

INSPECTION REPORT

RICHARD ALIBON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dagenham

LEA area: Barking and Dagenham

Unique reference number: 130357

Headteacher: Miss Margaret Smith

Lead inspector: David Whatson

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th October 2003

Inspection number: 257308

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	436
School address:	Alibon Road Dagenham
Postcode:	RM10 8DF
Telephone number:	020 8270 4706
Fax number:	020 8270 4709
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. T. Wade
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Richard Alibon Primary School is bigger than other primary schools. It is situated in an area of east London that is one of the most deprived boroughs in the country. The school draws its pupils from the immediate area, which is a mix of local authority and owner-occupied housing. There are 412 pupils on roll, with a further 49 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Overall there is a broad balance between the number of boys and girls, although there are some variations in specific year groups. The economic circumstances of many families are below average and 28 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The intake is ethnically diverse. There are 12 different ethnic groups represented at the school. Many pupils are of White British origin. The second largest group are of Black African heritage. The group of pupils who are learning English as an additional language (2.1 per cent) is slightly higher than in most schools, but very few pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. There are a few looked-after children. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (23 per cent) is above the national average, although this varies between year groups. Many pupils have learning difficulties and a few have emotional and behaviour difficulties. There are 20 pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Eighteen of these pupils attend a designated base at the school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. As well as their general learning delay, some pupils have other obstacles to learning deriving from medical conditions or sensory disabilities. Attainment on entry to the nursery class is below average. The rate at which pupils start or leave the school at times other than at the start of the school year is slightly higher than is normal; this varies between year groups. The school provides community provision for a family-learning programme.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23494	D. Watson	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Pupils with English as an additional language Pupils with special educational needs Educational inclusion
1165	P. Dannheisser	Lay inspector	
32218	A. Mumford	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
32142	B. Richmond	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education
32155	C. Taylor	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Citizenship
19827	M. Henderson	Team inspector	The provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Richard Alibon Primary School is a **satisfactory school** with some strong elements. The quality of education it provides is satisfactory. As a result, most **pupils achieve as expected** and develop into mature, responsible and caring individuals. **The school provides satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the majority of pupils of average and below average ability, including those with learning difficulties both in the main school and in the base for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, demonstrate good achievement;
- more able pupils and those learning English as an additional language are not carefully identified or provided with appropriate work and support, especially in English and mathematics;
- current assessment procedures are not consistently applied across the school and are not used to change lesson plans or to involve pupils in their learning;
- pupils' behaviour is good, as are their attitudes towards each other and work;
- pupils are well cared for in a safe place because of good levels of care and rigorous procedures;
- numerous out of class activities and links with other schools enrich pupils learning;
- the systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are not rigorous enough.

Improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory. They have been good in science and information and communication technology (ICT), but satisfactory in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception), in pupils' understanding of number, opportunities for writing and in formalising the curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement at the school **is satisfactory** as many pupils achieve well, but others, especially the more able, underachieve. Children's attainment at entry is below that expected. The youngest children at the school and those in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily but do not reach the expected standards for their age. Standards, based on the national test and teacher assessments in 2003 for pupils in Year 2, are well below the national average. For many pupils achievement is good in Years 3 to 6, but standards remain well below average in the national tests at the end of Year 6. In both year groups results did not compare well when judged against similar schools, except in English in Year 6 where results were above average. These low standards are partly because of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties at the school, but also because more able pupils do not achieve the high standards of which they are capable.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 (excluding those pupils in the base), compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	D	D	B
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	C	D	E	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2*

Other than in English there is no consistent difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The few pupils learning English as an additional language make similar rates of progress to others at the school but do not always achieve their best. Pupils of different ethnic minorities, particularly Black

African heritage, also make satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning disabilities, both in the base and in the school, achieve well in relation to their targets.

Most pupils start school with standards below those expected. By Year 6, standards in art and design and in ICT are in line with those expected nationally. Standards are above expectations in aspects of music and physical education. In all these subjects and in their personal, social and health education, including citizenship, pupils' achievement is good. In Years 2 and 6, standards in history and religious education are below those expected. This represents satisfactory achievement.

Pupils' personal development is **good**. Their **moral** development is **very good** and their **social** development is **good**. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Their behaviour and their attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are **good**. Attendance has improved but remains **unsatisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory**.

Teaching is **satisfactory** in most subjects in Years 1 and 2 and the Foundation Stage and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching in many subjects in Years 3 to 6 is good and most pupils achieve well. Across the school, most of the satisfactory teaching is in English and mathematics. The few pupils learning English as an additional language learn at the expected rate because of the emphasis placed on language development at the school. They do not achieve their best as their needs are not well analysed and not all teachers have the skills or experiences to teach them. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory.

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Aspects of the curriculum, such as the provision for pupils with learning difficulties, are good, as is the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. A wide and interesting range of out of class activities enriches pupils' learning.

Pupils receive very good care and support. Pupils with learning difficulties receive strong support. The school has good links with its parents and good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of **leadership and management** is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory, as is the effectiveness of the management and governance of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents consider that the school provides well for all aspects of their children's education. Most pupils agree.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise the achievement of the more able pupils and those learning English as an additional language in all subjects and especially in English and mathematics;
- improve assessment procedures so that they provide more accurate and useful information and so that teachers use the information to raise the achievement of all pupils;
- develop a wide range of systems that allow all members of the school's leadership, management and governance to monitor and evaluate the work of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement at the school is **satisfactory**. Many pupils achieve well but others, especially the more able, often underachieve. Children's attainment when they start school is below that expected for their age. **Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are below the expected level.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, history and religious education are below those expected.
- Pupils' achievement is better than expected in science, ICT, art and design, physical education and their personal, social and health education - including citizenship - because of the quality of teaching.
- From nursery to Year 6, more able pupils, those who are gifted and talented and those few pupils learning English as an additional language underachieve.
- Standards in singing and dance are higher than those normally seen.
- Pupils with learning disabilities achieve well in relation to their individual targets.
- Due to the school's efforts pupils of below average and average ability achieve well and their results in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been improving.

Commentary

1. Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Attainment at entry to the nursery is below the expected level. The youngest children demonstrate satisfactory achievement but do not reach the expected standard. Although children with average and below average ability are appropriately catered for, not all the more able children are identified or provided with challenging work.
2. Standards in Year 2 in English, mathematics and science are below those expected, but show an improving upward trend. In ICT standards are below expectations in Year 2. In religious education pupils do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. At the end of Year 6, standards are below the expected level in English, mathematics and science. They are better than those achieved in the 2003 tests because of the good level of support that many of them receive to overcome their weak literacy skills. Standards are below those expected in history and religious education. In ICT, physical education, art and design and music pupils achieve well and standards in Year 6 are in line with those expected. In personal, social and health education, including citizenship, pupils achieve well throughout the school and reach standards above those normally expected.
3. Pupils with learning difficulties in the main school achieve well because of the good support they get. Teachers are adept at including them in each part of a lesson. Learning support assistants provide good direction and guidance so that they complete their tasks.
4. Pupils learning English as an additional language make similar progress to others because of the emphasis placed on the development of English language skills across the school, but they do not always achieve their best. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, especially those of Black African heritage, achieve satisfactorily. The achievement of more able pupils and those whom the school has identified as gifted and talented is unsatisfactory in relation to their capabilities because they are rarely provided with work that specifically challenges them.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003. These figures (*) exclude pupils in the base.

