favourable. This is the outcome of good teaching, which, for lessons in English and mathematics, takes place in groups arranged according to prior attainment and reduced in size because of the effective deployment of staff.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (25.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.2 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.1 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- The drive to raise standards is central to the school's improvement plan and inspection evidence shows that there are several ways in which this might be achieved. In English, writing is not sufficiently well promoted in other subjects such as science, geography and history in Years 3 to 6. In mathematics, the range in the quality of teaching – from excellent to satisfactory – is too wide and there is insufficient done to share best practice in order to lift the quality of all the teaching. In science in junior classes, too much of the work is teacher-directed, providing insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop relevant skills of exploration and investigation.
- Attainment in ICT is below average overall but it is rising as a result of measures taken to improve provision since the last inspection. Attainment in religious education is broadly average. Other subjects were only sampled during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to judge pupils' attainment and achievement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES (ETHOS)

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is well below the national average. A significant number of pupils do not arrive at school on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes to learning help them to achieve well.
- The school has very effective procedures to ensure that pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils respond very well to the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has very good procedures in place to improve attendance but a minority of parents are not conscientious enough about sending their children to school every day and on time.

Commentary

6. Pupils are happy and parents agree that their children like school. They respond positively to an ethos based on the school motto *Where everyone is valued*. The headteacher knows the pupils very well and, together with all staff, shows strong commitment to the care and well-being of each pupil. This results in a community where pupils work and play in a calm and considered manner and one in which they co-operate well with each other. Pupils particularly like to go on visits, including residential ones, to places of educational interest. They take part in the good range of extra-curricular activities with enthusiasm. Very good teaching in the nursery and reception classes promotes children's personal development and their independence well. The children have good attitudes to learning. Pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language have very good attitudes to work and behave well in most lessons, not least because of the good quality of support they receive.
7. There are reward systems for good behaviour and weekly certificates are awarded and displayed. These motivate pupils well and on the whole the pupils work hard to achieve the varied awards on offer. Several pupils and parents expressed concerns about bullying in the playground. This was not seen during the inspection but there was boisterous behaviour by some pupils. The school has good strategies to deal with unsatisfactory behaviour. As part of the whole-school approach to including everyone in its provision, those pupils who have difficulties with behaviour or relationships are well helped by support staff and learning mentors in the classroom and playground. Persistent bad behaviour is tackled very effectively and the school takes a tough stance when necessary. There were 30 fixed period exclusions last year. This action is not taken lightly and is used only when all other avenues of mediation have been explored.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	293	15	1
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	36	3	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	21	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	33	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	34	9	0
Chinese	6	0	0
Any other ethnic group	49	3	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

8. Provision for pupils' spiritual development remains good. The very positive attitudes and high expectations of staff continually boost pupils' self-esteem and spur them on to do their best. By celebrating the cultures and traditions of everyone in the school, pupils learn to respect each other's beliefs and this in turn enables them to reflect upon their own. Provision for moral behaviour remains good and teachers take the time to discuss with pupils what is right and wrong and the impact of their actions on others. This results in pupils having a high level of awareness of people of all backgrounds and beliefs and is backed by a comprehensive race equality policy which is carefully monitored and implemented.
9. Provision for pupils' social development has improved because the school engenders a very strong community spirit. The many photographs on display give examples of a community where everyone gets on well together. The school also develops pupils' understanding of citizenship through the school council and links with other agencies, including fund raising for charities. Older pupils watch out for younger ones well. The 'buddies' do a great deal to help those who need befriending and are particularly important to the many pupils who join the school part way through their education.
10. Provision for cultural development is now very good. It stems in part from the way pupils learn about the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society in a sensitive and natural way through daily contact with the different cultures represented in school. The many positive displays around the school confirm the richness of the school's multicultural

community. Music, art and dance, for example from African and Arabian cultures, are celebrated and enjoyed by all pupils.

11. The school takes attendance very seriously and good attendance has a high profile in the school. Awards are given weekly, half termly and annually, ensuring that pupils are continually reminded that good attendance is important. Staff monitor registers rigorously every week and all pupils with poor attendance are targeted for special attention. There are clear routines for contacting parents speedily if a targeted child is absent without reason. Learning mentors and the educational welfare service are very actively involved in challenging the parents of pupils who do not regularly attend. Parents are left in no doubt of the importance of regular attendance. In spite of the school's best endeavours, a minority of parents are not conscientious enough about sending their children to school every day and on time.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.7
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	1.1
National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. All aspects are at least good and there are strengths in the enrichment of the curriculum, the provision for pupils' care, welfare and guidance, and the links with parents.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and good teaching in the rest of the school secure good achievement. The assessment of pupils' work is effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching meets the needs of pupils of greatly varied capabilities and backgrounds well.
- Teachers' skilled use of a wide range of teaching methods enables pupils to make good progress but there are weaknesses in teaching science in Years 3 to 6.
- High standards of behaviour give a firm foundation for learning in nearly all lessons.
- Careful assessment guides pupils' learning in the main subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (4%)	13 (23%)	27 (48%)	14 (25%)	0	0	0

