

INSPECTION REPORT

MULBERRY PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 133707

Headteacher: Mr Alan Jenner

Lead inspector: Gail Mclean

Dates of inspection: 23 – 27 February 2004

Inspection number: 256980

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	704
School address:	Parkhurst Road Tottenham London
Postcode:	N17 9RB
Telephone number:	020 8808 2109
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father Luke Millar
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Mulberry Primary School opened in September 2002. It is an amalgamation of two schools, an infant and junior school. There is special provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The ASD provision, infant and junior school occupy separate buildings although they are on the same site. The school is much larger than other primary schools, with over 700 pupils on roll. There are more boys than girls, although the spread is not even across the school. There are more boys than girls in the nursery, reception and Year 3. Children start in the nursery with very low levels of skill in literacy and social development. Although they make good progress, the majority are one or two years behind where they should be at age five. The school is in an Education Action Zone in Haringey and it is involved in the Sure Start and English as an Additional Language for Adults initiatives. This part of London is an area of low affluence, which accounts for the much higher than normal percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (64 per cent). The school's composition is similar to other large city schools in that pupils come from a rich diversity of ethnic backgrounds; about one third is Black or Black British, almost a third are White British or of other White backgrounds, about a third are Asian and a small number are from other ethnic minority groups. A small number are Traveller children. A significant proportion of pupils are members of families seeking asylum or who are refugees. As a result, a much higher proportion of pupils have English as an additional language than is usual for schools in Britain and a very high percentage of these pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English (about a third). The school supports more pupils with specific learning difficulties, speech and communication, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties than is typical of other schools (20 per cent). Within this large group of pupils with special educational needs there is a high percentage with Statements of Special Educational Need (2.6 per cent). Although a reasonable core of pupils stay at the school from age three to 11 a high proportion are only at the school for a short time. This high level of pupil mobility is a barrier to learning but, equally, makes it difficult for the school to demonstrate its effectiveness. Staff turnover is similarly high but the school's recruitment and retention policies, especially in relation to overseas teachers, is bringing a degree of much needed stability to the workforce.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Mulberry Primary School is a moderately effective school providing a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. There is a strong commitment to raising standards and decisive action is being taken by the headteacher and governors to bring about required changes. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning are improving. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are generally well below average at Year 6 but achievement is at least satisfactory, with pupils doing as well as those from similar schools
- The support offered to pupils with English as an additional language is very effective for those at an early stage of language acquisition but it is not so robust or effective for those at higher stages
- The very good attitudes shown by pupils towards school are attributable in large part to the very good partnerships with parents and considerable care shown towards pupils by staff
- The quality of teaching and learning is sound, overall, with good features, but there are inconsistencies
- Appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy but equality of opportunity is not sufficiently well addressed in other subjects
- The governors and headteacher are providing a strong leadership but a significant number of key staff do not fulfil their roles well enough to build on the school's strengths and to remedy weaknesses
- Provision for very young children in the nursery and reception is good but, in contrast, it is only satisfactory for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

This is the school's first inspection. Improvement since it opened has been satisfactory. Appropriate priorities have been established and the school has rightly focused on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Turnover of staff, although high initially has reduced, leading to greater stability, more effective teamwork and improvements in standards of achievement. Relationships are very good in all respects. This has been hard won and reflects considerable commitment by the staff. The limitations of the school building have been recognised. A major building project has started in order to bring the accommodation up to date.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - lowest five per cent.*

Similar schools are those that achieved similar average point scores at Key Stage 1.

Achievement, overall, is satisfactory. When children start school their attainment is generally very poor. Although they achieve well, very few reach the expected levels in any area of learning at the end of the reception year or subject at Year 2. Consequently, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Year 2 are well below average. The test results for 2003 reflect this position. The test results also show that pupils are achieving well overall, because although they do not do as well as those from similar schools in mathematics they do equally well in reading and do better in writing. Inspection findings for Year 6 indicate that pupils continue to achieve at a satisfactory level and standards are rising in English and mathematics. Although standards remain well below the national average they are better than in 2003 when test results indicate that they were poor (in the lowest five percent). In science improvement is not so well marked because the 2003 test results and inspection findings both indicate that standards are well below average. Nevertheless, the test results show that

Year 6 pupils did just as well as those in similar schools in English and science although they were below in mathematics. The test results suggest that Turkish and Kurdish pupils did not achieve as well as other groups. This was not borne out by inspection findings. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is very high, as, too, is the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. The school is increasingly successful in meeting the needs of these pupils, which is having a positive impact on levels of achievement. Boys and girls are attaining similar standards across the school.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils like school and the majority are keen to attend. As a result, attendance levels and punctuality are satisfactory, overall. Behaviour is good and there is a very high degree of harmony throughout the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Although there are some inconsistencies, due in large part to lack of experience, **teaching and learning are sound overall.** It is good in the nursery and reception. Recent changes to the deployment of the high number of teaching assistants is successful. As a result, pupils in most classes, especially those with special educational needs, are benefiting and this is contributing well to the school's work to improve standards. The curriculum meets statutory requirements but some subjects are not being taught often enough to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. The level of care and attention given to all aspects of pupil welfare is impressive, contributing significantly to pupils' self-esteem and the very high levels of racial harmony. Partnership with parents is very good. This is particularly evident in the way in which parents are welcomed into the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good and this is beginning to improve the quality of education offered to pupils. Governors are very perceptive, fulfil their roles effectively and are increasingly holding the school to account for standards attained. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of the requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship. Governors are seeking dis-application from this requirement. The strong lead taken by the headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and some senior managers, is contributing significantly to raising standards. This is particularly noticeable in relation to English and the support given to children from minority ethnic groups who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Although subject co-ordinators are generally aware of their strategic role, few are taking responsibility and fulfilling their roles effectively. As a result, progress towards raising standards is uneven and not as rapid as it should be.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents of children with ASD have concerns, but parents are generally satisfied with the school. They appreciate what the teachers do for their children but there is some dissatisfaction with lunch-time arrangements.

Pupils are happy with the school. They think lessons are interesting and they learn something new every day. They would like more opportunity to participate in music and physical education.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in all subjects throughout the school
- Continue to raise standards for EAL pupils; especially those at the later stages of English language acquisition
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all lessons come up to the best
- Improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum in all subjects to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils
- Improve the quality of leadership of subject co-ordinators so that they make a greater contribution to raising standards
- Improve provision for children with ASD

And to meet statutory requirements the school should:

- Ensure that a daily act of collective worship takes place for all pupils

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, taking into account levels reached in all subjects inspected, attainment is well below average. Nevertheless, pupils work hard and achieve well in relation to their very poor starting points. Although the school's targets for English and mathematics at Year 6 seem low, they are challenging given the school's context. The targets set for 2003 were met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Writing is a relative strength at Year 2
- Boys and girls and pupils from all types of backgrounds achieve well in relation to their own prior attainment
- Pupils with English as an additional language at an early stage of language acquisition achieve particularly well but those at higher stages could do better
- Pupils with ASD develop communication skills effectively
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, overall, because of the high levels of adult support but some could do even better if tasks in lessons were matched even more closely to their needs

Commentary

1. Although the school has only been open for a relatively short time and standards in all respects are well below national averages there are strong indications to suggest that standards are moving upwards. For example, in 2003, fewer than 50 per cent of pupils gained the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics. Predictions for 2004, based on robust assessments indicate that more than 50 per cent are likely to achieve Level 4. This is a small gain but the impact of the school's work is more noticeable in the infants and is gaining momentum, beginning to work its way through the school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23	26.8
mathematics	22.9	26.8
science	25.5	28.6

There were 86 pupils in the year group.

2. Children start with very poor levels of attainment in all areas. Many find oral communication in English difficult, regardless of whether they are part of the indigenous population or recently arrived in Britain as refugees or asylum seekers. In the main, pupils thrive in the nursery and reception classes and make significant gains in their knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. This is particularly noticeable in the areas of physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Nevertheless, standards remain below the expected levels for children at the end of the reception year.
3. The school has rightly identified improving standards in literacy as a key priority and every effort is made to help pupils reduce their learning gap. As a result, standards in the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening show steady gains, with many pupils working to capacity and achieving well. The school's records show that the attainment and

achievement of pupils who remain at the school for a substantial amount of time is satisfactory and the number of Year 6 pupils gaining Level 4 in the national test results is increasing gradually by a small if noticeable percentage each year.

