

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Southwark

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100828

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Higgs

Lead inspector: Selwyn Ward

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

Inspection number: 257653

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: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 345

School address: 33 Westminster Bridge Road
London
Postcode: SE1 7JB

Telephone number: 020 7525 9250
Fax number: 020 7525 9251
Email address: office.st-georges-cathedral.southwark@lgfl.net

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Pauline McAlpine

Date of previous inspection: 5th – 8th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St George's Cathedral RC Primary is a large inner-city Roman Catholic voluntary aided school catering for boys and girls aged 3 to 11. Although almost all of the pupils come from Catholic homes and families come from a very wide range of different ethnic backgrounds. Around two thirds of the pupils are Black British, mostly of African origin. Around one in eight of the pupils are learning English other than as their mother tongue, with many at an early stage of learning English. In recent years, an increasing number of pupils have joined the school from Spanish-speaking families. A small number of children at the school come from Traveller backgrounds but they are settled in the area. A very small number of children are from refugee families. Mobility of pupils is high, with many pupils joining the school partway through their primary education. An above average proportion of pupils are from socially-disadvantaged backgrounds, as is reflected in the above average number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. An average number of pupils have special educational needs, mostly for specific learning difficulties. Children's attainment when they join the school is below average. In common with many other schools in London, the school has suffered from difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. Around a third of the permanent teachers have overseas teaching qualifications. This year, staffing difficulties have been compounded by a high level of staff

absence, due to illness. At the time of the inspection, a third of the classes were being taught by temporary teachers. The headteacher joined the school at the start of the school year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
9271	Selwyn Ward	Lead inspector	
9881	Anthony Comer	Lay inspector	
23288	Marianne Harris	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History Personal, social and health education Special educational needs
4351	Jeanne Strickland	Team inspector	English English as an additional language
12764	Wendy Thomas	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is **unsatisfactorily effective** because too much of the teaching is unsatisfactory and too many pupils are not achieving as well as they should be. Staff illness has been a significant problem for the school and has been a barrier to achievement because the many staff changes have disrupted pupils' progress. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There are too many lessons where pupils do not learn enough.
- Year 6 pupils did very well in the national tests in 2003 but standards have since fallen sharply so that they are below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science.
- Children do not make enough progress during the nursery and reception years.
- There are very good computer facilities and pupils do well in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Pupils are not achieving well enough in science.
- Not enough support has been given to pupils at an early stage of learning English or to those with special educational needs.
- Behaviour problems have been tackled well and, as a result, pupils behave well in almost all lessons and around the school.
- The leadership and management of the school have not been sufficiently effective in raising the quality of education provided for the pupils.
- Marking varies too much in quality, with much that gives little guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- The accommodation is poor because some classrooms are too hot and humid in the summer, and other parts of the school are in a poor decorative state.

There has been good improvement in standards in ICT and geography. Standards in most other subjects are similar to those reported in the last inspection, but in science and in the nursery and reception years, standards are lower than they were previously. There is more unsatisfactory teaching than was seen in the last inspection and there remain weaknesses in the use of assessment information and in leadership and management. This represents **unsatisfactory improvement** since the last inspection.

The school is failing to provide an adequate standard of education for its pupils. In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1966, it is the opinion of the Lead Inspector, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in <i>National Curriculum</i> tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	D	A	A
mathematics	E	D	A	A
science	E	E	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, overall, because there is too much underachievement among particular groups of pupils in the school. Results in the Year 6 tests in 2003 were very good and this represented a sharp improvement on previous years. They were well above average in comparison both with schools nationally and with similar schools. These high standards have not, however, been maintained. The evidence from inspection is that standards in English and mathematics are below average. In science, the standard of work is well below average. Given pupils' below average starting point, this represents satisfactory achievement in English and mathematics but unsatisfactory achievement in science. In the Year 2 tests in 2003, results were average in mathematics, below average in writing, and well below average in reading. Current standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In this inspection, inspectors did not look in detail at every subject, but in those other subjects inspected, standards are in line with national expectations in ICT and geography. The standard of singing is above average. In these areas, pupils are achieving well. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are not given enough support in lessons and so they do not make enough progress. This is also the case for some pupils with special educational needs. Only about half of the children in the reception classes are likely to attain the learning goals that children are expected to reach by the start of Year 1. This represents poor achievement over their time in the nursery and reception years.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils' behaviour – a concern raised by parents and the children themselves – is now controlled well, and that is a good recent success for the school. There were no exclusions last year. Relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils are mostly attentive in lessons but they are rarely fired with enthusiasm and they have relatively few opportunities to develop as independent learners. Given the many different backgrounds of the children, opportunities are missed for pupils to learn about their own and others' cultures. Attendance is satisfactory, but some pupils still drift in to school late.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is unsatisfactory because there are too many lessons where pupils do not learn enough. **Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.** Teachers know and get on well with their pupils, and this contributes to the friendly atmosphere of the school. Behaviour is generally controlled and managed well so that any incidents of misbehaviour are not allowed to disturb the learning of other pupils. In the most effective lessons, pupils learn and achieve well because teachers build carefully on what the children have learned previously. In these lessons, work is matched well to the different capabilities of the pupils in the class. This is not, however, the case in all lessons. Too often, pupils of very different abilities are set the same work. In many lessons, teachers do not expect enough of the pupils and so they do not make as much progress as they could. Pupils are compliant but subdued in lessons because often the teaching is not stimulating enough. Their books show that many lessons have involved much copying from the board, sometimes inaccurately. Pupils with special educational needs do not always get enough help in lessons and their needs are not always sufficiently met. Similarly, pupils at an early stage of learning English are given inadequate support.