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

12. Good teaching is at the heart of the school's success. The teachers have done well to improve the quality of learning since the last inspection, during a period of major changes in the school's character and accommodation. There is now more good quality teaching and there was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics and ICT, and satisfactory in science and religious education. Other subjects were only sampled during the inspection. The quality of learning is good in most lessons because of teachers' good command of subjects, careful planning, use of resources, strong engagement of pupils and effective teamwork with support staff. Teachers' insistence on very high standards of behaviour and concentration gives pupils a good atmosphere in which to learn in most lessons.
13. Keenness to improve professional skills and well-managed training have given teachers a very good understanding of how children learn. This is the main reason for the very good progress of children in the nursery and reception years. Foundation Stage staff develop very good relationships with each child. Their very good knowledge of all the areas of learning and stages of children's development enables them to provide high quality learning experiences each day. They also know how to make best use of very good resources, keeping children's interest at high levels. The varied needs of slower and faster learners, refugee children, boys and girls and children from many ethnic minorities are therefore very well met.
14. Teachers and support staff in Years 1 to 6 continue to prioritise development of literacy and numeracy skills through effective use of the National Strategies. They also match a very wide range of teaching methods to pupils' changing needs. At any point in the school day the number of different methods in use in classrooms and corridors is huge. For example, in an excellent Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils listened to multiplication tapes, tackled a challenging money problem, explained their methods, played a game of mathematical bingo in pairs, studied and discussed a word problem together, shared a joke with the teacher and learned how to 'get friendly with a problem'. Learning was challenging, exciting and intense throughout, as pupils raced to finish in the time available. The teaching of pupils in groups for English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6, which are organised according to the pupils' prior attainment, enables teachers to meet precisely the needs of pupils of all capabilities. In science lessons in junior classes, however, teaching is sometimes directed too much by the teacher, leaving few opportunities for pupils to think about investigations for themselves.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Their individual behaviour plans are well planned and monitored. There are well-organised systems of help from senior staff for the pupils who experience behavioural difficulties in class. The support is both appropriate and effective. Strategies to promote positive behaviour are effective and understood by the pupils. Teachers are skilled in identifying pupils' special educational needs and the co-ordinators work well with teachers, regularly supporting and monitoring pupils' targets in their individual education plans. The targets are shared with pupils and

are couched in sufficiently short steps to enable pupils to realise that progress is being made. Where there were pupils present with special educational needs, 71 per cent of teaching and learning in lessons seen was good or better.

16. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The quality of assessment for these pupils is good. Nearly all pupils receiving additional support because they are at the earliest stages of learning English are well taught. This is because of the expertise and enthusiasm of the bilingual staff and the sensitivity of the whole school to their needs. The pupils are very appreciative of the very good relations they have with staff. However, there is not enough bilingual support either for children in the nursery and reception classes, or for pupils with Eastern European first languages.
17. Good procedures to assess pupils' progress across the school give teachers and pupils a clear view of progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Lessons have clear learning aims which pupils understand and which teachers check with them at the end. Most marking in English and mathematics praises achievement enthusiastically but also shows pupils the next steps to take. Individual targets in pupils' exercise books help to focus their efforts. The quality of assessment in science, religious education and ICT is satisfactory. There was not enough evidence to judge the quality and impact of assessment in other subjects.

THE CURRICULUM

The school's curriculum is good and designed to remove barriers to learning. The school provides a good range of opportunities for enrichment. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements, and accommodation and resources for learning are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language means they have very good opportunity to be included in everything the school offers.
- The new building and its surrounding areas provide a very good environment for learning.
- There has been very good improvement in ICT.
- The school celebrates very well the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of its pupils.
- Support for learning outside the school day is very good.
- Pupils need more opportunities to develop literacy skills in subjects such as science, geography and history in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

18. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. While there is a strong concentration on the core subjects of English and mathematics, it nevertheless offers breadth to engage pupils' interest. For example, the teaching of Spanish to pupils in Year 5 is proving to be very popular with pupils. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very well planned and stimulates the children's interest well. In a sample of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6, however, the promotion of pupils' writing is underdeveloped in science, geography and history.

19. All pupils have full opportunity to take part in the curriculum offered, and staffing is used imaginatively to support the learning, social and emotional needs of pupils. Small-group teaching is used extensively for the older pupils in English and mathematics, and pupils with special educational needs benefit as a result. All support staff are used to good effect in lessons and have a good knowledge of pupils' needs. Pupils follow a curriculum that is well pitched to their needs, with effective use of resources and good behaviour management strategies contributing to their achievement.
20. Pupils for whom English is an additional language have good opportunities to enjoy the curriculum fully because of the good overall quality of teaching, the effective deployment of support staff and their good teamwork with class teachers. For example, the school provided extra staffing to support pupils from families seeking asylum. The school provides excellent additional language provision for all pupils through its Bengali, Arabic and International clubs.
21. Pupils benefit from a good variety of breakfast, lunchtime and after-school clubs. They have the opportunity to learn a number of languages including German and Arabic, as well as cookery, chess, science, music and sport. Interest and enjoyment in learning are stimulated through a range of visits to museums, parks and other places of interest. Visiting artists and performers also help to enrich the curriculum.
22. The school promotes the variety of cultures in school by emphasising the international nature of the school. A display in the entrance hall shows the photographs of all staff, where they were born and their cultural background. In lessons pupils enjoy learning about each other's lives, religions and traditions.
23. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship of pupils was only sampled during the inspection; very few lessons were observed and no overall judgement on its quality is possible. It is very central, however, to the whole-school approach to including everyone. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils provide extremely well for pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to work with adults in the school to make things better. There is an active school council, and the pupils' attendance of clubs before, during and after school is monitored and encouraged. In one ICT lesson, older pupils achieved very well and were very motivated and involved in preparing a Children's Charter, using the UNESCO Charter.
24. The new school building has very good facilities for learning and they are used well. Teachers, parents and pupils alike applaud its design and staff have made very good improvements to playgrounds to make them interesting places to enjoy. There are unique features reflecting the early history of the school as well as very well-planned spaces for large and small games to be played and quiet spots with seating. All staff are deployed well, have good teaching skills and use resources available to good effect. Levels of learning resources in subjects are at least good and they are very good in the Foundation Stage. Resources for pupils for whom English is an additional language are satisfactory overall. However, there is room for improvement in the number and availability of home language and dual language books and resources for pupils at the early stages of learning English.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