4. The constant turnover of pupils due to the transient nature of the community is a significant barrier to learning. Nevertheless, when comparisons are made with other similar schools, Year 2 pupils are seen to do just as well in reading and better in writing. This reflects the inspection findings that many pupils in the infants work up to their potential. The school's efforts to raise standards in language and literacy is underpinned by robust assessment procedures undertaken by the English co-ordinator, good support for pupils with English as an additional language at an early stage of language acquisition, and high levels of adult support directed toward pupils with special educational needs.
5. The school is injecting considerable support into the junior classes with the result that standards are beginning to improve and pupils are enthused and motivated to learn. Proven good practice, such as teaching Years 5 and 6 pupils in ability sets and organising booster classes, are being implemented by skilled and energetic teachers. Inspection findings indicate that while standards are moving upwards the impact of these endeavours has yet to be reflected in the national tests taken by Year 6 pupils.
6. Although the school has given high priority to the key skills in English, similar work has been undertaken in mathematics and to a slightly lesser degree in science. Standards remain well below the national average but pupils are making appropriate gains, especially in numeracy, given their low entry levels.
7. Standards in all other subjects are below expected levels throughout the school. This reflects pupils' well below average standards in the key skills of speaking, reading and writing in English and the emphasis placed by the school on teaching literacy and numeracy lessons. However, there is a lack of rigour in ensuring that all subjects are taught consistently. This limits the school in its ability to raise standards across the curriculum and use opportunities provided through the study of all National Curriculum subjects to enable pupils to practice and demonstrate new learning in basic skills.
8. There is some evidence to suggest that the inconsistencies in teaching across each year group has a negative impact on the rate of progress made by pupils and, as a result, some pupils do not work to their capacity and achieve as highly as they might. Reasons for the inconsistencies in teaching vary, with no single aspect being dominant. The school is aware of deficiencies and is increasingly providing appropriate support so that pupils' needs are met.
9. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in the infants. National test results for Year 6 pupils suggest that boys perform better than girls, and Turkish and Kurdish pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils in the school. Inspections findings found very little to support this. Indeed, the work in books and engagement in lessons is similar for all groups of pupils, mainly because teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved and engaged.
10. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly assessed, supported effectively and achieve well. Those with English as an additional language attain standards in line with their peers. Their achievements over time are satisfactory. Pupils at the early stages of learning English achieve well as a result of good quality support, for instance, in the school's Immersion Class. The school's tracking of EAL pupils' progress shows that most pupils perform well after a consistent period of support when they first arrive. Progress of pupils on higher stages is not so well marked, due to a lack of such intensive, continuous support. Pupils acquire enough basic language to communicate effectively in class and to be able to access the curriculum. The gaps in progress become more apparent when greater demands are made on pupils' use of technical or subject specific language. Greater attention, therefore, needs to be given to extend their language skills through continuous expert support. The school has identified the need to focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and work has already started to

address this issue. For example, regular well-planned sessions are held for those pupils in Year 1 identified as being in need of most support.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They demonstrate engagement and interest in their work and enjoy being able to contribute to the life and work of the school. Their personal development is promoted well. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes and engagement in their learning are good
- Relationships and racial harmony are very good
- Pupils enjoy school and like being able to make a contribution to its work and to the school community
- Spiritual, moral and social development is good
- Cultural development is satisfactory, but not enough is done to take advantage of the rich diversity within the school community

Commentary

11. Pupils' attitudes and engagement in their learning are good. Pupils say they enjoy school and find the work interesting and challenging. They co-operate very well with one another, want to learn, and show interest and commitment towards their work. Most pupils in the nursery and reception classes initially find it very difficult to respond to structured activities and to play and work together. Although most will not have reached the expected levels by the time they complete the reception year they achieve well in relation to their starting point, especially in personal and social development. Most are able to concentrate, observe school rules, and participate well in learning activities.
12. The attitudes of pupils with English as an additional language are consistently positive in all lessons. They behave well, listen with interest and are enthusiastic about all learning. A similar picture emerges for others who have special educational needs. These pupils respond well to the gentle and caring methods used by the school to develop self-esteem. As a result, they work hard and are proud of their achievements.
13. Pupils welcome and actively participate in the many opportunities provided for them to take responsibility and show initiative. Individual class councils, and a whole-school council, provide effective platforms from which pupils can express their views, influence the development of school policies and actively contribute to the life and work of the school. Through these councils pupils have the opportunity to directly participate in the democratic process and develop negotiating skills and leadership qualities. The principles, knowledge and life skills required to live in a community are developed well.
14. Pupils develop good self-awareness and personal values through the good teaching of spiritual, moral and social values through assemblies, the wider curriculum, in particular through lessons devoted to personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHEC), religious education and the study of literature and poetry. Pupils learn to respect the views of others, develop good social skills and to act according to their own principles. They are prepared, in a mature way, to challenge things that they consider to be unfair.
15. Pupils develop a satisfactory appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions through:
 - opportunities to visit places of cultural and historic interest
 - performances in school by dancers and musicians of African and Asian origin
 - visits by story-tellers from other ethnic minority groups

16. However, the sharing and celebration of the rich diversity of cultural traditions represented by pupils in the school, and their families is not sufficiently well developed. For example, pupils are not sufficiently aware of the influences which have shaped their own cultural heritage and appear to have limited understanding of the heights of human achievement in all cultures and societies.

Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The school encourages parents to bring their children to school regularly and on time. The vast majority do so but a significant number have difficulties, especially when new to the school. Monitoring and analysis of attendance is gradually being improved but is still not sufficiently rigorous; for example, it is known that there is a high movement of pupils in and out of the school but there is no record of how much attendance time is lost during the transfer of pupils to other schools.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.0
National data	0.4

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

Behaviour in the classroom and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and welcoming to visitors and the quality of the relationships between all members of the school community is one of its strengths. This creates an environment where everyone feels safe and free from racial discrimination. To maintain its expected standards of behaviour, the school takes a firm approach to the use of exclusion. In the past year 14 boys have been excluded for a fixed period and one permanently. The school has suitable procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour, which recognises the rights of all pupils to be treated fairly and as individuals. A small amount of bullying occurs but the school's response is rigorous, quick and effective.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
58	6	1
196	7	0
25	7	0
80	5	0
150	4	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education is sound. Much of it is good but there are inconsistencies in teaching, learning and the curriculum offered to pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language who are at an early stage of English language acquisition are well supported and learn effectively. This is not always matched for those at the higher stages. Pupils with special educational needs are generally taught well, leading to good achievement. There is no significant

difference in the attainment of girls and boys or of those from different backgrounds and minority ethnic groups. The care shown towards all pupils and the partnership with parents is of a high order, which accounts for the good levels of behaviour and harmony throughout the school.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils learn well. The quality and use of assessment is satisfactory, although new recently introduced systems are likely to improve learning in the future.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Setting arrangements in literacy and numeracy lessons in Years 5 and 6 are effective
- Pupils in the early stages of English acquisition are taught well and achieve as well as can be expected of them
- Those at later stages of English language acquisition could be supported more effectively to build on the gains made initially
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well in small groups withdrawn from class, but tasks and activities could be even more effectively modified to meet their needs in lessons
- Teachers manage pupils’ behaviour effectively, fairly and consistently so that teaching time is not lost dealing with misbehaviour
- Teachers do not use assessment information enough to show pupils how to improve

Commentary

17. The quality of teaching, taking all inspection evidence into account, is sound for pupils of all backgrounds and capabilities. Support for those who need it is sound and sometimes good. There are variations between year groups, with some evidence of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1, 2 and 3. The strengths and weaknesses are recognised by the school and sensible plans have been drawn up to harness the strengths and improve the quality of teaching further.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 72 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11 (15%)	44 (61%)	14 (20%)	3 (4%)	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.