The curriculum is satisfactory. National Curriculum requirements are met, although some subjects, such as music, would benefit from more time. The school has been beset with staffing problems due to ill-health. At the time of the inspection, a third of the classes were

being taught by temporary teachers. Although these teachers have adjusted quickly to the school and have generally been effective, the changes of teacher have disrupted the learning of some classes. Resources, poor in the nursery and reception classes, are satisfactory overall. The resources for music are good, and those for ICT are very good. The accommodation is poor. The new classrooms are very hot and humid in the summer, making it difficult for pupils to maintain their concentration. Other parts of the school are badly in need of decoration and refurbishment. Their neglected appearance does little to raise pupils' self-esteem. Although this is a caring school, pupils do not benefit from enough support and guidance with their learning, and some health and safety concerns were identified. Thanks to recent initiatives in the school, parental involvement has improved and parents are now satisfactorily involved. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their interest in music through out-of-school activities, and there are some after school sports, but opportunities are missed to enrich and enliven the curriculum. Although the school has major London museums very close at hand, not enough advantage is taken of this.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The headteacher, who joined the school at the start of the school year, has done a satisfactory job. She has identified some of the areas that need to be improved but progress has been impeded by the staffing problems that the school has had to deal with. Management has not been sufficiently effective in improving the quality of education provided. Governance is unsatisfactory. Although governors are supportive, they have not been involved enough in strategic planning and have been too dependent on the headteacher and staff for their understanding of what goes on in school. Legal reporting requirements are not fully met in the governors' annual report and the school prospectus.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The number of parents who attended the meeting with the lead inspector was small, and only about one in six parents responded to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection. Views from parents were very mixed. Questionnaire responses were positive but those attending the meeting expressed many concerns, particularly about behaviour and the way it is managed. This was also a concern raised by pupils in their questionnaires. However, inspectors found that the strategies taken by the school to control poor behaviour have been generally successful. Pupils otherwise indicated satisfaction with the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise the quality of teaching and make more effective use of assessment information;
- ensure that children make effective progress during their time in the nursery and reception years;
- ensure that pupils at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs are given enough support;
- raise standards of achievement, particularly in science;
- focus leadership and management efforts on raising standards and supporting pupils' learning;
- remedy the shortcomings in the school accommodation,

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that the governors' annual report and school prospectus report fully on attendance figures and on school and national test results.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Standards are below average. Achievement is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high standards attained in Year 6 in 2003 have not been maintained.
- Children are not making enough progress in the nursery and reception classes. .
- Pupils at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs do not make enough progress because they are not given enough support.
- Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT), geography and singing.
- There is underachievement in science.

Commentary

1. Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in school as well as how well they do in lessons. Children join the school with a wide range of capabilities, but, overall, they are of below average ability. Because provision in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception years) is poor, children's achievement during these early years is poor. Only about half of the children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals that children are expected to reach by the start of Year 1.
2. Although at the time of the inspection, pupils had taken their Year 2 and Year 6 tests, not all of the test results were available to inspectors and national comparisons are not yet available to enable the 2004 results to be compared with those attained in other schools. For this reason, inspectors have to rely on comparisons made, using the results from 2003. The tables below show the average points scores attained in the Year 2 and Year 6 tests in 2003 (with the 2002 scores in brackets). One point represents roughly one term's progress, so the tables show, for example, that pupils in Year 2 were about a term and a half behind pupils nationally in reading but that last year's Year 6 were a term and a half ahead of pupils nationally in English, mathematics and science.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003		
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.2 (14.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.1 (12.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.7 (14.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Results in the Year 2 tests have shown quite a wide variation from year to year but the trend has been one of decline. Standards in the work seen in the current Year 2 vary markedly between the two classes. Pupils in the class that has benefited from having the same teacher throughout the year are attaining higher standards on the whole than those

who have had several changes of teacher. Overall, standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, although this represents satisfactory achievement for the majority of pupils. In the other subjects inspected, standards are in line with national expectations and the standard of singing throughout the school is above average.