All pupils are very well cared for and are given a very high level of support and guidance. These aspects are strengths of the school. The procedures for taking account of pupils' views are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very high level of care in a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils receive very good support, particularly in their personal development.
- The school is very good at involving pupils in the way it develops.

Commentary

25. The school, though large, is very effective in creating a strong, friendly and harmonious community. The key to this success is a deep respect for the individual pupil and a tangible pride in the international background of the pupils, their parents and the staff. The headteacher has a high profile in the school and knows the pupils well and their family backgrounds. Pupils are very well looked after at all times. The arrangement of the four separate playgrounds with a high level of adult supervision ensures that pupils feel safe and secure in their own space. Child protection and health and safety issues are treated very professionally, and staff and governors know their roles and responsibilities. First aid cover is very good and healthy living promoted well, for instance by encouraging walking to school and the participation in sport through school clubs, although the school's promotion of healthy eating is less well developed.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and have both academic and personal targets in their individual education plans. Pupils appreciate the stickers and certificates used to reward the achievement of personal targets, and their achievements are recognised in class time and assemblies. The school communicates well with support services for pupils, and information and assessments are used effectively and professionally.
27. A significant number of pupils experience social, emotional or behavioural problems arising from a range of causes including deprivation, high mobility and low self-esteem. The school has very good systems for giving all pupils assistance if and when they need it. This is firmly based on trusting relationships of a high level between staff and pupils and a very good understanding of the pupils themselves. It results in very effective systems of monitoring both their academic and their personal development. Pupils know to whom they can turn if they need help, and equally the school knows to which pupils it needs to give additional support. Learning mentors contribute effectively to the guidance for these pupils' and are part of the whole-school system for supporting everyone. The concept of supporting and developing the individual child permeates the whole school, from the headteacher through the very professional learning mentors to the use of older pupils to be 'buddies'. The pupils' positive attitudes and their good behaviour are measures of the success of the school's support systems.
28. Very good arrangements to welcome children into the nursery and pupils with little English when they join the school enable the staff to target support for most of them

promptly and accurately. This is particularly important because of the large numbers of pupils joining classes in the course of each school year. However, pupils are sometimes unable to make themselves understood at times when bilingual support in their first languages is not available.

29. The school has well-established procedures for pupils to air their views and to be involved in the way the school develops. The school council with representatives from all classes from Year 3 onwards has real impact. It has been instrumental in developing games and benches in the playgrounds and is involved in discussions on the school uniform. Pupils throughout the school recognise positively the value of the school council. Additionally, pupils are invited to complete a questionnaire at the end of each school year on what they would like to see improved and there is a council specifically for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2. The senior management team and the governors consider the responses when drawing up the school improvement plan.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

Links with parents are very good. The school has good links with the community and satisfactory links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a very good opinion of the school.
- The school is very effective in making all parents feel welcome.
- Parents are kept well informed about the life of the school and their children's progress but targets in some of the pupils' progress reports are too general to be useful to parents.
- The school is good at consulting parents on the way the school develops.
- Pupils benefit from good links with other schools and the community.

Commentary

30. Parents think very highly of the school and the way it is led. They comment on the happiness of their children at school, the way all pupils are treated equally and the progress the pupils make as a result of good teaching. Parents also praise the multicultural nature of the school and the support given to parents for whom English is not their first language. The inspection confirms all these positive views.
31. The school goes to great lengths to make sure that all parents feel welcome and have access to information. Bilingual assistants in Arabic and Bengali are always available and if required, interpreters in other languages are arranged if possible. Regular coffee afternoons for parents from ethnic minorities to meet school staff with bilingual assistants present are proving increasingly popular and are a very effective way of communicating between school and home. For example, at a recent meeting the manager of provision for pupils with English as an additional language arranged for parents to sample school meal diets for their children so as to address any concerns. The manager also gave them simple but vital guidelines on how to help their children at home by using their first languages.