18. In the main, pupils benefit from teachers’ effective use of different teaching methods. Planning for most lessons is clear and based on learning intentions which are shared with the pupils. Time is used very efficiently and pupils’ behaviour is well managed to ensure that all can learn. Relationships between pupils and staff are trusting, which ensures that pupils feel safe and cared for, enabling them to relax and focus on their lessons. Consequently, pupils work hard, are keen to discuss their work and feel a sense of achievement, especially in their written work. Teachers work hard to ensure that all have the opportunity to achieve through thoughtful use of resources and support from teaching assistants. Pupils work well together in lessons, supporting one other and developing their social skills.
19. In the nursery and reception classes teaching is good. It is underpinned by good use of resources and interesting activities, which build well on children’s everyday experiences. The overall quality of teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Partnership teaching is a common feature, and most of the additional support is provided in lessons as opposed to withdrawing pupils into small groups. This ensures that pupils feel

included in lessons and part of their class. The support for pupils who have moved to the higher stages of English language acquisition is rather thin and mostly provided by their own teachers. Where teaching is good and a range of teaching methods is used, pupils achieve in line with their indigenous peers. The opportunities afforded for developing pupils' language in context, for example, through well-planned focus on subject-specific vocabulary, enables them to cope effectively with the language demands of English and the concepts being taught. Pupils are disadvantaged initially until they reach a satisfactory level of competence in English, but once competent they make expected gains over their time in school. In lessons where classteachers' planning takes account of their needs, and the tasks are well matched, pupils make good progress, achieving as well as can be expected of them.

20. In contrast to this good picture, some teachers are not fully aware of the full range of language needs of pupils with English as an additional language and do not make good use of interesting and appropriate resources for young learners. Although there are some resources such as story books and dictionaries in pupils' home languages, they are not sufficient in quantity for the number for pupils at the school and what is available is not always made best use of. The amount of time afforded by the English as an additional language co-ordinator is often not enough to give the degree of specific and well-planned support needed for targeted individuals. The quality of teaching by the English minority achievement co-ordinator, as judged in one particular lesson, was very good.
21. A strength of the school is that pupils are assessed for their competency in the spoken English language and placed on one of the five stages. The assessment of pupils' needs in other aspects of English does not form part of this assessment and, as a result, the picture of pupils' needs is often incomplete.
22. Most teachers provide individual support in the classroom for pupils with special educational needs. Where appropriate, individual education plans are used to set targets which are included in the class planning documents. This ensures that those pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are well supported and their difficulties addressed. Changes have been made to the method of deploying teaching assistants. They are generally allocated to support one class. Although this is a recent development, inspection evidence shows that it is having a measure of success, especially in relation to continuity and progression in pupils' learning and teamwork. In the majority of classes, teaching assistants are deployed well to those needing support. They are usually well briefed, but there is a tendency for teachers to rely on the input provided by teaching assistants rather than modifying tasks to specifically match pupils' needs. As a result, pupils have a limited opportunity to develop independent learning skills. Furthermore, well-planned group teaching by the class teacher for pupils with special educational needs does not take place as often as it should to ensure that pupils receive the same level of expert teaching as all other pupils.
23. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well but are not yet making sufficient use of assessment to adapt and target work effectively for all pupils. Pupils know what they are meant to learn but are not given sufficient information on how they will know if they are successful, and so are unable to assess their own progress and motivate themselves not to accept second best. Assessment systems in the school for tracking pupils' progress are relatively new. They are currently used for literacy and mathematics and have enabled the school to identify and provide additional support for pupils who need it. Outcomes are also being used to set targets for all pupils. This has been successful in improving the achievement in writing. In some classes, these targets are shared with pupils and a 'target sheet' is placed in the front of exercise books so that pupils can be expected to achieve their best. This good practice is not consistent throughout the school and so development of pupil independence is patchy. Similarly, marking and the use of the last section of lessons (known as the plenary) are not as robust and effective as they should be in support of identifying what pupils know and understand.

24. Teaching and learning is noticeably effective in Years 5 and 6 where pupils are grouped according to ability. They are taught in four groups rather than three, thus reducing the size of each one considerably. Teachers are very well prepared for these sessions and have high expectations of their pupils. The ideas and content of the lessons is the same, but the methods of teaching and the tasks set are suitably modified to match the needs of each group. Analysis of current standards shows that pupils' attainment is likely to exceed that of the previous year, indicating that improved teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 is leading to an improvement in standards, overall.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory, overall. Opportunities for additional activities outside the school day are satisfactory. The accommodation and resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory in the light of the current programme of major rebuilding and refurbishment works. Staffing levels and expertise in subjects is satisfactory but the school has a generous number of teaching assistants for the number of pupils on roll.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is satisfactory, but there are some imbalances in the time spent teaching subjects in some year groups
- Provision is good for pupils with special educational needs
- Provision is good for those at the early stages of learning English but is not as robust for those at later stages of learning English
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is good given the limited outdoor provision
- Provision for PSHE is good and complies with all requirements for drugs, sex and relationships education
- The full potential of opportunities within the community are not exploited to enrich the curriculum and to extend pupils' experiences

Commentary

25. Following the recent amalgamation, and in light of pupils' needs, the school has rightly concentrated on improving the curriculum in English, mathematics, and science (the core subjects). The school has introduced overall curriculum plans that ensure National Curriculum statutory requirements are fulfilled.
26. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are in place and there are a good number of catch-up programmes for pupils at risk of falling behind. Schemes of work based on national guidelines have recently been put into place for all subjects, including religious education and personal, social and health education. The curriculum for children in reception and nursery is good. It is broad, balanced and covers all the areas of learning as required for children of this age.
27. The impact of work done to improve standards in the core subjects has yet to show in the results of the national tests at Year 6, but inspection findings indicate that it is having a measure of success in raising standards in these subjects. However, advances in achievement and standards in other subjects of the curriculum are not so well marked. Inspectors focused on the core subjects during the inspection but analysis of work in non-core subjects indicates that standards are barely satisfactory.
28. A significant contributory factor to this position is that there is an imbalance between the time allocations for subjects in some year groups. Consequently, not all subjects are being taught to the same degree or in sufficient detail. Therefore, pupils in the same year group do not always have the same level of knowledge and understanding and in some cases, such as music, they are not achieving as well as they might. In particular, history, geography, music, design and technology have suffered. Another factor is that in general not enough opportunities are

provided for pupils to substantially consolidate and apply their literacy and numeracy skills as part of work in other subjects.

29. The school is aware of the imbalance between the numbers of girls and boys in some classes. Tasks and activities are selected to appeal to both groups and this is successful in motivating and interesting pupils in lessons. In contrast, topics and units of work do not always relate well to the backgrounds and cultural heritage of pupils attending the school. This limits the school in its ability to make learning as real and as relevant as it could be to the everyday lives of its pupils. For example, there was very little evidence that the rich and interesting cultural traditions of Travellers have been used as a stimulus for learning, even though Traveller children do attend the school.
30. Opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to participate in all curriculum related tasks. The planned activities, the quality of support and teacher intervention ensure equality of access to the curriculum. However, the lack of continuous support for pupils at the higher stages of learning English affects their full access to the curriculum on offer.
31. A clear distinction is made between pupils with EAL and those with special educational needs. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of pupils learning English as a new language, in all school activities. There is appropriate focus on developing subject-specific vocabulary. However, some classteachers' planning does not always take account of those new arrivals with little or no English.
32. The school's provision for enrichment of the curriculum is satisfactory. The opportunities for learning outside the school day are satisfactory, although limited in number. There has been a satisfactory number of educational visits linked to learning, such as visits to The British Museum, Bethnal Green Museum, and The National Gallery. Year 6 undertake a residential trip to Wales and there are trips to various London parks for younger children. There have been limited opportunities for the participation in arts and sporting events, although this is now being addressed through the school's involvement in a music pilot scheme. There have been some visitors such as the local vicar and Turkish and Kurdish story-tellers but the use of the rich and diverse community to enrich learning is limited.
33. Since the school opened, the lack of permanent teaching staff has affected the quality of teaching and the development for many areas of the curriculum. The school now has a satisfactory permanent staffing level, although there is still a number of temporary teachers. The number of support staff is high in comparison with the average for a school of this size. Their effectiveness varies, and ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. There are enough learning support assistants to provide satisfactory levels of support for pupils with special educational needs, but this is not always extended to all lessons and to all pupils who need support, for example, those pupils who are at a later stage of learning English.
34. The school buildings and grounds are sufficient to enable all National Curriculum subjects and religious education to be taught. However, they are not cohesive, convenient or conducive to teaching and learning in modern-day Britain. In particular, the playground and site are very exposed, bleak, and underdeveloped. There is no grassed area for pupils to play in and mobile classrooms restrict the use of the current tarmac play area. The inadequacies of the site have been recognized and a major building project is underway to improve facilities. Internally the school has three halls and a gymnasium. The gymnasium is difficult to use for its original purpose because a mezzanine floor, to house play centre offices, was constructed last year.
35. The school is aware of the requirement to conduct a daily act of collective worship. Governors have applied for dis-application from this requirement and are awaiting a decision. At the time of the inspection the school is not meeting its statutory obligations in this respect.