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.58* (14.68*)	15.9 (15.7)
Writing	13.46* (13.95*)	14.8 (14.3)
Mathematics	14.47* (15.46*)	16.4 (16.2)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Since 2000, there has been a steady improvement in results in Year 2. This is because teachers have targeted their efforts to raise the achievement of pupils of average and below average ability. In relation to their prior attainment and their capabilities, most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in the 2003 national tests for Year 2 were well below the national average in reading and writing. Mathematics results were very low. Science results were well below average. When compared with similar schools, reading, writing and science results were below average and mathematics results were well below. The low standards shown in the data are partly because of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties at the school and partly because more able pupils do not achieve the high standards of which they are capable. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was very low when compared with similar schools (this year group has similar levels of pupils with learning difficulties as other schools).

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003. These figures (*) exclude pupils in the base.

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	*26.05 (*25.91)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	*25.11 (*23.84)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	*27.53 (*27.98)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Since 1998 the school's results at the end of Year 6 have improved at a faster rate than the national trend. This is because the school has focused on raising the achievement of pupils of average and below average ability. Test results at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics have improved over the past two years. They fell in science. These test results are below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools the results are above average in English and below average in mathematics and science.
7. There has been no consistent pattern of difference in the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics or science across the school, or in English in Year 2. In English at the end of Year 6, however, the gap is greater than is found nationally, with boys under performing more than the girls. Last year, this was due to the far higher number of boys with learning difficulties than girls.
8. Overall, pupils' literacy skills by the end of Year 6 are below those expected and this has a detrimental effect on their learning in subjects that require a lot of reading or writing, such as history and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is **good**. Their **moral** development is **very good** and their **social** development is **good**. The provision for both the **spiritual** and **cultural** development of pupils is **satisfactory**. Their **behaviour** and their **attitudes** to their work and towards others in the school are **good**. **Attendance** has improved in the last three years but remains **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance figures are below average for the country. However, they are improving due to staff efforts.
- The school is successful in promoting pupils' personal growth because of the importance placed upon it by the headteacher.
- The high expectations of all adults and very good teaching of the idea of right and wrong help encourage pupils' good, and sometimes very good, behaviour.
- Because of good social development, pupils think of others, work and play well together and take on responsibilities gladly.

Commentary

9. The school is successful in promoting pupils' personal growth because of the importance placed upon it by all the staff and particularly the headteacher. Children enter the nursery with levels of behaviour that are lower than expected for their age and with unsatisfactory attitudes to work and school. By the end of Year 6, because of very good moral and good social provision, pupils are well behaved and have positive attitudes towards school and work. All pupils spoken with during this inspection like being at school and parents confirm this in their answers to the pre-inspection survey.
10. The school focus on moral development is consistently very good and very effective throughout the school. All adults take time to explain to pupils what is right and what is wrong. These messages are reinforced in assemblies, class discussions and the school's provision for personal, social and health education.
11. The school's provision for social development is good. Through meetings, discussions, leaflets and the home-school agreement, pupils and parents are in no doubt as to the school's expectations.
12. Pupils with learning difficulties are encouraged to take part in all activities and follow the same rules as everyone else. There are plenty of toys and games to play at lunchtimes. Older pupils who have asked to be a member of the Richard Alibon Playground Squad (RAPS) wear their yellow caps with pride and do a good job. All pupils, irrespective of ability, gender, ethnicity, or linguistic ability, have the same chance to apply for the post. Once appointed, they support midday staff and help maintain the pleasant atmosphere at lunch times with calm and orderly playground activities. Behaviour in the classroom is generally good, although at times a little fragile. There have been no recent exclusions and one short exclusion in the previous year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	405	2	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	29	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

13. The school's good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship, has a high profile in the school and this has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour as well as the speed at which they mature into sensible and confident individuals. The emphasis placed on oracy at the school also encourages pupils to express their feelings well.

Attendance in the reporting year 2002/3 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.0	School data:	0.7
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence.

Unpublished attendance figures for 2002/3 show that attendance is still below the national average. However the figures are improving – especially the number of unexplained and unauthorised absences. The school's approach to improving attendance is mainly good. Comparative attendance rates of different groups of pupils are not analysed or monitored.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is also satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** and **pupils achieve satisfactorily**. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils achieve well in these years. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and the Foundation Stage. Across most of the school, teaching is also satisfactory in English and mathematics. **Assessment is unsatisfactory.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment is unsatisfactory and not used consistently.
- The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties is good overall due to the work of teachers and support staff.
- The teaching of science, ICT, art and design, dance and singing is good but it is satisfactory in English and mathematics.
- Teachers are skilled at meeting needs of below average and average ability pupils.
- In Years 3 to 6 the teaching is largely good, but in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 it is mainly satisfactory.
- The teaching of the few pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

14. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils' learning is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is not consistent between year groups or across subjects.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 68 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (1)	7 (10)	28 (42)	29 (43)	3 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)

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

15. The overall quality of teaching is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be good. There has been some change of teaching staff in the last two years, but staff mobility has not been very significant. The quality of teaching noted at the last inspection has not been maintained because the monitoring of teaching has not been robust enough and there has been a lack of focus on the more able pupils.
16. The quality and use of assessment is unsatisfactory because it is inconsistent and not used to improve pupils' learning and achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties have their progress carefully tracked against their targets. Children in the Foundation Stage are also carefully assessed. But in the rest of the school there is a variety of assessment recording and reporting methods. These are more developed in the core subjects than in the foundation subjects, such as ICT, but in some subjects they are non-existent. During some lessons, such as ICT and science, teachers, especially in Years 3 to 6, often assess well. They are aware of pupils' different abilities and ask them different types of questions. They also modify their lesson plans in the light of how well the class has achieved. However, in other subjects, such as mathematics, teachers do not spend enough time at the end of a lesson questioning and discussing the work with the pupils. This valuable opportunity to assess learning is therefore missed. The quality and use of marking is similarly inconsistent. In mathematics it is often good, teachers assess pupils' work carefully and provide guidance on what they need to do to improve, but this type of marking is rare in other subjects, such as English. Assessment is rarely used to identify the more able. This group of pupils goes largely unidentified. Neither do many teachers use the assessment information they have on individuals or groups of pupils to provide different tasks for pupils of different abilities, especially in mathematics. Invariably all pupils do the same work. This is often aimed at pupils of average and below average ability and is thus undemanding for more able pupils. The assessment of pupils learning English as an additional language, both first stage language learners and those more competent, is unsatisfactory.
17. Teamwork is strong at the school and learning support staff make valuable contributions to pupils' learning, especially those with learning difficulties. There is a good level of

communication between teachers and support staff, who are also involved in monitoring the progress of the pupils they care for. Pupils with learning difficulties have clear individual education plans; individual targets are well written and pupils' progress is well tracked against their targets. Their learning is good. However, the targets are not so well used by teachers when support staff are not present. The few pupils learning English as an additional language, although well cared for and often well supported in the general level of teaching, do not have their specific needs met in the most appropriate ways as teachers are not knowledgeable about how to do this.

18. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching in the main part of most lessons, including English and mathematics, when the class teacher is instructing and leading the class is frequently good. The good relationships, born out of the school ethos and mutual respect, ensure pupils are secure and confident. Most pupils, including those from different ethnic backgrounds, are therefore willing to participate in lessons. Teachers reward this participation with good levels of praise. They value what pupils say, thus encouraging them to say more. This technique supports the school's drive to raise standards in speaking. To support this further teachers employ many activities that encourage pupils to talk, for example discussion between partners. This good level of oral work enables many pupils to overcome the difficulties they face with writing and reading and achieve well. One of the strongest skills teachers have is their ability to question. They use a range of questions that are appropriate to pupils of different abilities. They ask questions that require simple, sometimes one word answers from the less able, but ask more challenging questions of the more able. These require them to explain their work and teachers often follow their initial question with another probing question. In questioning, teachers ensure that all pupils, including boys and girls, take part, thus ensuring a similar level of achievement regardless of gender. In Years 1 and 2, however, the quality of these skills is not as good. Teaching is satisfactory overall, as are pupils' achievements. This is because the pace of lessons is slower, with the teacher taking more time to explain work and settle the pupils rather than engaging them in discussion through good, challenging questions. As a consequence, more able pupils fail to take part and do not achieve as well as they could. This is also true in the nursery and reception classes, where teaching often lacks imagination and drive.
19. The overall quality of teaching and achievement varies between subjects because of the quality of planning. In subjects such as science, physical education, ICT and art and design, teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan their own lessons. In these they clearly recognise the needs of pupils of different abilities, especially the more able. Teachers, therefore, build on the challenge made during the main teaching part of the lesson and provide extension tasks that enable pupils to work at their own ability. In these subjects, especially in Years 3 to 6, teaching is good and pupils achieve well. In English and mathematics, however, this is not the case. In these subjects, teachers use a scheme of work that is heavily scripted and aimed chiefly, although not exclusively, at raising the achievement of average and below average pupils. Teachers' delivery of the scheme, coupled with good teaching skills, is the main reason why the achievement of these groups has improved in recent years. Teachers rarely provide separate tasks for more able pupils. For example, in mathematics all pupils start their work from the same page of the same book, irrespective of their ability.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not provide fully for the needs of all its pupils.
- Good provision for pupils with learning difficulties ensures that they achieve well and are involved in all aspects of school life.

- Good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education underpins their good attitudes and behaviour.
- Good accommodation provides many specialist spaces for lessons.
- Pupils enjoy the benefits of an enriched curriculum, especially due to their encouragement to participate in sports and the arts.

Commentary

20. The commitment of the headteacher to broaden the curriculum and introduce subject specialists in dance and singing from external agencies has enriched the curriculum and has ensured pupils achieve well in these subjects. Pupils are encouraged to participate in both sports and the arts. Involvement in dance competitions and the much loved school productions, such as 'The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up', are significant reasons why pupils say that they enjoy school and why parents believe that the school provides well for their children. Support for learning outside the school day is good. Although there are few educational trips, opportunities for learning outside the classroom are good. In addition to the sports and drama events there are sailing courses for pupils as well as a one-week school journey for pupils in Year 6. Pupils also take part in many Borough events and the school funds swimming and short tennis lessons and visits from theatre, music, dance and drama groups.
21. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and has a high priority at the school. This is well structured and contributes well to pupils' responsible attitudes, good behaviour and attitudes to work.
22. The school provides good additional support for pupils with learning difficulties. Through careful planning between the teachers and support assistants, these pupils needs are often well met in the classroom. This results in these pupils making good progress. There is a good match of trained and experienced support staff who are deployed well when working with these pupils.
23. The school accommodation is good. The excellent library facilities support the development of pupils' reading skills. Similarly, two good-sized and well-equipped halls and a computer suite promote pupils' good achievement in physical education and ICT.
24. In many respects the school is strongly committed to providing the best opportunities for all pupils to achieve. This is evident in support for pupils with learning difficulties and the focus on improving the achievement of pupils of average and below average ability. It is also demonstrated in the way the school's welcoming ethos that values pupils from different ethnic minorities helps pupils from these groups settle so well at the school. However, they have not sufficiently addressed the needs of more able pupils, those who may be gifted and talented and the few but growing number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. These pupils' progress is limited because their needs are not well planned for or supported.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for the **care, welfare, health and safety** of pupils. It also provides them with **satisfactory support, advice and guidance**. The school provides **good** opportunities to seek out **pupils' views and involve them** in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe.
- Pupils do not always know how to improve their work as they are not always given the information or support they need to achieve their best.
- Pupils are proud of their school and develop mature and sensible attitudes because they are closely involved in the life and the running of their school.
- Behaviour is good as a well understood behaviour policy is used consistently by all staff.

Commentary

25. Regular health and safety audits are carried out, as are thorough risk assessments to help ensure pupils work in safe and secure surroundings. First aid provision is good and the building and its grounds are clean and well kept. The nursery outdoor play area and its equipment are old and worn, but the school already has plans for their improvement.
26. The school operates a very efficient system for child protection. Staff understand how to deal with any protection issues and staff, particularly the headteacher, monitor carefully those pupils not living in their own homes. Those pupils with learning difficulties are well cared for because of the good level of caring adult support. There is also a special support assistant available to counsel those who have personal needs.
27. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds as well as those learning English as an additional language are well cared for because of the importance that the school places on promoting good relationships in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to do their best. There is a reasonable range of intervention programmes to support pupils' learning, especially that of the less able. However, the few pupils learning English as an additional language are not always given the most appropriate support as their needs are not accurately assessed and teachers do not always know how to provide for them. Although the school has identified those pupils who may be gifted and talented, they are not providing sufficient support for them. Neither their progress reports nor the marking of their work give all pupils a clear and individual indication about what further steps they should take to improve the standard of their work.
28. The guidance given to pupils' personal development is good. Their behaviour is carefully tracked and there is close liaison with home should problems arise. To encourage good behaviour pupils are able to win individual and classroom rewards and both pupils and adults fully understand the school's behaviour policy. This is consistently applied across the school.
29. Pupils very much enjoy coming to this school. They say that they like and respect their teachers and there are very good relationships between staff and pupils. The RAPS squads chosen and trained to support pupils in the playgrounds help give all pupils a feeling of being cared for. Many pupils comment on how much they value the RAPS and aspire to be one. Although there is no school council, most pupils have some experience of contributing to the shaping of their school. Pupils' involvement in the school is good as can be seen in the membership of many clubs and pupils' enthusiastic involvement in impressive school performances, such as 'Bugsy Malone'.

Partnership with parents, other schools, and the community

The school has developed a **good** partnership with its **parents, carers** and **local schools and colleges**. Links with the **community** are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' education is well supported by good links with the local secondary school and with local special schools.
- Due to the leadership of the headteacher, parents are well supported and given good opportunities to be involved in the life of the school and their children's education.
- The support of some parents for their children's learning is not as great as it could be.
- Annual pupil progress reports do not contain sufficient information to help pupils know how they can improve.