32. Documentation for parents is informative, comprehensive and easy to read. A simplified brochure is available for parents with limited English and gives a clear outline of the main school procedures. Half-termly newsletters give a good overview of the topics pupils are about to study but lack detail on what will be covered in English and mathematics. There are good opportunities for parents to meet their children's teachers on a formal basis and there is a high level of attendance at these meetings. At an informal level, the school's policy of responding to any concerns immediately is effective and parents can normally see any teacher at the end of a school day without an appointment. Pupils' reports are well written and free of jargon. Progress is clearly stated and the sections on personal qualities show that the teachers know the pupils well. Most reports contain targets but some are too vague or general to be much use to a parent wanting to be involved in their child's learning.
33. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective partnerships established with parents, other schools and the community. The school has a good working relationship with local special schools giving curricular support to both pupils and staff. There is good communication with parents and carers, and all staff try hard to keep parents informed of their child's progress.
34. The school is serious in consulting parents on how the school develops. This consultation ranges from an annual questionnaire on the school's performance to a letter asking parents what special courses they might be interested in attending. Parents are well represented on the governing body. The school ensures that parents' views are taken into consideration when the school improvement plan is drawn up.
35. Good use is made of links with other schools and the community. Sports facilities are used effectively at two nearby sports centres and a local Sports College to develop pupils' skills, for instance in athletics. The school has close links with a local church. Pupils benefit from studying the local area in geography and history to give them a sense of place and the choir gives performances both locally and in Liverpool's Anglican and Catholic Cathedrals. Links with other schools are developed well through initiatives such as learning mentors and promoting the achievement of talented pupils. The school has strong links with a local University College, providing placements and other training for student teachers. Good use is made of the school's computer facilities through courses arranged for members of the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, whose leadership is excellent, has led the school exceptionally well through many changes in recent years.
- The headteacher receives very good support from both the senior management team and the middle management team. They display very good leadership in their roles and have established highly effective teams to manage the school.
- The monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning have not been as rigorous as they should.

- Governance of the school is good.
- The school's commitment to promoting the well-being and potential of all its pupils is excellent.

Commentary

36. The headteacher is held in high esteem by teachers, governors, parents and pupils. The headteacher's excellent leadership has steered the school through a period of significant upheaval since the time of the last inspection. The school was housed in temporary accommodation for almost two years before moving to its new premises, on the site of the original 19th century building, at the start of 2002. During the same period, changes in pupil population have been very significant. The headteacher has shown vision and clarity of purpose in establishing and deploying specialist teaching and support staff to meet these diverse challenges. Through the headteacher's example, and with the support of the governing body, the school has embraced its new multi-ethnic character wholeheartedly. Everyone is highly committed to doing the best for pupils and their families. Consequently, the school is successful in overcoming the significant barriers to learning that many pupils face.
37. The headteacher has taken full note of the views of parents, pupils, staff and governors in compiling plans for the development of the school. As a result, strategic planning is very well focused and underpinned by very good financial planning. For example, the headteacher ensures very good value for money from the funding available for the promotion of the needs of the various ethnic minorities in school, topping it up from the school budget and making sure that the impact of improved staffing, such as bilingual assistants and learning mentors, contributes to the good of the many as well as the few.
38. The headteacher is very well supported by other senior teachers. Skilled members of the senior management team have oversight of vital elements of the school curriculum and provision and form a highly successful team. Because of the size of the school, steps have been taken to make highly effective teams working in four 'quarters' of the school and this move has led to efficient lines of communication. These 'quarters' link age groups together successfully and reflect the physical space both internally and externally with which pupils identify. Team leaders work with teaching, support and ancillary staff for the benefit of pupils in their two-year age groups.
39. Subject leadership is good. The leadership and management of provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language are very good. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs have improved since the last inspection and are good. There is good communication between all staff and the two co-ordinators for provision, and they contribute effectively to the leadership and management of the school. Although monitoring of teaching is regularly undertaken through the process of assessing the performance of teachers, there have been few opportunities in recent times to monitor and evaluate specific subjects of the curriculum in order to share best practice and raise standards. This is a key aspect for improvement in the drive to push up standards.
40. Governors, very well led by the chair of governors, make a good contribution to the direction of the school. They are highly supportive of the school and proud of its achievements. As a result of good quality training at the start of the current school year, in

which governors began to evaluate their own practice, they have improved their level of understanding of the school's priorities and achievements. This has been achieved through regular reports from staff at the start of each meeting, and better links between governors and classes and between governors and subject co-ordinators. The governing body fulfils statutory requirements well and is well involved in monitoring the school's race equality policy. Individual governors, such as the governor with responsibility for risk assessment, make a very good contribution to the working of the whole governing body.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1 537 391	Balance from previous year	226 170
Total expenditure	1 580 655	Balance carried forward to the next	182 906
Expenditure per pupil	2965		

41. The figures in the table above show income and expenditure during the year in which the school re-located to its new building. The table shows balances that were far higher than in previous years and at the end of the financial year 2003 to 2004, because of ongoing spending on resources and facilities (including an ICT suite). The balance carried forward into next year (2004 – 2005) is below five per cent of expenditure.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and now is **very good**. Children's levels of attainment when they start in the nursery are very low when compared with those typically expected for their age. A growing number speak little or no English when they start and have limited skills in their mother tongues. Children gain ground at a very good rate and respond very well to the sensitive and very effective teaching in the nursery and reception classes. Teaching is very good overall and this ensures that children achieve very well during their time in the Foundation Stage. The strong teamwork between the teachers, the nursery nurses and support staff adds to the quality of the teaching. Organisation is seamless, which is due to the very good leadership and management of this stage of education in the school. Teachers use their expertise very well to plan stimulating activities that link the six areas of learning in a natural way and make the best possible use of the new accommodation.

Induction procedures are very good and enable teachers to assess and prepare for each child's individual needs before they start in the nursery. This very thorough assessment continues throughout the nursery and reception classes so that teachers and staff have a very clear picture of children's achievements and plan work to match their abilities. Children with special educational needs particularly benefit from this and achieve at the same very good rate as other children. Those with English as an additional language achieve well because of the extra support they receive but the lack of bilingual support on a daily basis prevents them from achieving as well as they might. The very strong links forged with parents when their children start in the nursery continue during the reception year and parents appreciate the regular opportunities they have to join their children in class to observe how they learn. They are right to be happy with the flying start their children get.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Warm and trusting relationships help children to be kind and considerate and to care for each other.
- The curriculum is planned to allow children to initiate their own activities and to make choices and decisions.