Care, guidance and support

The welfare, support and guidance afforded to pupils are very good. There are very good procedures for welcoming new pupils and their parents into the school. The procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and dealing with child protection issues are very good. The school is very good at seeking out and acting upon pupils' views. There is a strong commitment to pupils with English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good care, support and guidance based on good monitoring, particularly for those with special educational needs
- Very good induction procedures help pupils joining the school to settle in well, especially for those with English as an additional language
- The school respects its pupils and values and acts on their views
- Relationships are very good and pupils trust their teachers and other staff

Commentary

36. The school supports its pupils very well. Staff know their pupils and give very good care and guidance that is well matched to their individual needs. The school promotes a caring ethos that encourages pupils to work hard and do their best. There are very good induction procedures to welcome the constant flow of new arrivals and help them settle successfully into the routine of school life even when, as in numerous cases, they have no previous experience of formal education. A mark of the school's success can be observed in the confident way pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs become happy members of the school community.
37. Relationships are very good and pupils trust their teachers and other staff. Pupils are confident that, when they have concerns or need to seek support and guidance, staff will listen and respond to their needs. One Year 6 pupil was very complimentary about the support she had received when her parents were going through a divorce. Although lunch-time supervisors carry out their responsibilities reasonably well, many pupils express dissatisfaction with the way in which disputes are managed during the midday break. This is a small but important area for development.
38. Child protection procedures are effective because those responsible are very experienced and staff well trained and alert to the needs of vulnerable pupils. The school maintains close links with social services and all relevant external agencies that promote and support the welfare of pupils. Health and safety procedures are rigorous and risk assessments and actions meticulously recorded. There is good provision for first aid. The school has developed a good personal health and social education programme that teaches pupils about personal hygiene, drugs awareness, relationships and sex education. The school also runs a breakfast club that is very well attended and is a much-valued social occasion for those who attend.
39. Pupils' opinions are valued and acted upon. The members of the class councils, and whole-school council, take their responsibilities very seriously and function as effective consultative links between pupils, their class teachers and school management. There are very good induction arrangements for children and their parents when they first enter the nursery and reception classes.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership between the school and parents is very good. Parents are happy with what the school provides and the majority help their children with their learning. The school has satisfactory links with the wider community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is welcoming towards parents and maintains a close relationship with them
- Parents' views are sought and valued
- Special workshops encourage and enable parents to support their children's learning
- Annual progress reports do not contain enough information on pupil progress and future learning targets
- The school is not drawing sufficiently on the cultural richness and experience of the community to enhance the curriculum

Commentary

40. The partnership between the school and parents is very good. Parents indicate a high level of satisfaction with many aspects of the school's provision and are particularly positive about the openness of the school, its welcoming attitude towards them and the availability and high profile of the newly appointed headteacher. The biggest disappointment for some parents is that, in their view, the support offered at lunch-times does not match the high levels of support offered at other times of the school day. This is recognised as an area for development by the school. Many parents make a point of meeting class teachers at the end of the school day and attending class assemblies when their children are involved. Parents like the weekly newsletters and feel confident about approaching the school if they have any concerns, in the secure knowledge that any issues they raise will be noted and dealt with.
41. Parents much appreciate the many opportunities provided for them to attend special curriculum workshops, such as those in English and ICT, and to access additional training in the skills that will help them to support their children's learning. Because of this support many parents are able to play an active role in encouraging their children's learning and achievements. A number of parents volunteer their services to help in the classroom. Over time, some of these parents have undertaken further training to become learning support and teaching assistants.
42. Parental support for pupils with English as an additional language is sought effectively where needed. Translators and translations are arranged if and when needed. The on-going interaction between school and home in supporting the learning of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. However, there is potential for ethnic minority parents to be involved more actively with the school.
43. The information provided for parents about their children's progress is satisfactory. The annual progress reports do not present a definitive judgement on progress linked to National Curriculum levels, except at the end of Years 2 and 6, do not include any pupil self-evaluation or targets to guide future learning. This judgement confirms the views expressed by some parents at the pre-inspection meeting. Parents are, however, offered the opportunity of attending a termly meeting with class teachers where they are able to discuss their children's progress and future learning targets. Translators are available at these meetings for parents who are not fluent in English. More comprehensive reports would enable parents to better prepare for these consultation meetings.
44. Parents of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs are fully involved in the school's process of monitoring and evaluating the progress made by their children. They are invited to attend a meeting each term, where their child's individual education plans are reviewed and targets are agreed for the coming term's work. This is contributing significantly to the achievements made by these pupils.
45. The school promotes satisfactory links with the community. There is a good relationship with the parish church and established links with both the Turkish and Somali communities. However, the school is not currently making full use of the cultural richness and experience of the wider community to enhance the curriculum and broaden the experience of its pupils. Some of the work being undertaken through the Zone of Excellence funding is beginning to have

an impact on the school's work in the community and with other schools. Currently, the links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory, and useful contacts and relationships are being developed well for the future.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governance of the school is very good. The governing body has taken a very strong lead in moving the school forward since its formation in 2002. The newly appointed headteacher is providing very strong, decisive leadership. The deputy headteacher and most other senior managers fulfil their roles effectively. Leadership offered by some senior teachers and subject co-ordinators is largely ineffective. Governors have considered the school's context very carefully and as a result have requested dis-application from the requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship. Although there is non-compliance with this particular requirement, all other requirements are met fully.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governors' commitment to the school, together with their awareness of its strengths and weaknesses result in high but not unrealistic expectations
- The headteacher's ability to judge the school's performance accurately, identify priorities and take appropriate action provides a very strong sense of direction for the school
- The very strong commitment demonstrated by the deputy headteacher and some other senior colleagues to including and meeting the needs of all pupils is helping to establish increasingly effective teamwork
- Performance management is not used effectively to ensure that all experienced teachers and subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles effectively and play an appropriate part in raising standards
- Policy and practice in relation to continuous professional development is weak, resulting in inconsistencies in teaching and learning
- Lack of clear leadership in relation to the Provision for pupils with ASD has limited the school in its ability to make best use of this facility

Commentary

46. The school has clearly stated aims and is successful in implementing those concerned with behaviour, relationships and values. On these issues staff have pulled together effectively and have achieved much despite a high turnover of pupils and teachers. The school has a calm and caring ethos. Pupils co-operate with each other and there is a great sense of harmony and racial tolerance throughout the school.
47. Governors take a keen interest in the school. They are perceptive and, while accepting the demands placed on staff of working in an area of high social disadvantage, are acutely aware of their role in ensuring that pupils receive their full educational entitlement. Consequently, they offer appropriate levels of support but are confident enough to challenge the school in order to secure high quality provision. They are increasingly working in true partnership with the school and this is contributing significantly to the school's work to drive up standards. This is evident in relation to the rigour applied to analysing standards of attainment and achievement for all ethnic groups represented in the school and the care taken in ensuring that the school's race equality policy is implemented effectively.
48. All statutory requirements are met, with the exception of holding a daily act of collective worship. Prior to the amalgamation, the junior school successfully secured dis-application from the requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship. The governors, in consultation with staff and parents, have considered the school's position since amalgamation and have submitted a similar application for the new school.