Commentary

30. Professional links between the school and staff of the local secondary school are good and enhance the continuity offered to pupils. Equally the school is in close touch with a local school for pupils with learning difficulties. The sharing of expertise and resources is very good and enhances the education of pupils with learning difficulties at the school.
31. Links with parents are good and parents have favourable opinions about the school. The school has, as a priority, attempted to build good links with the parents in order to improve the aspirations of many of them. There are good procedures for the induction of new children to the Foundation Stage. There is a good range of activities aimed at informing parents about what their children are learning and how they can be supported.
32. Parents are welcome to help in school but few take up the offer and there are few activities in the school to involve them in their children's learning. However, many parents come into school when their children are taking part in class assemblies and many come to a meeting when specific subjects are being explained, for example mathematics. The school has provided facilities for the local college to run courses at the school but attendance has been limited. There are relatively few opportunities for pupils to go on visits. The school has endeavoured to put on educational trips, but some have had to be cancelled because of a lack of parental support.
33. Most parents feel well informed about how their children are progressing, but the annual reports do not give them much information about how their children could improve their standard of work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of **leadership and management** is **satisfactory**. The **leadership of the headteacher** is **satisfactory**, as is the effectiveness of the **management** and **governance** of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Within the school's good commitment to equality and meeting pupils' individual needs there has been insufficient emphasis on raising the achievement of all pupils.
- The headteacher has a clear vision that is centred on providing a wide range of opportunities for all pupils and raising achievement.
- Performance management has been used well to help raise achievement.
- The headteacher's calm and caring manner, along with that of her senior management team, influences staff, pupils and parents to create an orderly school that is respected and valued by many.
- There is little regular or robust monitoring or evaluation of the school.
- The school's deficit budget is being managed well.

Commentary

34. The school is not as well led or managed as at the time of the last report as it is not firmly focused on raising the achievement of the more able pupils or providing a rigorous system by which to monitor and evaluate the school.
35. The headteacher is committed to raising achievement. She has, through her good leadership in this respect, raised the achievement of many of the pupils at the school. From being an improving school at the time of its last inspection, it now provides a sound level of education that has some good elements. Part of the headteacher's vision, shared by staff and governors, is centred on achieving good standards in pupils' personal development. The success here, and the enjoyment that pupils have in participating in sport and the arts, is due largely to her influence. The headteacher's commitment to equality of opportunity is strong and is evident in the way that pupils with learning difficulties in the base and in the school are involved in all

activities. She is passionate about the individual needs of many pupils, such as looked-after pupils, but has not devoted the same time and energy into meeting the individual needs of either the more able pupils, those who are gifted or talented or those learning English as an additional language. This is why overall leadership is only satisfactory.

36. The senior management team share the headteacher's convictions. It provides a reasonable level of support to school improvements, but has not been sufficiently rigorous in developing the curriculum or the quality of teaching. For example, since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the weaknesses identified in the Foundation Stage, but some remain, for example it continues to lack challenge. The leadership of some subject areas is good, such as ICT, special educational needs and English. These co-ordinators, through their good vision and energy, have brought about change.
37. The school is committed to improvement. The headteacher and staff have recognised some of the barriers to raising achievement, for example levels of oracy and parental aspirations. Their efforts in oracy have been successful. But subject co-ordinators and the senior management team do not regularly monitor the work of the school and measure its effectiveness. This has meant that developments in some areas of the school, such as the Foundation Stage, have been slow. Lesson observations are conducted as part of the school's performance management of its staff. But the observation of teaching is not common practice, nor is the monitoring of pupils' work, teachers' planning or their assessment records. The school does analyse trends in pupil performance. This helps to identify the main priorities for development, such as mathematics. However, the analysis is not carried out to a depth that would provide greater insights into the achievement of different groups of pupils at the school, such as those born in the summer months. As a consequence the school improvement plan has been narrowly focused and has not included important issues such as raising the achievement of more able pupils. Subject plans, and in part the school improvement plan, are written as a list of activities and not as a series of aims or objectives. As this is coupled with a lack of measurable targets it is not a useful tool to measure how effective the school has been in tackling areas for improvement and what the school needs to do next to improve further.
38. Performance management procedures at the school are in line with statutory requirements. They have been instrumental in some key areas, for example raising achievement in mathematics and the levels of oracy, but not sufficiently focused to tackle areas such as the lack of challenge in the Foundation Stage.
39. The school uses the resources available to it well to further its educational aims. The potential impact on pupils is at the centre of all financial decisions and the school seeks best value for money in its spending. For example, additional funding has been successfully allocated to mathematics to help raise pupil achievement. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The deficit the school is currently facing was caused by inaccurate information being provided by a new finance programme introduced by an external body and a sudden and unexpected drop in funding. Once this was identified, the school took swift and appropriate action to remedy it as quickly as possible.
40. The governing body provides a sound level of support and guidance to the work of the school. It is well organised and has been supportive in dealing with major issues such as the deficit budget. All statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. There is a trusting relationship between the school and the governors. A few core governors have a good understanding of the school strengths and weaknesses and do question the school about its work, but this is not true of all of the governors. They are, however, kept informed through regular meetings and reports and therefore have a reasonable understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Initiatives to tackle the latter have the backing of the governors, but they do not regularly or fully monitor and evaluate the success of the action taken because there is often a lack of measurable targets by which to measure them.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	997,444	Balance from previous year	-8,954
Total expenditure	1,005,490	Balance carried forward to the next	-17,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,206		

THE BASE FOR PUPILS WITH MODERATE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Overall, provision within **the base** for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs for moderate learning difficulties **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in learning against their prior attainment.
- Assessments are of an uneven quality and pupils are insufficiently involved in setting and reviewing their own targets.
- Teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- There is insufficient monitoring of trends in pupil progress and teaching by senior management.
- A very effective learning support staff team supports pupils' development well.
- The base provision is well led and resourced.
- The reports of the annual reviews do not show clearly enough progress made by pupils against their previous year's targets.

Commentary

41. Pupils make good progress against their prior attainment. Achievement is good and pupils become increasingly confident in using their developing speaking and listening skills, communication and number skills. During their time in the base, between Year 1 and Year 6, their personal and social skills develop well. However, they are not always involved in reviewing or setting their targets and this reduces their knowledge of their own learning as well as levels of responsibility. Pupils respond well to praise and accept correction when teachers need to check occasionally negative behaviour. Good individual records are kept of pupils' individual achievements over time. These show that, whilst there is a very wide range in the standards reached, nevertheless good progress is made over a longer period of time.
42. Teaching is good. Teachers and support staff work very well together. This ensures that there is a good continuity in teaching methods and expectations. Pupils are therefore happy and secure in this well regulated environment as they always know what to expect. Staff are patient and create a happy and friendly atmosphere that is supportive to learning and increases pupils' self-esteem. Teachers use a good variety of approaches to retain pupils' interest in their work whilst reinforcing consistent knowledge and skills. Learning support staff lead group work effectively and support pupils well in individual speech and language programmes. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' learning difficulties and how to overcome them. Lessons are well planned, using a good range of strategies most suited to each pupil and individual targets. However, there is insufficient focus within the lesson on vocabulary identified for learning which means pupils do not always use the correct terminology. There is a close link between teachers in the base and in the main school. Planning is regularly shared so base pupils can be prepared for lessons that take place in the main school. This often gives them some confidence and skills so they can be a full member of the classes they join. Although there are set assessment procedures they are not used consistently well across the base. Sometimes

they are not completed thoroughly and there are few assessments undertaken in the foundation subjects or targets written for these subjects.