Commentary

42. Many nursery children are reticent and need much encouragement to participate in activities, some not having worked in groups other than their families, prior to starting nursery. Others may have only been in the country for a matter of weeks. Nursery staff are very encouraging and caring in their approach and make each child feel special. This

ensures that children settle comfortably into the routines of the nursery. For example, they register their name on arrival and share in tidying the room at the end of activities. Adults act as very good role models, particularly in the calm and quiet manner they use when talking to children. In turn children learn to be polite, to care for others and to take turns and share fairly. One boy quickly came to the aid of his friend whose glue stick had run out by saying, "You can share mine." Very good teaching promotes children's independence well and because they are given a manageable choice of tasks and the opportunity to make simple decisions, their sense of responsibility grows. Although few are on course to reach the expected levels in this area of learning, this very good start to their personal and social education means that the gap between national expectations and what they are able to achieve will have closed considerably by the time they leave the reception classes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very skilful teaching gets children off to a good start with reading and writing.
- There are good links with other areas of learning that help the development of language skills.

Commentary

43. A very good feature of the teaching is that staff pay particular attention to developing children's communication skills. This means that even the youngest children learn to explain their immediate needs and begin to offer simple contributions to discussions. Every activity involves asking questions and emphasising words and names. Children are encouraged to talk about themselves and to explain what they have done. Teachers employ their own good use of language to help children to broaden their vocabulary and to improve their diction. This is of particular benefit to children who are learning English for the first time.
44. There is a strong emphasis on learning to recognise the sounds of letters, beginning in the nursery with the initial letter of their names. Shared reading times in reception are spent very well not only to extend children's reading skills but to develop their understanding of the text. Teachers make these times very enjoyable as well as educational experiences. Children are taught how to form letters correctly and are given regular opportunities to write. Writing is planned very well as a part of role-play activities. Children in the nursery 'write' the names and addresses of customers needing a taxi, while reception children fill in the travel details of customers at the 'airport'. By the end of the reception year, more able children can read and write independently although less able children still struggle to write their names. Children achieve very well in this area of learning but many are still below the level typical for their age by the end of the reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, clear explanations enable children to achieve the objectives of lessons in mathematical development.
- Many opportunities are taken to develop mathematical skills in other areas of learning.

Commentary

45. Children practise what they are learning in many different ways. For example, counting is used whenever it is appropriate so that they become familiar and confident with numbers. Children in the nursery count the number of movements in their warm-up activities during a physical development lesson. In reception classes, the repetition of class chanting of numbers helps the less confident children and those with English as an additional language to acquire an awareness of number order. Challenges are set that stretch the higher attaining children. For example, a more able child was asked, "What comes before 23?" A less able child was asked, "What comes after 4?" Group activities are planned with care to extend children's understanding of the mathematical focus of a lesson. These activities, however, are fewer in number than those which follow a lesson with a literacy focus and children do not have as many opportunities to reinforce or extend a mathematical concept. Because of the overall good teaching, children achieve well but most will not reach the levels of mathematical development expected for their age by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching provides children with very good opportunities to learn about different cultures.
- The tasks in this area of learning are used very well to support the development of language.

Commentary

46. Very good teaching that is typified by well-planned and exciting activities ensures that children have a good knowledge of a range of topics by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. Practical activities are used very effectively to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their learning. Nursery children found out for themselves how Goldilocks felt as they made and ate porridge, while children in reception classes learn to recognise and care for the plants and creatures in the school gardens. Visits to a local farm enable nursery children to use their senses to see, hear, touch and smell the animals. Visitors are a regular feature, particularly during the recent Arts Week when children had, for example, the opportunity to play African drums and to take part in an

Arabian dance. On such occasions, the children are helped to understand and celebrate the many cultures in the school community is reinforced and celebrated fully. Very good features of this area of learning are the opportunities children have to develop their skills in ICT. Regular access to an interactive whiteboard and very skilled teaching ensure that children quickly pick up and apply new skills. Children in the reception classes used their skills to drag pictures across the screen. This very good grounding in this area of learning means that most children will be close to achieving many of the goals for this area of learning at the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident when taking part in physical activities in the school hall and the outside area.
- Children have ample opportunities to use small tools and implements for writing, drawing and painting.

Commentary

47. The new outdoor area has been designed to ensure the best possible use of the space available. Staff use this area well to support all areas of learning but particularly children's physical development. Opportunities are planned for children to experiment and to experience a wide range of physical activities through large-scale climbing equipment. They negotiate wheeled toys around the pathways in a controlled way and with an awareness of space. There are good opportunities for children to initiate their own activities. A small group of children, including several for whom English is an additional language, designed a route across some tyres, which became increasingly challenging as the game evolved. They supported each other well and readily applauded when one of them made it across the tyres. The formal teaching of physical skills is good. Children learn to move with increasing confidence, balance and control and show a good awareness of space and the need for safety when working in the hall. They are given the opportunity to watch each other at work as their teacher evaluates it. However, they are not invited to take part in the evaluations and some children lose interest here. Children's skills in manipulating small tools, such as scissors, brushes and pencils, develop very well because they are taught to use them correctly and have plenty of opportunities to practise using them. As a result of the consistently good teaching, many children are on the brink of achieving the expected goals in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links between creative work and other areas of learning are good.

- Pretend play enables children to use their imagination well.