49. The newly appointed headteacher is very experienced and knowledgeable about running a school in the heart of London. He is aware of the school's context and the significant barriers to learning which exist for his pupils. He clearly expects staff to support and show high levels of care for all pupils. They understand the issues related to health and welfare of children and meet the expectations placed on them very well. In addition, the headteacher is committed and suitably determined to establish a high performing team which is focused on raising standards of attainment so that pupils achieve as highly as they possibly can.
50. In the short time since the school opened the governors have rightly pursued issues related to resolving the very low standards attained by pupils in the national tests at Years 2 and 6. Gains made in the initial phase of the school's existence have been recognised and valued by the new headteacher. Nevertheless, decisive action has been taken in relation to a lack of capability of some teachers and deployment of teaching assistants to ensure that pupils get the best from the school. The focus on literacy, numeracy, supporting pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language who are at an early stage of English language acquisition, is largely effective. Booster classes, special focus groups and teaching Years 5 and 6 pupils in ability sets for literacy and numeracy are successful. Evidence suggests that leadership in these areas is reasonably effective, gaining momentum, and that standards are moving in the right direction even though steps are small and hard won. For example, the deputy headteacher has undertaken a thorough analysis of assessments in English and her work is instrumental in raising standards in key skills of writing; especially in the infants. The co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language is very clear about what needs to be done to further improve the quality of provision for these pupils. This includes advancing her role in monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning and the impact of the school's provision in meeting the needs of pupils; especially those at the higher stages of English language acquisition. The special educational needs co-ordinators (one of whom is recently appointed) show similar levels of insight and recognise that more must be done to ensure that the work set for pupils in all lessons is matched better to their specific difficulties, and that teaching assistants need to be trained and deployed even more effectively.
51. The lead taken by other key teachers, such as subject co-ordinators, is not so well marked. Management responsibilities are fulfilled with varying degrees of success but very few understand how to lead effectively and in the worst cases there appears to be a lack of willingness to engage in monitoring performance and helping to establish appropriate strategies for maintaining strengths and remedying weaknesses. Performance management has not been used effectively to unite the whole team in pursuit of common goals and to determine how each person should contribute to progress in reaching overall targets. This accounts for much of the discrepancy in relation to the lack of clear leadership by middle managers. Another factor is that until recently there has been little emphasis placed on continuous professional development and providing suitable avenues for teachers to learn from each other and to improve their own levels of expertise. This is reflected in the inconsistencies seen in the quality of teaching and learning.
52. Nevertheless, there is an air of optimism in the school and a buzz of excitement. Some teams are working very well together, such as the teams who work together in Years 5 and 6. Some subject co-ordinators, such as the information and communication technology co-ordinator, are quietly but efficiently moving things forward in their area of expertise.
53. The school is fortunate in that it has special provision for pupils with ASD. Although there are strengths in this provision, the lack of clear and substantial leadership, until very recently, has reduced the school's capacity to make the most of this facility. Under the circumstances, teachers have worked well together and most pupils have made reasonable gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,783,744	Balance from previous year	n/a
Total expenditure	1,753,744	Balance carried forward to the next	30,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,727		

54. The budget allocated to the school is appropriate for its size and the expenditure per pupil is about average for schools in London. It was difficult for the school to untangle its budget due to complications arising from the amalgamation but the figures presented are now true and accurate. The school's own monitoring systems and financial management are becoming increasingly robust, so much so that the school was able to identify an error in the amounts provided by the LEA in relation to its start-up allocation. Funds secured for special projects and in support of different groups of pupils are spent wisely. The financial plan and school development plan are coming into line so that the school is improving its position in relation to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of spending on school improvement priorities.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

The special provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders is barely **satisfactory**. There are some strengths but there are significant weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make satisfactory overall achievement, but achieve well in their communication and numeracy skills and in their ability to be sociable
- The quality of teaching is good, overall, and pupils learn well, building key skills and understanding on a daily basis
- The curriculum is too narrow and is unsatisfactory. This impedes pupils' achievement over a wide range of subjects and skills
- There is very limited inclusion for pupils in mainstream lessons where appropriate
- The special provision lacks overall leadership and direction. This is unsatisfactory, but is recognised by the school and is being addressed
- The newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator has recently become involved and, as a result, there are now high quality individual education plans, target-setting, monitoring and reviews
- The school is committed to developing this provision as a high quality resource for the pupils and the community

Commentary

55. Pupils in the special provision are quickly helped to become more settled so that they can learn in a calm, well-ordered environment. Their good achievements in developing social skills cannot be separated from other learning and contribute well towards it. Pupils' achievements in communication, speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy are usually good, with a few making very good progress in these basic skills. For example, one boy with limited language, is now able to follow instructions to put a purse in a red bag and then into a bigger bag. As with several pupils, this boy has learned to point to himself to show he is responsible for something. Achievement in communication is shown in unexpected ways, with pupils drawing what they know quite clearly, or leading an adult towards something they need. Spoken language is clear and several pupils have a good developing vocabulary. Some very good

achievement in numeracy includes matching, sequencing and counting skills being developed quite quickly.

56. Teaching is good, with good planning for a predictable structure. The pupils follow a pictorial timetable and have well-established routines throughout the day. This helps them to know what will happen next and adapt to changes quietly. Very good individual targets ensure that pupils build their learning systematically and new skills are practised every day. The teachers and teaching assistants understand the individual needs of pupils very well and use humour and imagination to keep them focused and on task. Pupils evidently enjoy themselves, for example, they loved playing different percussion instruments and listening to them being played back on a tape recorder. The warm, caring atmosphere in lessons is a delight.
57. The main weakness of the provision is the narrowness of the curriculum, which is unsatisfactory, leading to satisfactory rather than good overall achievement. This is linked to too few opportunities for pupils to be included in the mainstream school. There are, for example, insufficient activities for physical education, with no swimming, gymnastics or games. Music, drama and science are also too limited. The accommodation is attractive and comfortable, but does not have enough space or equipment for the full curriculum, which is compounded by a lack of use of the main school facilities. The teachers have had some, although not enough, training in special methods, which they use very effectively, and learning support assistants rely on training from the teachers. These limitations are a direct result of there being no leadership and direction for the work of the unit until very recently. The new headteacher has brought in specialists to audit and develop the work and the new special needs co-ordinator has introduced very high quality target-setting and assessment to support lessons. A person will be appointed to take charge of the provision in the autumn term to address these shortcomings further. There is a very good long-term vision and planning to improve the school's work in relation to ensuring that:
- all pupils have equality of opportunity to participate in activities
 - racial discrimination is eliminated
 - good race relations are actively promoted.

Furthermore, these plans are sufficiently detailed to enable the school to realise its aim of becoming a centre of expertise so that it can provide good support for other schools.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There are currently 160 children in the Foundation Stage, 78 in the nursery class and 82 in the three reception classes. Attainment on entry to the nursery is very poor in comparison with that expected for children of this age. They receive a mixture of part-time and full-time provision. Children are taken in as young as three when there are available places to fill. The children join the reception classes in the year in which they are four.

Overall, provision in the nursery and reception classes is good. The provision for children's learning in most areas is good. All pupils achieve well.

Over 75 per cent of children who enter the nursery have little or no English and have significant language and social needs. Most of these children make good progress because of the support given to them and the emphasis placed on the development of personal, social and language skills. The good provision in the Foundation Stage means that all children, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. However, by the end of reception, standards are still at least one or two years below those expected nationally for children of this age. Strong dedicated leadership in the nursery and reception classes ensures that all staff members are well supported and work together as an effective team. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has led her team of teachers, nursery nurses, and teaching assistants to be consistent in planning and assessing children's achievements so that previous learning is built upon well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Trusting, warm relationships between all adults and children result in a pleasant place to learn
- Well-established routines and good models of behaviour reinforce school rules and result in an orderly community
- The children's good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to their achievements in all areas of learning