4. Test results in Year 6 in 2003 were exceptionally good. They were well above average compared both with schools nationally and those where pupils had performed similarly in their Year 2 tests. Results last year were also very sharply up on the below and well below average results in English, mathematics and science from previous years. However, these high standards have not been sustained. The evidence from inspection is that standards in the current Year 6 are considerably lower than those attained in 2003. Standards are again below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Given pupils' below average starting point, the current standards in English and mathematics represent satisfactory achievement, but achievement in science is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils have too few opportunities in Years 3 to 6 to discover for themselves through investigations and because much work involves copying from the board.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003		
Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (26.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.4 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.0 (27.1)	28.6 (28.3)

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

5. Standards in ICT and geography are in line with those expected nationally and represent good achievement, as well as good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are similar to the last inspection in English and mathematics, but they have declined in science and in the Foundation Stage. Although every member of staff with subject leadership responsibilities benefits from a generous regular allocation of time for the task, too little of the focus has been on directly monitoring learning and how well pupils are doing, and so subject leaders have not generally been effective in securing improvements.
6. Quite a large number of pupils join the school partway through their education, but the school has no evidence to indicate that these pupils do less well than others because of their mobility. A number of the pupils who join the school from overseas and who are at an early stage of learning English achieve less well than they could because they are not given adequate support. Pupils with very low levels of English were seen largely just marking time in lessons that they could not follow because there was no appropriate work planned for them. For example, one recent arrival, with no English, spent an entire lesson with nothing to do or look at except an English reading book which he could not read. Some pupils with special educational needs also achieve less well than they are capable of because they are not given direct support and work is not matched adequately to their needs.
7. There is no evidence that pupils from different ethnic backgrounds do generally better or less well than others, but, over recent years, boys have generally attained higher

standards than girls, even in English where the opposite is more commonly found. The school has itself identified this unusual pattern of boys performing better than girls but has been unable to explain the cause. Inspectors saw little evidence, for example, that teachers were consciously or otherwise choosing boys rather than girls to answer questions.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is **satisfactory** and there is satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Attendance is satisfactory but punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well.
- They get on well with each other and the adults in the school.
- Pupils are involved in the life of the school and are willing to accept responsibility.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and others' cultures.

Commentary

8. Pupils' behaviour is good overall and their attitudes towards school are satisfactory. In a small number of lessons, pupils with challenging behaviour disrupt the learning of others when additional support is not provided. The school has done much to improve behaviour since the last inspection. There were no exclusions last year. The school deals effectively with incidents of bullying that occur and are reported.
9. Pupils move around the school sensibly and get on well with each other and with adults, both at work and at play. Pupils are generally polite and well-mannered. They readily participate in the life of the school, including the school council. Pupils expressed generally positive views about the school. They are willing to accept responsibility but they have too few opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and develop independent learning skills, for example, through recording work in their own way or in their own words rather than copying from the board.
10. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school provides for pupils' spiritual development mainly through the religious education curriculum, which was outside the scope of this inspection, and in assemblies, and there are also effective links with St George's Cathedral. Pupils' moral and social development is satisfactory. They are beginning to make choices and decisions of their own through the school council, and they discuss issues and concerns through Circle Time, where pupils sit in a circle and take turns to speak. The personal, social and health education programme, whilst still in the early stages of development, provides opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on moral and social issues during lessons and assemblies. Social development of pupils in the reception year, however, is poor. Around half the children are unlikely to meet this early learning goal by the time they join Year 1. The range of educational visits and visitors, as well as activities outside the classroom, are somewhat limited, considering the diversity of local cultures and the rich

variety of resources within the immediate local community. This, together with opportunities that are missed within the curriculum, inhibits both the cultural and multicultural development of pupils.