Commentary

48. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities where children can explore colour, texture, shape and music. Many of these activities are linked to ongoing themes and are planned well to introduce particular techniques and new resources. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Teachers build on what children already know. For example, painting skills are developed further as children are taught how to mix paint to get a wider range of colour and tone. The portraits that children draw and paint of themselves and other people show the good achievement that they make in adding detail to their pictures.
49. Children's imagination is evident in role-play. Children in the nursery travel on the 'big red bus' after they have bought a ticket and received their change. Children in the reception classes travel the world from 'Lawrence Airport', taking with them the necessary accessories for a holiday in the sun. Children enjoy their regular singing lessons and are building up a large repertoire of songs, which are sung with a great deal of enthusiasm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Grouping the pupils by their prior attainment in Years 3 to 6 results in a good level of challenge for pupils.
- Support for pupils learning English as an additional language and for pupils of black or dual heritage is very good.
- The leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinators are very good but there have been too few opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils' writing skills are not developed well enough in science, geography and history.

Commentary

50. Pupils' achievement is good and the pupils make good progress over time. The school helps them to overcome significant barriers to their learning and is especially successful in helping pupils who start at the school with very little English. For instance, those who stay at the school the longest reach the standard expected of pupils at the end of Year 6 and are often among the highest attaining pupils. The school also assists pupils of black or dual heritage particularly well, so that, unlike in many schools nationally, they reach the expected Level 4 in their work. Although the results of last year's national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 were well below the national average, they compared favourably with those of schools with similar levels of social deprivation. Standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are similar.
51. The reason that pupils achieve well is because of the good personal and academic support that they receive and that underpins the good quality of teaching evident in lessons. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has responded well to the changing nature of its roll, with more pupils joining the school midway through their primary years, often with little English and seeking asylum in this country. Improvements in levels of staffing to support pupils with special educational needs, those with behavioural difficulties and those with little English, as well as in levels of resourcing, have made a significant impact on how well pupils do in all aspects of literacy.
52. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop well from the end of the reception year. Pupils are confident responding to and asking questions in lessons. Overall, standards are average by the end of Year 6. Individual pupils, especially those whose first language is not English, make particularly good progress. Standards of reading and writing are well below average. For example, only about half of pupils reach the nationally expected Level 4 by the end of Year 6 and few are at the higher Level 5. Pupils' progress ranges from very good to satisfactory and depends on the length of time the pupils are at the

school and the level of support that they receive from parents. All pupils benefit from the grouping arrangements in Years 3 to 6 and the good staffing levels. These arrangements mean that class sizes for English lessons are reduced and the deployment of teaching assistants is in direct proportion to the level of need.

53. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Three very good lessons were seen in the mixed reception / Year 1 class, in Year 2 and one of the teaching groups in Year 4. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers use the guidance of the National Literacy Strategy well and make very effective use of resources and time. In the best lessons, they have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and for their behaviour. As a result, standards of presentation are good and pupils are expected to work hard in the time available. Teachers set homework regularly and are keen that pupils learn spellings and complete assignments. Consequently, many pupils have good spelling skills. Marking of work is carried out conscientiously and with good attention to encouragement and praise.
54. The two subject co-ordinators lead the development of the subject very well and have completed a series of action plans over recent years to improve assessment procedures, target-setting and pupils' writing. They have identified weaknesses in pupils' work through careful analysis of tests and they monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work regularly. However, they have had few opportunities to monitor the quality of lessons and this is important if good practice is to be shared and standards are to rise. The school is well equipped in terms of staffing and resourcing to make further improvements. However, the library is awkwardly located and used as a teaching base each morning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Pupils have good opportunities to question and discuss aspects of their work in subjects across the curriculum. However, links are not always made clear in teachers' planning and insufficient use is made of pupils' own skills of writing in science, geography and history in Years 3 to 6. The use of the subject in religious education is satisfactory.

SPANISH

Provision in Spanish is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's staff contribute well to provision.
- The subject enriches the school's curriculum well.
- A good range of extra-curricular clubs in languages adds to the pupils' awareness of other cultures.

Commentary

55. Currently pupils in Year 5 are taught the subject in short, regular sessions. At the time of the inspection, the specialist assistant, who is a member of the local education authority's team for modern foreign languages in primary schools, was absent and the teaching had been undertaken by class teachers. They are making a good contribution to the above average standards evident among pupils in relation to their skills of speaking, listening

and responding in the language. Pupils achieve well, acquiring skills rapidly so that, at this latter end of the school year, they are able to greet one another, respond to simple questions about themselves and ask questions of each other. They know a good range of simple vocabulary, for instance colours and parts of the body. They are confident to have a go in the language and enjoy finding out about Spanish life and culture.

56. The subject contributes well to the school's international flavour, helping pupils to become familiar with the differences and similarities among peoples of the world and to explore their richness. Staff are very willing to take the teaching on themselves, even though few have had much prior knowledge of the language. They are developing good skills quickly. In one lesson observed the subject co-ordinator was confident enough to carry out the whole of the lesson in the language. In addition, the staff willingly give their time to run clubs in Arabic, French and German. Pupils continue their study of Spanish in Year 6 and links are well established with the associated high school in order to continue the good work started in school.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching is good, but there is too much variation between classes, resulting in uneven progress.
- Very good resources make an important contribution to the quality of learning.
-

Commentary

57. Pupils are achieving well and this is an improvement since the last inspection. For example, in the last few years, pupils' performances in national tests, though often below and well below the national average, have surpassed those of similar schools. Boys and girls achieve very similar standards by the end of Year 6. Thorough planning and assessment ensure balanced progress in the main aspects of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language achieve very well.
58. Good leadership and management have developed consistent and effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Through regular training, the co-ordinators have improved the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good since the last inspection. Grouping based on pupils' prior attainment in Years 3 to 6 enables teachers to match work very closely to pupils' capabilities. For example, pupils in Year 6 commonly work at nine different levels in three classes in their morning mathematics lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they often have additional support as well. Pupils learning English as an additional language mostly make rapid progress from Years 3 to 6 as they develop their understanding of English. It is not unusual for mathematically gifted pupils to move up from the lowest to the highest group in a matter of months.