Commentary

58. Children's enjoy coming to the nursery and this continues when they join the main school. Members of staff expertly establish warm and trusting relationships with children. They act as good role models so that children behave well and are keen to learn. These good attitudes ensure that children engage well in all activities, steadily make progress in knowledge and understanding so that they achieve well, overall. A structured induction programme, and concentration on the development of social and personal skills in children's first term in school, ensure that they settle in well. Parents feel confident and comfortable in speaking to staff. This is because of the welcome and openness to parents at the start and end of sessions in both the nursery and reception classes. Good teaching builds swiftly upon successful relationships to teach the children to be responsible. They can sit and concentrate in whole-class sessions or when working as a group, taking turns and sharing with their peers. The establishment of good classroom routines teaches the children to be independent, so that both boys and girls are able to choose their own activity. All children, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress but the lack of English often means that they lack the vocabulary to express their needs and feelings. All achieve well in this area given their very poor levels on entry, but the majority are unlikely to meet the expected level at the end of reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn well because staff make good use of resources designed to support communication, language and literacy
- Good teaching promotes the learning of English by many of the children, but some opportunities for this are not always used consistently

Commentary

59. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, overall. Teachers ensure that there are many planned activities that concentrate on improving speaking and listening skills. This is very effective in meeting the needs of the large number of children who are at an early stage in developing linguistic skills, especially those learning English as an additional language. Many opportunities are provided for them to talk to adults and one another. Constant repetition of vocabulary and the use of resources are two teaching methods used very effectively to promote children's understanding of vocabulary. However, this is not consistently used in all four classes and opportunities are missed to reinforce language. Role-play, puppets, props, and pictures are used well to stimulate the children's imagination. Staff often model play to initiate talk and draw out the children's speaking skills. Because of the availability of books and the numerous stories read to them, most children are able to handle books well. Most listen well, but the lack of English limits their understanding. Some are beginning to link letter sounds to read and write simple words. Children are given regular opportunities to experiment with making marks and writing. Some children are beginning to form letters correctly and show good pencil control. Only a third of the children in reception are likely to reach the expected standards by the end of the year. However, children achieve well given a very low starting point.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of activities and resources supports the learning of number, shapes, space, and measures
- Small focused groups, including good use of resources, provide intensive teaching that promotes high levels of pupil engagement and learning

Commentary

60. The quality of teaching is good and children achieve well. Good links are made between the development of language skills and mathematics. While working with one group in the nursery, the teacher used repetitive instructions and reinforcement of vocabulary so that children were able to recognise numbers up to two. Children were encouraged to request a piece of fruit and to use correct vocabulary in a sentence "I want one banana please". In reception classes, children can match numbers up to nine, can recognise some shapes, and are able to use positional language such as up and down. Only a third of the children are likely to reach the standard expected by the time they begin Year 1, and overall attainment by the age of five is likely to be well below that normally expected. Nevertheless, given their very low starting point, this means that the children make good progress.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning involves offering numerous activities that help to reinforce learning in several areas of the curriculum

Commentary

61. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Focused, well-planned teaching provides a good range of opportunities to extend children's understanding of the wider world. Very good use of support staff ensures that all children are fully included in all aspects of their learning. Activities include real experiences with a link to language and mathematical development so that all children can be included and learn together. Children are confident in using computers and can use large and small construction equipment to build towers or houses. A third of the children are likely to reach the expected standard by the time they enter Year 1, but overall standards at the age of five are well below those normally expected. However, given their very low attainment on entry, all children make good progress and achieve well because of good teaching.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities and teaching promote good achievement in many aspects of this area of learning
- A very small and poorly equipped outdoor play area limits opportunities for physical development through play and exploration

Commentary

62. The current outdoor space is too small for the number of children using it. It is shared between nursery and reception classes. The equipment and resources for outdoor play are poor and inadequate for the number of children using them. Teachers use the sparse facilities they have well, but the lack of space and equipment impairs progress. Three teachers in the reception classes use the main hall to teach physical education as intrinsic lessons and this supplements the lack of outdoor facilities. In a good lesson in reception, the teacher used a parachute to develop children's throwing, crawling, co-ordination and co-operative working skills. This was linked well with extending vocabulary and understanding. The teacher encouraged the children to repeat vocabulary such as push, pull, higher and lower, while demonstrating with the parachute what this meant. Children make very good progress in this area because of very good teaching. There are well-planned opportunities for children to improve their physical skills in both nursery and reception classes. Various learning areas encourage them to use a good range of tools and materials. Good adult support provides guidance so that children achieve well; for example, demonstrating how to use scissors, hold a paint-brush and decide on shapes and colours. In one reception class, children could demonstrate their skill in threading beads and following a pattern, although as one said "It's a bit fiddly". They are able to run, climb, jump, and work creatively and imaginatively. Consequently, they make very good progress, and many children are likely to achieve the expected level by the end of reception, and overall attainment is very good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of role-play and teacher modelling play
- A good range of activities caters well for all areas of creative development in the nursery

Commentary

63. The quality of teaching is good because a range of well-planned art activities in vibrant surroundings improves children's learning. Children use a wide range of materials, including pencils, crayons, paints, modelling materials, beads and counters. The resources for this area of learning are adequate in quantity but, because of the large numbers of children using them, they need to be replenished regularly to maintain their overall quality. Children were able to join in favourite songs and follow rhythms, matching actions to words, and playing co-operatively. Many opportunities to encourage speaking, listening, and exploration are included in the range of activities. Teachers often model activities so that children feel confident in participating in them. The majority of children are unlikely to reach the standards expected of them, nationally, by the end of the reception year. All children achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry to the nursery.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and the way pupils learn is good, overall, but there are inconsistencies which lead to slower progress for some pupils
- Many pupils learn to speak, read and write fluently and with enthusiasm at their level
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in their writing
- The subject is very well led and managed and is improving steadily
- Teaching assistants and mentors provide good, effective support for pupils
- Some work is too difficult to help lower-attaining pupils to build on their learning

Commentary

64. Standards are well below average throughout the school but pupils of all abilities achieve well, working up to their potential and making good progress in relation to their very low starting point. However, there are signs that standards are beginning to improve. Some good and very good achievement has been seen for individuals. This is true for speaking and listening, reading and writing. Many pupils barely speak English because English is not their first language. A high proportion have special educational needs with speech, language and reading difficulties, as well as problems forming letters and controlling a pencil. In all year groups a significant number of pupils start and others leave the school. This mobility factor creates a noticeable degree of instability for the school. These barriers to learning are overcome through good quality lesson planning using the National Literacy Strategy and systematic building of skills based upon what pupils have previously learned.

65. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 gradually learn how to speak confidently, ask questions and give their views. They also become familiar with books and their favourite stories, some reading regularly on their own. They do particularly well in writing and produce some interesting stories about real things that have happened to them, as well as imaginative events. One pupil in Year 2 learned to use more creative words and eventually wrote "When he walks he creeps, his claws are so sharp he can scratch somebody." Lower ability pupils show a steady gaining of skills; for example, one pupil advanced from dictating and copying text to shared writing, which was increasingly accurate, lively and interesting.
66. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop the full range of English skills, many developing as analytical readers, contributing constructively to class council meetings and writing for several different purposes, such as letters to community leaders. Punctuation and vocabulary levels improve for all ability groups and handwriting is generally neat. Many pupils, however, lack knowledge of how to use a library because there are few library lessons for all age groups. For pupils in Years 3 to 6 this is made even more difficult because there is no library; this is unsatisfactory and limits their reading development.
67. There are inconsistencies, however, and some pupils do not show the progress seen with the majority. This is usually due to weaker teaching and lesson planning. For example, teachers usually have appropriately high expectations to make sure that learning moves forward but for some these capabilities are too high. A few pupils of lower ability in every year group are unable to understand their reading books, which are not well matched to their reading levels. This is also evident in lessons, where a few teachers do not adapt lesson texts well enough for pupils whose reading is at an early stage of development. In these lessons pupils can not progress and lose confidence. Teachers rely too heavily on the skills of learning support assistants and learning mentors. These support staff are skilled in making sure that almost all pupils can do the work eventually. Without work being adapted at the planning stage, however, progress tends to be slower and the resulting lack of confidence adversely affects pupils' willingness to work hard.
68. The majority, roughly two-thirds, of teaching in English is of a good or very good quality. This is because teachers and learning support staff understand the pupils very well and match the work well to their levels of achievement. There is generally good use of questioning to involve pupils and to check that they have understood. Pupils behave very well in English because teaching is good and lessons are well-structured and interesting. A wide variety of activities and games helps pupils to enjoy themselves and so that they remain very enthusiastic. Clear objectives, which are explained well, as well as good individual targets, ensure that pupils know how to succeed and so learning is systematically built from lesson to lesson; some make exceptionally good progress as a result. In a few lessons, opportunities were missed to help pupils who were learning to speak English, or particularly the boys with learning difficulties, to understand more by providing pictures as well as text.
69. The subject is very well led and managed and this is resulting in improving standards. The co-ordinator does a very thorough job of monitoring pupils' achievements in reading and written work, and the quality of teaching and planning. The results are analysed and improvements to provision systematically implemented. For example, booster groups have been formed to improve writing for pupils of different abilities, and individual teachers are guided in what they need to do to help pupils learn more effectively. The co-ordinator recognises the need now to focus on reading, speaking and listening. Inconsistencies in the quality of provision, not just in English lessons but in literacy right across the curriculum, are clearly understood and are being addressed, showing a good capacity for better achievement in the future.