43. Leadership is good. The base manager leads by example. She has a good understanding of the needs of the pupils, is passionate about their involvement in all aspects of the school and has been instrumental in bringing about changes within the base. The work of the base is fully supported by the headteacher. The management of the base is satisfactory. There are good levels of staffing, resources and staff training due to the efforts of the base manager and the headteacher. However, there has been insufficient formal monitoring. Staff are not performance managed by the base manager. There has been little analysis in trends in achievement over time. As a consequence the improvement plan, although appropriate, does not have clearly measurable targets by which its effectiveness can be measured. Although the administration of the base is done well, the written reports of pupils' annual review do not clearly show how much progress each pupil has made against their previous year's targets.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall the **quality of the provision** in the nursery and reception classes is **sound**. When children start school their attainment is below the expected level. Children **achieve satisfactorily**.

Commentary

44. By the end of the reception year, although some children do attain the expected level for 5 year olds, many do not, and overall attainment remains below the expected level. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls, although there is a difference in the achievement of the more able compared with the other pupils. The provision for personal, social and emotional development and for physical development is good. In these areas of learning children achieve well and are expected to meet the early learning goals. Children with learning difficulties make good progress in relation to their individual targets.
45. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory progress in most areas identified in the last report, except in increasing the amount of challenge. Leadership and management of this stage of learning has been satisfactory, although in the last 18 months good management by the deputy headteacher has successfully carried out the tasks identified in the school improvement plan. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and the school has focused on building a secure team in the nursery and reception classes, through reviewing the curriculum, policies and auditing resources. Training for the Foundation Stage practitioners had been a priority and, coupled with improved resourcing, has supported the implementation of the broad curriculum through the stepping-stones and the early learning goals.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teamwork by teachers and teaching assistants provides each child with a good level of care and support and a secure place in which to learn.
- Well-established routines and good models of behaviour reinforce the school rules and result in a calm community.
- The children's good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to promoting positive relationships and supporting independence.

Commentary

46. By the end of the reception year, children have made good progress and are likely to meet the expected level. This shows good achievement and reflects the emphasis on personal and social development and the good teaching in the nursery and reception classes in this area of learning. The adults warmly encourage children to participate in activities and they act as good role models so that children behave well, often taking turns in games. Because of the good range of activities provided in the nursery and reception years, children develop independence and the ability to make choices. The use of role-play and good quality intervention by adults directly develops the children's social skills.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities for spoken language encourage the language development of the children.
- Good support for children with learning difficulties enables them to be involved in all activities and make good progress.
- The lack of challenge in writing activities limits the achievement of more able children.
- The provision for the few pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory; they do not have the most appropriate support.
- Missed opportunities for constant reinforcement of initial letters and sounds as they arise in the course of the school day slow the development of pupils' reading skills.

Commentary

47. Adults in the Foundation Stage focus on providing good opportunities for spoken language, for example paired work, talking with adults or in role-play such as in the café. Here teachers encourage children to use their imagination and develop their independence. Because of this, children in the reception classes speak with increasing confidence in a range of situations. There is also a reasonable level of support for pupils learning English as an additional language due to the good quality of support staff. However, the specific language needs of these children are not assessed on entry to the school and teachers are not secure in the most appropriate ways to teach them. During the reception year children develop an increasing knowledge of letter sounds and an interest in books. Most listen well and some are beginning to link letter sounds to read and write their names. However, there are missed opportunities to reinforce this during the day as initial letters and sounds are not constantly reinforced. Most children progress steadily from making marks, to some 'letter like' shapes, to attempts at correctly formed letters. However, teachers' expectations of the more able children are too low and they are not encouraged to extend their writing skills. Individual education plans for children with learning difficulties are clear and the small steps identified enable learning support staff and the child to focus on a particular aspect for development. These children make good progress. The majority of children will not meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year and overall attainment on entry to Year 1 is likely to be below the expected level.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers do not take account of children's knowledge, understanding and skills to provide challenging work, especially for the more able.
- Children's mathematical skills are not used well outside of the numeracy sessions.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics as there are many interesting activities planned for them.
- Good support for children with learning difficulties enables them to make good progress.

Commentary

48. The imaginative ways that teachers and learning support staff employ a wide range of activities to teach the same idea, the pace of the lesson and building on the children's prior knowledge all enable those with learning difficulties to make good progress. These approaches also benefit most other pupils. However, high attaining pupils are not always challenged because teachers' expectations of them are too low as insufficient use is made of the assessments that are undertaken when children start school. Most children make satisfactory progress, but are

unlikely to meet the expected standards at the end of the reception year. More able children make unsatisfactory progress because they are not sufficiently challenged. They, like many other children, do not have their knowledge of number extended because opportunities to reinforce counting and numbers outside of the numeracy sessions are not used and there are few opportunities for them to use their numeracy skills in the other five areas of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good, planned use of the indoor and outdoor environment supports children's development well.
- There are limited resources to support cultural or multicultural development.

Commentary

49. Children show increasing confidence in using the computer and 'listening stations'. Most use the mouse effectively and confidently select from a menu. Activities are often carefully based on children's real experiences that require them to use their language skills. Teachers encourage children to be observant and to be aware of living things. For example, children enjoyed their first hand experience of looking for spiders in the nursery garden. There are opportunities for the children to make their own models and they have access to an increasing range of materials to re-apply their skills and the techniques they have been taught. There are limited books and resources to support cultural and multicultural development and this limits the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Recent purchases to improve the resources had not arrived by the time the inspection took place. Children make satisfactory progress, but are unlikely to meet the expected standards at the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned activities and teaching promote good achievement in many aspects.
- A good range of indoor and outdoor activities and play areas engages children in their learning.
- The nursery outdoor play area needs further developing and currently limits opportunities for physical development through play and exploration.

Commentary

50. Activities are well planned and the staff have a good knowledge of children's development. This enables children to make good progress, especially in reception, and they achieve well. Children's manipulative skills develop well as teachers provide many opportunities to handle small items such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors. Because teachers regularly remind them, reception children generally move around the classrooms, hall and school playground with an awareness of space and each other. Teachers set high expectations of behaviour and children respond appropriately. Assistants provide good support for children with special educational needs. Children in the reception classes have the benefit of using a well-equipped and interesting outdoor area. This encourages good physical development. However, in the nursery, although good use is made of the nursery outdoor play area, its equipment and the floor are of an unsatisfactory quality. The school has already allocated funds for the improvement of this area. Overall, however, children make good progress and are likely to meet the expected standards at the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' planning is good.

Commentary

51. There is a reasonable amount of encouragement for children to develop their imagination and use their senses to investigate and explore through effective questioning strategies. When playing in the café area as waiters, waitresses or visitors they use role-play with confidence. A reasonable range of opportunities for creative development are planned for within the classroom and in the outdoor environment, with children using a variety of materials including pencils, crayons, paints, modelling materials, beads and counters. Children have a growing awareness of colour and develop increasing control with a paintbrush. In the nursery and reception classes children were able to join in favourite songs and follow rhymes, matching actions to words. Children make satisfactory progress, but are unlikely to meet the expected standards at the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for **English** is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good aspects of much of the teaching enable many pupils to develop their skills and knowledge well.
- The needs of more able pupils are not met through their writing tasks or in the teaching of reading.
- The teaching and use of oracy across the curriculum is good. This leads to pupils having higher standards of speaking and listening skills than in reading and writing.
- The assessment and marking of pupils' work is not used to change the planning of lessons or to enable pupils to know how to improve.
- Through leading by example, the co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language are not always fully included in lessons.