59. Very close relationships with pupils and good knowledge of each topic enable teachers to develop pupils' understanding rapidly through searching questioning. Pupils enjoy nearly all lessons and work hard because teachers make learning exciting and fun by providing challenging activities. Teachers also ensure high standards of behaviour enabling everyone to concentrate all the time. Learning is less effective in a fifth of lessons because teachers do not expect enough of pupils, for example in accepting work rates well below pupils' capabilities. Very good resources simplify learning, improving pupils' motivation, progress and achievement. Teachers usually create their own resources to add to the school's, so as to fine tune teaching to the particular learning needs of their classes.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent resourcing enabled Year 6 pupils to make very rapid progress in evaluating hire purchase deals.

The teacher wanted the class 'to become competent in managing personal money' in their last few weeks at primary school. Excellent resources, including a large computer screen and a translucent colour calculator, facilitated very clear revision and explanations. The teacher had prepared exceptionally well for the lesson. She produced large numbers of high quality, colour-coded cards with problems at different levels of difficulty to enable pupils of all abilities to work independently for most of the lesson. There were many other advantages to this method: the teacher could match challenges exactly to individual skills; problems also matched the achievement and interest of particular groups; pupils enjoyed very high levels of choice and responsibility for their work; and the teacher was free to improve achievement further through one-to-one support and tips for the whole class. Pupils raced to the final stage of learning and most began creating mathematical word problems based on offers advertised in magazines. When asked what they had learned, pupils said they had discovered that the best deal was to pay cash!

60. As the quality of teaching varies from excellent to satisfactory, there are corresponding differences in achievement. For example, achievement this year is very good in Year 3, satisfactory in Year 6 and good in the other year groups. While temporary staffing problems have accounted for some of this variation, the school has not done enough to address the problem. For example, co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to assess and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in lessons across school, and nor has the school arranged for all teachers to observe its three leading mathematics teachers in action.

Mathematics across the curriculum

While adequate overall, the use of mathematics in other lessons is an area for development. Planning for lessons prioritises the helping of pupils to meet the linguistic demands of the subject. Full use of mathematical skills in other subjects presents a further opportunity to develop this important initiative.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 has helped to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher levels.
- Inconsistencies in the teaching of the investigative strand of the subject in Years 3 to 6 lead to some underachievement.
- There is good emphasis on the use of specific technical language.
- A lack of monitoring means that some weaknesses in teaching are being missed.

Commentary

61. Standards for the current Year 6 are well below those expected nationally with only a handful of pupils reaching the higher levels. This is lower than the standards achieved in

2003. Standards for the current Year 2 pupils are also well below average. However, there has been a significant rise in the number reaching the higher levels, marking the achievement of a target from the 2002/2003 school improvement plan.

62. Evidence in pupils' books shows that teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. In the Year 2 classes in particular, pupils use their literacy skills well to record their work in their own words. This in turn affords teachers good information to assess what children have learned, which in turn helps them to plan for the next step of learning. This has contributed in part to the rise in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels.
63. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall and good teaching was observed in two Year 3 classes and one Year 5 class. Much of the teaching is based upon an investigative approach to science and pupils are given the opportunity to carry out investigations, make and test predictions and draw conclusions. However, there are weaknesses in the teaching. Too often the starting point for an investigation is the same for all pupils with no added challenge within the investigation for more able pupils. Too often, teachers play safe and give too much help. Introductions are lengthy and apparatus is already prepared so that nothing is left to chance. On these occasions, pupils lose interest and say they do not enjoy science. Pupils are not always encouraged to make the best use of their literacy skills to record their activities, particularly when worksheets are used. When teaching is too prescriptive, pupils' opportunities to think for themselves are limited which, in turn, slows their rate of achievement.
64. The best teaching is marked by clear explanations, good opportunities for pupils to take part in practical activities and the appropriate choice of resources. Pupils say they enjoy these occasions. A good feature of all teaching is the way in which pupils are taught to use the correct scientific language. Good support is given to those pupils for whom English is an additional language so that they too begin to add the new words to their vocabulary.
65. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Both co-ordinators are aware of the need to monitor teaching and learning in order to identify where teaching is most effective or where improvements can be made. For example, although teachers make some use of pupils' mathematical skills in science, there is scope for improvement, particularly in the upper juniors. A start has been made to use ICT skills alongside scientific skills. Other cross-curricular links are being made. For example, less able pupils in Year 2 used their skills in art to demonstrate their understanding of camouflage, but these links are few and far between.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
- Staff are confident in what they teach.
- Resources are good.
- Good subject leadership continues to drive the curriculum forward.

- Achievement is slowed at times when pupils have to share a computer.