Literacy across the curriculum

70. Overall, the teaching of literacy in other subjects is satisfactory. In the good lessons, for most subjects, teachers take care to involve pupils in discussion and sometimes engage them in high quality debate. In one Year 4 design and technology lesson, for example, pupils were able

to say just how different alarms can be used and gave some lovely examples of alarms having been set off and what had happened. In a few lessons, discussion is limited to one-word answers and speaking and listening skills are not taken forward sufficiently. Key words are usually explained well and the system for doing this is consistent across the school. This is a key factor in the steady development of pupils' reading and spelling vocabulary. However, there are also examples in several subjects where opportunities are missed. For example, in geography and history, too few lessons result in written work of a suitable standard. This hinders the efforts of the English department in raising the quality of writing further.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy mathematics and have very positive attitudes to learning
- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are suitably supported and achieve well
- The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well and is having a positive impact on standards in mental arithmetic in particular
- Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not sufficiently support improvement in work
- Standards achieved are well below average throughout the school
- Insufficient practical application of mathematics in other subjects
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but with some weaknesses

Commentary

71. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are well below what is expected for their age. Nevertheless, they use their time in school productively, and achieve well in relation to their very low starting point. The school's inclusive climate for learning promotes good attitudes towards the subject in all pupils, which contributes well to overall learning and achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported and make the same progress as their peers.
72. The school is working closely with the local authority to raise standards. There are new initiatives; for example, the introduction of 'Springboard', a catch-up programme for pupils in the junior classes. The introduction of Year 6 'booster classes' has resulted in more effective smaller group teaching and greater pupil confidence and self-esteem in their ability to succeed. Most initiatives are still too recent to have had their fullest impact, but the changes have produced a strong, coherent structure, which should continue to raise standards in the future. For example, the assessments for each year group are thorough and used for identifying teaching groups and setting clear learning targets. But this practice is not yet fully embedded, and in some lessons results in a mis-match of work to pupils' abilities.
73. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented effectively. Teaching in numeracy lessons is satisfactory, overall, with instances of both good and unsatisfactory teaching. Satisfactory teaching contributes to pupils' ability to perform written computations and to recall and calculate mental challenges using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Most pupils are able to explain their different methods of calculation. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use to a good effect in lessons. Teaching of mental mathematics is good in almost all lessons, and this quality is reflected in pupils' improving knowledge of numbers. Pupils enjoy learning and are excited by the challenge in some lessons. A good example was seen during the inspection in a Year 6 lesson, where very good teaching resulted in most pupils thoroughly understanding the ordering of fractions. The teacher in this lesson used questioning, explanations and demonstration very effectively. The very good teacher pupil relationships encourage pupils' confidence and help them to achieve. The two unsatisfactory lessons in

Years 1 and 2, were characterised by tasks that were often either too difficult for the lower-attaining or too easy for the average attainers and this slowed down pupils' learning. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. It is regular and encouraging, but not always diagnostic in helping pupils to make improvements in their work. Information and communication technology skills are used inconsistently in mathematics.

74. The subject leader for mathematics offers satisfactory leadership. The action plan is clear and forms a significant part of the school's overall improvement plan. The priorities include rigorous checks in teaching and learning, and the need to ensure appropriate coverage and in-depth study of all aspects of mathematics; for example, 'shape space and measurement' and 'data-handling', which are currently underdeveloped.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory, although not abundant. Most teachers are not yet using cross-curricular approaches sufficiently in their work; therefore, pupils are not applying their mathematical skills regularly in other subjects. The school is helpfully aiming to improve the quality of problem-solving in mathematics by treating it as a cross-curricular learning skill, which can usefully be applied across subjects as well as in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good development of factual knowledge and technical vocabulary
- A good plan to improve the provision for the subject
- Pupils' attitudes are good and they show interest and enthusiasm in their work
- There is a lack of a rigorous approach to the assessment of teaching and learning
- Pupils' development of their reasoning and independence is limited through too much support in recording

Commentary

76. For a majority of pupils in the school, English is not their mother tongue and a high proportion have special educational needs, so the development of literacy skills needs to be undertaken within all lessons. Good teaching is ensuring that standards in science are being raised and most pupils are achieving well from a very low base. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they are engaged by the practical investigative activities offered. Workbooks show careful recording of scientific knowledge, and the use of structured sheets and technical vocabulary cards ensure that all pupils are able to record their findings effectively. Nevertheless, standards are generally well below average.
77. Pupils in Year 2 have satisfactory understanding of electrical circuits, knowledge of the range of electrical equipment used in everyday life, and know that mains electricity is dangerous. They know which equipment uses batteries and which mains electricity. Good team teaching between the class teacher and the teacher supporting pupils who have English as an additional language ensured in one lesson that all pupils were learning scientific terms and understood their meaning. Pupils achieved success in creating electrical circuits; one child said "wicked!" when he had completed a circuit and lit a bulb. Understanding of circuits was well supported by pupils forming a circle, holding hands and squeezing to pass the electricity from the battery to the bulb.

78. Pupils in Year 6 are engaged in being forensic scientists to find out which of six white powders was the compound at the scene of the crime. Discussions between groups of pupils demonstrates clear reasoning and this is clearly communicated between them. They use their knowledge of dissolving and purifying, reversible and irreversible reactions, to narrow down and identify the suspect. Pupils are supported with structured recording sheets and vocabulary cards to record their findings.
79. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils can achieve success with a variety of support provided. They provide interesting practical activities and ask challenging questions. Sometimes, as in Years 3 and 6, pupils' recording is unnecessarily supported, stifling independent thought and the setting of their own hypotheses. Assessment is unsatisfactory because it is not consistent and progressive and pupils' year group weaknesses are not identified and addressed. Marking does not always support pupils in identifying how they might improve. Homework, where it is set, is relevant to the lesson and suitable for all pupils.
80. The co-ordination of science has been patchy. As a result, leadership and management of the subject have been barely satisfactory. This is reflected in the lack of any substantial work being undertaken to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Consequently, the rigour associated with supporting and challenging teachers to improve has been largely missing. However, the newly appointed science co-ordinator has a clear vision and understanding of how to promote high quality in science and is being given the management opportunities to implement her ideas. She has identified areas for development and is keen to develop exciting resources, increase teacher confidence and improve assessment. Resources for science are appropriate and of good quality, although the potential for using ICT to support teaching of science has not been realised. The school is in a strong position to move forward.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average throughout the school
- Pupils work hard and achieve as well as they can given their very low starting points
- The hardware and software is neither cohesive nor compatible, which limits the school in its ability to ensure that pupils make sufficiently rapid progress to reduce gaps in their knowledge and understanding
- The co-ordinator is motivating and encouraging teachers so that there is growing confidence, commitment and competence in relation to teaching skills in information and communication technology
- Teachers are supported well by the technician so that lessons run smoothly

Commentary

81. The vast majority of pupils have limited experience of all forms of technology prior to entry to school, largely due to high levels of poverty and lack of opportunity associated with families on low incomes and those who are refugees or asylum seekers.
82. Standards of attainment are much lower than expected for pupils throughout the school, yet they achieve well in relation to their starting point. Pupils enjoy work associated with computers and many are fascinated by the capabilities of modern equipment. They co-operate well with one another when working in the computer suite, persevere with tasks and generally demonstrate good attitudes to learning.
83. Pupils show growing awareness of control in a range of devices and competence in manipulating computer tools such as keyboards. Computer programs give them appropriate experiences in relation to dragging, rearranging and placing images on the screen. Work on

control technology, data-handling and word processing enables pupils to develop appropriate skills, and to understand the range of different uses of technology and its importance in today's society.