Commentary

52. Standards seen during the inspection are similar to those achieved in the 2003 national tests.
53. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and achieve the expected standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This is as a result of the school's 'Oracy Programme' put in place by the school in an attempt to overcome a barrier to raising achievement across the school. Teachers provide good opportunities for discussion, for question and answer sessions and for pupils to work in discussion pairs. Pupils in Year 6 answer questions fully, mostly using sentences, and speak with confidence and clarity.
54. Throughout the school, standards in reading are below the expected level for pupils' age. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily based on their prior attainment. Pupils in Year 2 do not have sufficient fluency to help them with their understanding of texts. However, they get great pleasure out of reading and appreciate humour in books. They have frequent opportunities to

read in school, both in class and to voluntary helpers. Pupils are encouraged to take home books from the school's scheme and from the library. By Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress. Many read books fluently and understand text at a simple level. However, few are able to use higher reading skills, such as deduction or inference. There is little difference in attainment between the more and less able. In response to the weaker results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, guided reading in literacy lessons has been introduced. Because of this pupils are now achieving better, but there has been insufficient time for this to have an impact on standards. The co-ordinator has also identified that standards in reading are lower than writing, particularly of boys, and has bought more texts that may appeal to boys in an attempt to reverse this. All pupils have good research skills as a result of good teaching in the attractive and well-designed library.

55. Standards in writing in both Year 2 and Year 6 are below the expected level. Most pupils, except the more able pupils, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 2 often include the main points in a story when they re-write one after they have heard it, but most use only short phrases and sentences. The use of full stops and capital letters is inconsistent. Handwriting is often good when being practised but this is rarely carried over into other writing where it is frequently poor. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they have made satisfactory progress. They write in full sentences that are correctly, if simply, punctuated. Few, for instance, use exclamation marks or speech marks correctly. Pupils' spelling skills are weak. Some common words, such as 'where', are often misspelt. Handwriting and presentation of work are also poor. However, many pupils achieve well as the scheme of work supports their learning well. However, assessment data is not being used to identify accurately the more able pupils and as teachers rely heavily upon the school scheme they are not offering them more challenging work.
56. The quality of teaching of English is satisfactory, although there are some good aspects. Expectations are particularly good in Year 6. However, there was insufficient challenge for more able pupils throughout the school, resulting in their lower achievement. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and how to teach it. They adhere closely to locally agreed lesson plans that build on previous learning for most pupils, although not the more able. When teaching the whole class, in the main part of a lesson, the quality of teachers' questions is good and enables pupils to develop their thinking and their speaking and listening skills well. Probing questions move pupils from a literal interpretation to underlying meanings. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on the poem *'The Lady of Shalott'*, pupils understood the story at a basic level. They made good progress, when guided by the teacher, to an understanding of what being trapped in the castle entailed and why she might want to leave it. The use of good strategies, such as the consistent use of partner discussions throughout the school, helps pupils develop confidence and refine their oral skills. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by teachers and learning support staff and they achieve well.
57. The achievement of pupils from Black African heritage is in line with their peers. They are included in lessons and achieve at a similar rate. The few pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. On occasions, insufficient attention is given to these pupils, for instance by ensuring they participate fully in paired discussions, because teachers are not always aware of their needs and how to meet them.
58. Teachers use the results of test scores to set targets for pupils. These are helpfully written in language that pupils may easily understand. However, little account is taken of these targets when teachers plan work and tasks set are the same for all. Work is not matched to pupils' differing needs. As a result, the more able are not sufficiently challenged. Teachers are not secure in assessing pupils' work. Assessments are often inaccurate (many pupils are working at a higher level than teachers are currently assessing) and as a consequence the individual targets set for pupils from these assessments are unchallenging. Marking is often positive but teachers rarely comment on what could have improved the work. As a result, pupils are not given enough guidance for them to make the improvements of which they are capable.

59. The leadership of the subject is good and accounts for the improvements in oracy and in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in the national tests in English was double the previous year's and higher than the national average. From analysing the annual test results, the subject leader appreciates the strengths and weaknesses and has prioritised the actions that need to be taken to improve pupils' attainment. An example of this is that the selection of books provided was not engaging significant numbers of boys, so more 'boy-friendly' books were purchased. She leads by example, for instance, by having high expectations of pupils. The management of English is satisfactory. The actions taken are bringing about a steady improvement in standards. However, there has not been sufficient monitoring of the quality of teaching, analysing books, teachers' planning or their assessments. The action plan provides a list of actions to be undertaken, but there is no indication of intended outcomes and how success will be measured.

Literacy across the curriculum

60. Across the school, pupils' literacy skills are weak. This hinders their learning in other subjects such as science and history. In an attempt to overcome this, teachers rely a great deal on oral work. However, they do continue to provide a reasonable range of opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. Good opportunities are taken to include writing at length in ICT, history and religious education, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There has been sound improvement in this area since the last inspection. However, in many subjects written tasks are similar for all and as a consequence there is insufficient challenge for the more able or opportunities for them to extend their writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- More able pupils are underachieving because teachers are not planning work that is sufficiently challenging for them.
- Although standards throughout the school are lower than expected, pupils with learning difficulties and pupils of average ability achieve well because their teaching and learning is based on a structured scheme.
- Assessment procedures are weak, not used well and lead to unchallenging targets.

Commentary

61. The school has been working hard to raise standards in mathematics and this remains a current priority. It accounts for the fact that results seen during the inspection are higher than those achieved in the 2003 national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about each area of mathematical development as many of these areas are taught later in the term. However, in their knowledge and understanding of number, pupils' standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are lower than expected nationally. There was no difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
62. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Although there are good aspects to the quality of teaching, such as the amount of oral work that underpins the good learning of many pupils, overall teaching is satisfactory because of the lack of challenge for the more able. Most pupils learn well because teachers follow a highly structured scheme to plan their lessons. However, teachers are not using assessment information either clearly to identify the more able pupils in their planning or to provide work that is more challenging for them. They often work from the same book and page as every other pupil in the class.