Commentary

66. The school has come a long way since the last inspection. It now has a computer suite that provides a valuable learning resource and all staff have enough training and guidance to teach the full curriculum for the subject. As a result, standards are rising quickly now and most pupils in Years 1, 3, 4 and 5 are working at or close to the expected levels for their age. However, standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are still below what is expected. This is because there has not been enough 'catch up' time, particularly for pupils in Year 6.
67. Teachers have more confidence in teaching the subject as a result of the national programme of staff development in ICT and this is beginning to pay dividends in the achievements of pupils. Teaching is now good throughout the school. Very good teaching was observed in the mixed Years 4/5 class. Teachers prepare thoroughly and use the electronic screen to demonstrate and clearly explain new skills. There is a good balance between mastering new techniques and exploring ways in which these can be used. There is enough adult help to support those pupils for whom English is not their first language and pupils with special educational needs. This results in these pupils achieving at the same good rate as the rest of the class.
68. Although a valuable learning resource, the computer suite has some limitations. There are not enough computers for a whole class so most pupils have to share. There are some occasions where the task enables both pupils to achieve at the same rate, for example, in a Year 1 lesson, when one pupil gave another the commands to draw a robot on screen. However, there are others where it does not work as well and pupils' achievement slows, for example, word processing activities using the keyboard. Another limitation is that the suite is part of the main thoroughfare between two 'quarters' of the school, which results in distractions at times.
69. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The two co-ordinators have worked very hard not only to ensure that all the issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed but also to move the provision forward at a cracking pace. Computers are rarely idle and the action plan to develop the use of ICT, which includes the purchase of laptop computers, places the school in a good position to raise standards even further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

Teachers have made a good start to using ICT in other subjects because it is being systematically planned for across the curriculum. Pupils use ICT in most subjects now and regularly use their skills for research or presentational purposes.

HUMANITIES

Geography and **history** were only sampled during the inspection and no judgement is possible on provision. In one satisfactory geography lesson seen in Year 6, higher attaining pupils were insufficiently challenged because they were not required to use their own writing

skills. This aspect of provision requires improvement in both subjects. In a good ICT lesson involving a mixed class of pupils in Years 3 and 4, good links were made between history and ICT, when the teacher introduced the Internet for researching information about tombs in Ancient Egypt.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching overall is satisfactory.
- The subject is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinators who have an action plan for subject development but there are insufficient opportunities to monitor teaching and learning.
- The effective organisation and planning for using resources in lessons require attention.
- Cross-curricular links are underdeveloped.

Commentary

70. Standards are in line with those expected of pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6. As only two lessons were observed, much of the evidence arises from discussions with the co-ordinators, a sampling of pupils' work and displays around school. The overall breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed a very good lesson focusing on Islam, specifically on the meaning of Ramadan and Eid. Pupils were able to answer questions upon the important aspects of the faith, and discussed the rules of fasting during Ramadan. There was interest in the Arabic words for dates, which individual pupils shared with the whole class. Pupils went on to design cards to celebrate Eid.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but there are problems in the sharing of resources between classes when topics are being taught by more than one class at a time. Teachers make some links between religious education and other subjects, for example English and ICT. For instance, pupils discussed pictures of the celebration of Eid in other countries using an Internet link on an interactive whiteboard. The Year 3 class were also given a demonstration of designing an Eid card using graphics on the Internet. However, cross-curricular links are underdeveloped.
72. The two subject co-ordinators have been leading the subject since the start of the school year. They have a good action plan for the development of the subject but little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in order to raise its quality and share best practice.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were only sampled during the inspection. Only two lessons were seen in art and design, and design and technology, and none in music or physical education.

In a well-organised design and technology lesson, pupils in Year 2 planned the food and drinks menus for their end of term party. There were good links with English and science as pupils investigated and compared the taste of different types of orange drink, discussed choices and designed menus. A recent and very well planned Arts Week, led and managed by the art and design co-ordinators, made an important contribution to the school's efforts to strengthen provision in creative subjects. Pupils of all ages and capabilities enjoyed excellent creative opportunities, both with their own teachers and in stimulating visits from professionals in art and design, drama, music, dance, origami, puppet theatre, story telling, desktop publishing and creative writing. Each class focused on the arts and culture of a particular country. Displays of work from the week showed how creatively and enthusiastically teachers, parents and children had worked. Their creations included Afghani landscapes, Chinese dragons, Russian dolls, Egyptian masks, toy crocodiles and Polish paper patterns. The week celebrated the school's international character colourfully and imaginatively.

No lessons were observed in music although pupils were heard singing in assemblies. These occasions were enhanced by the accompaniment of pupils playing violins, flutes and recorders. This band of musicians, who flourish under the guidance of the co-ordinator, is an asset to the school. The school choir also helps to raise the profile of music both in the school and the local community. Music played a prominent part in the recent Arts Week and included African drumming, Portuguese songs and Arabian dance music. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development, not just during special occasions but throughout the year.

Provision in physical education is enhanced by opportunities to use the nearby sports centres for lessons as well as a good range of clubs and team games. Dance also formed a part of the Arts Week and helped to enrich pupils' experiences.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The subject was only sampled during the inspection. Only two lessons were observed and it is not possible to make a secure judgement about provision, teaching or learning in this subject. The lessons involved pupils in Years 4 and 5. In one lesson, pupils learned more about the attention that must be given to matters of hygiene in first aid. Pupils learned more about the dangers of infection and the importance of safe practice. One very good lesson linked the subject very successfully with ICT and literacy.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgment</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	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).