84. The quality of teaching and learning until recently was largely unsatisfactory because there was no coherent approach to the subject and a lack of resources. Due to the strong guidance and good leadership of the co-ordinator this position is being reversed. The quality of teaching and learning is now more consistent and of a satisfactory standard. Teachers are more confident in their own abilities as competent users of the hardware and software available to them. They plan work well under the careful and thorough guidance of the co-ordinator. As a result, information and communication technology is gaining a higher profile in the school's curriculum and pupils are covering more work specified in the National Curriculum. Although there is limited evidence to show that information and communication technology has been used effectively to support learning in all other subjects in the past, schemes of work and lesson plans indicate that much more is being done now and to a greater depth.
85. The school has a small computer suite. This is no longer adequate for the school's needs and the systems installed are not compatible with other systems used in different parts of the school. The technician offers a very high level of support so that, despite the limitations of the resources, lessons proceed well and pupils are making gains in knowledge and understanding. The support offered by the technician is a major factor in ensuring that lessons take place because teachers are confident that any technical malfunctions will be corrected swiftly, causing minimum disruption to lessons and disappointment to pupils.
86. Special initiatives, such as Alpha Smart 3000, which harness the capabilities of technology to advance pupils' skills in writing and their general awareness of the world of technology, have been grasped, so much so that an article featuring the school appeared in a national newspaper.
87. The major building project currently underway incorporates a new information and communication technology suite. Furthermore, the school has secured involvement in new information and communication technology initiatives. Although these developments are still on paper, they demonstrate that the school recognises the need to improve provision in this vital area of the curriculum and is taking imaginative measures to improve resources and raise standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. Information and communication technology is used reasonably effectively to support work in literacy and numeracy. This is appropriate given the emphasis placed on these priority areas throughout the school. Analysis of work shows that information and communication technology capabilities are being used in other subjects, such as art and design, with reasonable effectiveness. The school has rightly recognised that this is an area for development and the co-ordinator has sensible plans to move this forward.

HUMANITIES

89. Work in **history, geography and religious education** work was sampled. No lessons were seen; therefore, a firm judgement cannot be made on provision but inspectors looked at pupils' work, analysed teachers' plans and met the co-ordinators.
90. In **history and geography**, the work scrutiny and detailed timetable analysis reveal that there have been insufficient opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding in these subjects. Furthermore, there are discrepancies between the amount of work produced by pupils in similar year groups and the depth to which units of work are studied. For example, in the autumn term 2003, in Year 2, there are only two or three pieces of work for a whole term covering the Great Fire of London. In the spring term, there is evidence of work undertaken in relation to developing pupils' understanding of maps in one class but not in the other two. This indicates that

improvement is needed in the coverage of the curriculum and standards of work in these subjects. The co-ordinator is aware of the barriers to learning faced by the school but

lack of training and experience as a co-ordinator is limiting her ability to improve levels of attainment, teaching and learning in history and geography. This is most keen in relation to raising standards in the key skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

91. The **religious education** curriculum introduced at the time of the amalgamation ensures that teaching of the subject takes place following the locally agreed syllabus. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about a range of religions and to begin to understand the similarities and difference between the major world religions. The work seen indicates that a variety of tasks and activities are used to add variety to teaching in this subject. Pupils take a pride in their work, and recorded work shows that literacy skills are being extended in religious education lessons. However, the overall volume of work is insubstantial and suggests that not enough time is given over to this subject in all classes.
92. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and clearly has a keen interest in this area. He helps teachers with resources and is able to tap into connections within the community to borrow artefacts when the occasion arises. The overall management of the subject is satisfactory, given the fact that religious education is not a priority for the school at the moment. However, leadership is not as robust as it should be to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement and that teachers' expertise keeps abreast of requirements to teach religious education to a sufficiently high standard. For example, ideas and information gained from courses and training events are not disseminated widely or frequently enough to help teachers remain up to speed with current good practice. There are no assessment procedures in place to track pupils' progress or to assist teachers in planning work for pupils of different abilities.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. It was only possible to sample work in **art and design**, so a judgement cannot be made about the school's provision in this subject. Curriculum plans, displays and samples of work were examined and a discussion held with the co-ordinator.
94. The displays and records of children's previous achievements and the detailed curriculum plans indicate that there are opportunities to learn some skills and techniques but that not all areas of the art curriculum are being covered. Pupils are given the chance to develop their observational skills through pencil sketching, shading and the use of pastels, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to use paint. Year 2 pupils showed good observational skills in pencil sketches of their school, which were then developed into a painting. In Year 6, pupils had observed leaves, fungi and flowers and produced pictures in the style of Georgia O'Keefe, demonstrating good observation of shades and tones of colours as well as form. Pupils in many classes are given opportunities to see artists' work and create pictures based on their styles. They also use this approach to develop skills in ICT whilst using painting programs.
95. Work in three dimensions is found in Year 5, where pupils have made clay pots in the style of the ancient Greeks. These demonstrate a variety of painted and surface decorations. Other three-dimensional work was produced in the art club, based on the Chinese New Year, using paper-folding and large-scale work with cardboard. Printing is undertaken in Year 1, as well as on textiles in Year 3. Links with literacy are made with collages of scenes from fairy tales. Opportunities for developing understanding of different cultures are missed in this subject, as are opportunities for enabling those whose language skills are at an early stage to work at the same levels as others.
96. The co-ordinator is aware that art and design is not taught consistently across the school. She feels that when the subject can be given higher priority she will be able to move it forward effectively.

97. In **design and technology** just two lessons were observed, so an overall judgement on provision and the quality of teaching and learning cannot be made. Curriculum plans, displays and samples of work were examined and a discussion held with the co-ordinator.
98. Good enthusiastic leadership by the co-ordinator is raising the profile of design and technology within the curriculum. She has ensured that the resources needed are now available and has provided training for staff. There is a plan in place to develop the subject further and ensure that it is fully covered.
99. Planning and displays show that structures are covered well by pupils in Year 1, creating houses out of card, and in Year 2, developing winding mechanisms which require a suitable choice of materials. In Year 3, photo frames are designed and made and in Year 4 some delicate money containers, involving sewing and decoration. In Year 5, pupils design and make musical instruments. Opportunities to do more control are needed as only in Year 6 have pupils made a moving vehicle linked to electrical circuits. There are very limited amounts of textile and food technology work.
100. Pupils design before making and their sketch-books include their designs. Some pupils review their designs and discuss how they might improve them. This opportunity for self-assessment needs to be developed further.
101. Owing to the timetable arrangements, insufficient evidence was available in either **music** or **physical education** to make a judgement on standards or the quality of the provision.
102. Both subjects are planned using the national guidance to ensure coverage of the required skills throughout the school. The scrutiny of the school's timetables indicates that neither music nor physical education are allocated sufficient time for teaching all aspects of the subjects. Very limited teaching and learning is currently taking place in physical education, due to the building works. There are limited extra-curricular activities in music and sports.
103. A small group of Year 1 pupils was seen using a selection of percussion instruments and showing good enjoyment at learning to listen and play a rhythm. The session contributed well to their social development of taking turns and using the instruments with care and respect.
104. Observation of a clarinet lesson, with a small group of Year 4 pupils noted, a very good quality of teaching and learning. The enthusiastic teaching by the visiting music teacher encouraged pupils to learn to be part of an orchestra. These pupils had very positive attitudes to learning. There is currently no co-ordinator to oversee the development of music within the school. Resources for the subject are limited in range and quality.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

105. Only two lessons were seen in this area of the school's work. Therefore, no judgement can be made in relation to the overall provision. However, the school's aims and values underpin all aspects of this subject so that it is a successful element of school life. Pupils' personal development clearly has a high profile and the school actively seeks pupils' views and acts upon them. The school council and class councils make a very significant contribution to the school's work in this area. The school's work in relation to ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils is of a very high order. This is reflected in the sex and relationships education and the drug and alcohol education programme taught at the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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