63. In Year 6 the teaching and learning are good because teachers have high expectations of behaviour and of what the pupils can achieve. Consequently, pupils behave very well and work hard. In the other year groups, whilst teaching is always at least satisfactory, it is not consistently good across the year group. Teaching assistants give good support during all aspects of lessons, especially to pupils with learning difficulties, so that they are involved in oral work, complete their written work and achieve well. Teachers develop the use of mathematical vocabulary well by modelling the use of the words and encouraging pupils to use them in their answers and explanations. This assists those pupils learning English as an additional language, so they often achieve well. A particular strength in the teaching is the questioning of pupils. A variety of questions, aimed at pupils of different abilities, ensures that all pupils are involved and challenged.
64. In the satisfactory lessons, the mental and oral starters to lessons are brief and, therefore, pupils do not spend sufficient time consolidating number facts. Although objectives for learning are often well displayed, teachers do not share them with pupils at the beginning of lessons. Consequently, pupils are not always sure of what they are to learn in the lesson and teachers do not always use the end of the lesson to review what pupils know and understand. In the classes of the youngest pupils teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to make decisions about recording their mathematics. Pupils often record their work in a textbook or complete worksheets. This again hinders the achievement of many pupils, especially the more able.
65. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The school does not track pupils well enough. Practices are inconsistently applied across the school. Teachers are not secure in their assessments. Work is incorrectly assessed. It is often judged to be of a lower standard than the actual level pupils are working at. As a result, pupils' targets are not challenging. A positive aspect of assessment is the quality of marking. This is informative and with the comments and modelling of methods, pupils know how to improve. This is well supported by written targets that are expressed in a way that pupils understand.
66. The leadership of mathematics is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear view of how the subject should develop, especially in relation to the more able pupils, but has not ensured others undertake the necessary steps to achieve this. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, with the support of the local education authority and headteacher, has monitored the quality of teaching and learning across the school. He, therefore, has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses, but areas for development, especially in teaching, are not rigorously followed up to ensure improvements have been made or sustained. The mathematics action plan, although identifying key activities, does not have measurable outcomes. This limits the co-ordinator's ability to keep track of the effect of any initiatives introduced to raise achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Overall, there is a reasonable range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. In ICT there are good links with mathematics as pupils use their knowledge of graphs in their work on data, and on directions and angles in their work on making the on-screen turtle move. In science, not all the opportunities are fully exploited. This limits the achievements of some pupils, especially the more able.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in science is good and, as a result, pupils learn well.
- A good level of oral work helps pupils overcome their literacy difficulties so that they develop a reasonable understanding and knowledge of science.
- Planning is not sufficiently adapted always to take account of all pupils' learning, especially the more able.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in their investigative work because of a lack of emphasis in this aspect of the subject.
- Positive attitudes to science help boys and girls learn well.

Commentary

68. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below those expected for pupils in this year group. In relation to their abilities, pupils achieve well. Standards are now better than those achieved in the 2003 national tests because more time is being spent teaching the subject. However, pupils' skills in conducting an experiment and recording their results are much lower than that expected for their age. This is because their weak literacy skills limit their ability to record their work and because teachers devote insufficient time to pupils devising and undertaking their own experiments. In Year 2 standards are also below the expected level, but most pupils achieve well because of good teaching. Like the older pupils, their ability to record their findings is weak. Standards in Year 2, however, are better than those achieved in 2003 because of the support pupils receive in lessons in overcoming their weak literacy skills.
69. Good teaching in science means that most pupils achieve well. There is no noticeable difference between the achievement of boys and girls. In most lessons, teachers ask good questions that encourage pupils to think and explain their work. Lessons also have a lively and interesting pace that keeps the pupils interested and keen to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident in teaching science. They support pupils and enable them to test out explanations. They invite discussion, correcting misconceptions and supporting pupils in their thinking. Teachers introduce new scientific vocabulary and ideas, continually taking opportunities to reinforce them in the lesson, explaining new words. Because of this most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. Relationships in lessons are good. There is a good level of trust and teachers value the contributions made by all pupils. Pupils from different ethnic minorities, therefore, are willing to be involved in the lessons. In recent years the school's main focus has been raising the achievement of pupils of below average and average ability. They have been successful at this, but at the expense of the more able. Taken with an inadequate use of assessment to identify the more able, this means that teachers do not regularly identify the more able pupils in their planning or prepare separate and more challenging activities for them. This means they often underachieve.
70. The science co-ordinator has been recently appointed; it is too soon to judge the impact of his leadership or management. However, due to his knowledge and enthusiasm he has the potential to do both well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Standards have improved since the last inspection and in Year 6 are now in line with what is expected.
- There is a strong curriculum that ensures pupils acquire skills as well as use them in other subjects.
- Good leadership provides the subject with a high profile and a clear sense of direction.
- The well-informed management of the subject provides good guidance and support.
- Pupils do not know how to improve because they are not involved in their own assessment.

Commentary

71. The teaching of ICT is good; it is consistently good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In all cases teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well on many occasions to plan thoroughly and ensure that the lesson builds upon pupils' prior learning so that they are continually learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach and use this to employ a good range of both group, paired and individual work that helps maintain pupils' interest and provide good opportunities for their social development. Both teachers and learning support staff include all pupils by asking them specific questions that are matched to their needs. Pupils with learning difficulties are therefore well included, as are more able pupils. This is particularly true in Years 3 to 6, but in Years 1 and 2 teachers' expectations are not as high and therefore pupils make only satisfactory progress.
72. As a result of this good teaching, pupils achieve well by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils have a wide range of skills in presentations and in making things happen, as in setting up a series of commands to make Christmas lights flash in a predetermined sequence as well as in using the World Wide Web. In an interesting lesson that added considerably to pupils' moral and social development, pupils in a Year 6 class searched the Internet for information on football hooliganism. In Year 2, although pupils have an appropriate level of skill in using paint programmes, their skill in editing a text using the arrow keys, back space and return keys is less than is normally expected.
73. In lessons teachers and learning support staff provide direct assistance to pupils. This often encourages and directs pupils' efforts. But because teachers do not share their assessments with them they do not have a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in the subject as a whole and how they need to improve.
74. The leadership of the subject is good and has been instrumental in bringing about a good deal of improvement since the last inspection. There is a new well-equipped computer suite and ICT is both well planned and has a high profile. Management is also good. Through careful monitoring, as well as providing a good role model, the co-ordinator has supported colleagues in developing their own knowledge and confidence.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **good**. Although pupils do not regularly use computers in the classroom, the weekly sessions in the computer room are well linked to other subjects.

HUMANITIES

The provision for **history** and for **religious education** are **satisfactory**. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about the provision for geography. In the two lessons observed in Years 1 and 4, the teaching and learning were good and unsatisfactory respectively. The pupils' attainment was below average in both classes.

History

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership provides history with a high profile.
- There has been insufficient time to effectively monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- The assessment system is very new and not being consistently used.

Commentary

76. Standards are below those expected. From a low starting point most pupils demonstrate satisfactory achievement with the exception of more able pupils who underachieve. This is because most teachers do not ensure that there is sufficient challenge in the written tasks set.
77. The teaching of history is satisfactory. As teachers resource lessons well with video and photographic resources, pupils are interested in their work and concentrate well. Teachers use questions well to include all pupils irrespective of their ability. This includes extending more able pupils with challenging questions that encourage them to explain their answers. Most teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. Assessment is currently unsatisfactory. The school has only recently introduced an assessment system. Consequently, teachers are not planning well enough to take account of pupils' prior attainment, especially in providing follow up activities to the oral work.
78. The leadership of history is good because the co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has helped to give the subject a high profile. Management is satisfactory as the co-ordinator has had insufficient opportunities to review this subject properly and so teachers have not received the feedback they need.

Religious education

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in lessons because of good teaching.
- The change from one syllabus to another is slowing pupils' progress and standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- There is no assessment system for religious education and this is unsatisfactory.
- Good leadership by an enthusiastic co-ordinator has overseen the change to the new agreed syllabus well.
- Good links with the team at St. George's Church enriches pupils' education.

Commentary

79. The main reason why pupils' attainment is below that expected in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils are achieving satisfactorily is because a change is currently taking place from one scheme of work to another. As the old and new schemes are very different, the new syllabus will take a while to become embedded practice in the school and raise achievement.
80. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory overall. Teachers resource lessons with interesting artefacts and contributions so that the lessons are brought alive and pupils are

interested and keen to learn. Pupils in Year 6 have an apt level of knowledge and understanding of some aspects of different world religions. Strong links with St. George's Church supports pupils' learning well. Pupils' work in religious education supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A high level of oral work in many lessons helps pupils overcome their weak literacy skills, often a barrier to their learning. However, when writing tasks are undertaken, all pupils are given the same task. This is normally well matched to the average ability pupils, so the writing skills of the more able are not being used or developed.

81. Leadership is good because the subject leader is enthusiastic about the subject and has worked hard to write the scheme of work for the youngest classes. She has a clear vision about the development of this subject. Her management is satisfactory because, although she has begun to scrutinise work and planning, she has not yet begun to observe lessons and review pupils' work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The provision for **art and design** and **physical education** is **good**. Not all aspects of **music** were seen during the inspection, but in singing the provision is **good**. No overall judgement can be made about the provision in design and technology due to a lack of evidence. Design and technology alternates on the timetable with art, so no lessons were seen. At this early stage in the academic year there is no other pupil work.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Teachers are unable to accurately track pupils' progress as assessment procedures are not in place.
- The subject has a high profile in the school as it is led well because the co-ordinator is very knowledgeable.
- Good use is made of visiting experts to enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

82. The teaching of art is good. As a result, pupils achieve well. They make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills and pupils' attainment in drawing and painting is in line with the expected level for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Because teachers think carefully about what they need to teach and how this might help pupils learn, they design tasks that challenge all pupils, including the more able pupils, at their own level. Over time, teachers encourage pupils to use a variety of techniques using a range of equipment and materials. They use the correct terminology and encourage pupils to do the same. Teachers use a good range of questions that helps pupils to recall their previous learning. The use of well thought out stimuli, such as displays of fruit and vegetables, motivates pupils well. There are good relationships between staff and pupils and because of this many pupils are confident, trying new techniques and making bold marks in their work.
83. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator leads by example. She has very good subject knowledge that she uses to guide and support her colleagues. Through her informal observations she has identified areas of weakness, for example the lack of three-dimensional work. The management of art, however, is satisfactory. This is because the action plan does not include measurable targets by which the success of the plan can be measured.

Furthermore, the formal procedures for monitoring the subject are underdeveloped. Visiting experts enrich the art curriculum.

Music

Provision in music is satisfactory. Provision for singing is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiastic teachers motivate pupils and they therefore achieve well.
- As assessment procedures are not firmly in place, teachers do not accurately know pupils' abilities.
- Standards of singing of both boys and girls are very good.
- There is an enriched curriculum for music that adds positively to pupils' personal development and achievements.

Commentary

84. The standards being attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those normally expected in singing. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically. They have a good sense of pitch, rhythm and duration of notes. They sing songs from memory. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. There was insufficient evidence about other aspects of music to make a judgement about their standards.
85. The teaching of music is good. Enthusiastic teachers motivate all pupils to join in and make an effort. Good opportunities are taken during singing lessons to explain specific ideas or teach certain skills such as the different duration of notes and the need for clear diction. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and, as a consequence, all pupils, including the most able, achieve well. Teachers use a good range of strategies to involve all pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were well used to lead some of the singing in different parts. This effective strategy helps to celebrate pupils' achievements and build their self-esteem and confidence. All of these strategies encourage the pupils and lead to higher standards of performance. Assessment is not yet in place, so teachers do not accurately know different pupils' abilities.
86. Whilst the leadership and management of music by the co-ordinator are satisfactory, the driving force behind the subject is the headteacher. Her enthusiasm and commitment has ensured the high profile of singing and the high standards of attainment. Under the direction of the headteacher, pupils also have very good opportunities to perform and are actively encouraged to do so. There is good support for music provided by outside specialists visiting the school to teach specific instruments, such as the trumpet. Music is important to the school. Music, some composed and performed by ex-pupils, is played at the start of assemblies for pupils to appreciate. This contributes well to their personal development.

Physical education

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, especially in dance, because of good teaching.
- Standards of attainment in dance are good and in Year 6 they are very good.
- In a small minority of classes, time is wasted and unsatisfactory behaviour means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- There is an enriched curriculum for physical education that adds positively to pupils' personal development and achievements.

- Pupils' attitudes to all the aspects seen of physical education are good and they participate with enthusiasm because the good quality teaching means they are actively involved throughout each lesson.

Commentary

87. The standards being attained by pupils in Year 2 in dance are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils make good progress due to the quality of teaching provided by a visiting specialist. As a consequence, standards in Year 6 are above those expected and pupils achieve very well. In gymnastics and games, standards are in line with expectations at Year 2 and Year 6. Boys and girls show the same enthusiasm and level of skill. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on building a sequence using balances, pairs of pupils worked hard and significantly improved their poise and balance. In both gymnastics and dance pupils move with confidence and their performance becomes increasingly polished. They build on their previous ideas and learning as they provide a critical commentary of their peers' work.
88. The teaching of physical education is good. The lively pace of lessons means that no time is wasted and pupils' interest is sustained. Teachers' good subject knowledge leads to good planning, which enables all pupils to achieve because lessons have challenge. Teachers frequently participate in lessons and demonstrate movements well. These good role models help pupils to understand clearly what is required. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour and performance and use praise effectively to motivate. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, too much time was wasted both in the lesson and in changing. The behaviour in this lesson was unsatisfactory because of the teacher's lack of firm control.
89. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator ensures full coverage of the physical education curriculum and expert visitors are used well, such as in the dance lessons. Management, however, is satisfactory because the formal procedures for reviewing the subject are underdeveloped. However, a good aspect of the management of the subject is the enriched curriculum that is organised. This brings a great deal of enjoyment to pupils, supports their achievements and encourages them to participate in sports. For example, there are several opportunities to swim between Years 2 and 6 and there is a good range of out of class activities (sailing courses and the Basketball Club are but two). The activities undertaken in lessons and out of class encourage co-operation so contribute well to the pupils' social development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management ensure that teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Personal, social and health education is well planned and is taught well through other subjects and in its own right.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities outside of lessons to develop their personal and social education, as well as their understanding of citizenship.

Commentary

90. Reflecting the school's priority in this area, personal, social and health education and citizenship is promoted well in numerous ways. The co-ordinator has put together a comprehensive scheme of work building on the strengths currently found in the school's curriculum. This, her own enthusiasm and the good support from the headteacher, gives this area of learning a high profile. Most importantly it permeates the culture of the school and teaching is good. Developing pupils' self esteem and self-confidence is central to the school's

work and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are explicitly encouraged. For example, they may become members of the Richard Alibon Playground Squad (RAPS). Pupils have to apply in writing for posts of responsibility, giving reasons, and if successful are given badges and training to support them in their role.

91. Pupils have a formally taught lesson of personal, social and health education and citizenship each week. These lessons cover a range of topics and are taught in a variety of ways, including the provision of a discussion period called Circle Time. This provides a good opportunity for pupils to talk over issues that face them as part of everyday life such as bullying and self-esteem. Pupils achieve well because of the teachers' good questioning encourages pupils' thoughtfulness.

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	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
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	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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