11. Attendance is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Due to recent initiatives, punctuality has improved, but a persistent minority of pupils still arrive late for school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	1.7
National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **unsatisfactory**. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory but there is too little on offer to enrich this provision. There are unsatisfactory arrangements for pupils' guidance and support. Care and welfare are unsatisfactory. Over the past year, the school has developed a satisfactory partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **unsatisfactory** because there are too many lessons where pupils do not learn enough. Marking and assessment are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work is not matched well enough to pupils' different capabilities.
- Not enough is expected of the pupils.
- Behaviour is generally controlled and managed well.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to learn independently.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs do not get enough support.
- Marking varies too much in quality and does not give pupils enough guidance on what they need to do to do better.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (11%)	11 (24%)	19 (42%)	5 (11%)	5 (11%)	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. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

12. The quality of teaching and learning has declined since the last inspection. There is more unsatisfactory teaching than was seen last time. Teaching is poor in the nursery and reception years and unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 because there are simply too many lessons where pupils do not learn enough. In common with other London schools, St George's has had serious difficulties in recruiting staff in recent years. This problem has been exacerbated by the number of staff who have been away for extended periods as a result of illness. During the inspection, a third of the classes was being taught by temporary teachers because staff were ill. Another third are taught by staff from overseas who do not have United Kingdom recognised teaching qualifications. Although the temporary and overseas staff generally perform as well as other teachers, pupils' work shows that, in some cases, their progress has been hampered by the several mid-year changes of teacher that they have had.
13. Nonetheless, there has been commendable progress in establishing a successful climate for learning throughout the school, particularly in relation to pupils' behaviour. Despite criticisms of pupils' behaviour voiced both by parents and other pupils, behaviour is generally controlled and managed well in lessons. Where incidents of misbehaviour occur, these are not usually allowed to disrupt the learning of others. Even temporary staff who have only recently joined the school know their pupils well and the good relationships that teachers have with their pupils is a spur to learning and contributes to the friendly atmosphere of the school.
14. In the most effective lessons, pupils learn and achieve well because teachers build carefully on what pupils have learned before. They also ensure that the pupils make good progress by extending pupils' knowledge in small manageable steps. In a mathematics lesson in Year 1, pupils achieved well, recognising whether problems involved adding or taking away, because the teacher posed gradually more challenging questions based on the storybook *Handa's Surprise*, where the little girl in the story has fruit taken out of and added to her basket. A variety of short, different activities, including a brief acting out of the story, helped enliven the lesson. Too often, however, lessons are not made interesting enough for the pupils. Pupils are dutifully compliant in carrying out routine tasks or listening passively to long teacher introductions, but they do not learn as well as they could because too little is done to engage them and fire up their enthusiasm. Too often, teachers ask closed questions, which call for short, factual answers rather than more open questions that demand a more thoughtful response.
15. Pupils learn best when the work they are set is matched well to their different capabilities. In many lessons, however, all the children are given the same work to do. This means that the more able pupils are not challenged enough and lower attaining pupils, including some of those with special educational needs, do not achieve enough because they do not have enough support. The same is true for a number of the pupils who are at an early stage of learning English because it is not their mother tongue. Because these children are given too little support, they are sometimes left sitting alone in lessons struggling with work they simply do not understand.
16. In some of the lessons that were ineffective, pupils learned little because teachers did not expect enough of them. Too long was allowed for mundane, unchallenging tasks and lesson time was not sufficiently well used. Rather than completing their assigned tasks quickly, pupils in these lessons allowed the work to fill the time available.

17. Even where teaching is effective, lessons are often too teacher directed, with pupils not given enough opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning through practical investigations or independent research. Pupils' exercise books show that many lessons over the past year have involved much copying from the board – not always accurately. Books also show much too wide a variation in the quality of marking. There are examples of some good marking that gives pupils practical guidance on how to improve their work but, even in the same class, there are other examples of marking that does little more than acknowledge that the work has been done, with indiscriminate ticks.
18. Teaching has been monitored by the headteacher but subject leaders have not generally been involved in observing lessons. Often the regular time they have each week out from class teaching does not coincide with any lessons being taught in their subject, which severely limits the opportunity teachers have of having their lessons seen by colleagues or for getting practical support with their teaching.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **satisfactory**. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met. There is unsatisfactory enrichment through out-of-school activities. Resources are satisfactory but accommodation and staffing are poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good provision for information and communication technology (ICT).
- There is inadequate provision for pupils with special needs and those in the early stages of learning English.
- The accommodation is poor.
- The many changes of staff have had an adverse affect on pupils' progress in some classes.

Commentary

19. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is satisfactory. Allocation of time is adequate in all subjects but relatively little time is devoted to music, where pupils are taught in a weekly half-hour lesson. The school has made a substantial investment of resources in ICT. There is a very well equipped computer suite where, in most cases, every pupil has individual access to a computer, and there are several networked computers in every class. As a result, ICT is used well as a learning tool across a range of subjects. The school has also begun to develop some effective links between work in literacy and the topics studied in history and geography, so that, for example, Year 6 pupils learning about rivers in geography have used books on rivers in their English lessons.
20. The curriculum and its effectiveness are impaired by staffing difficulties, poor accommodation and unsatisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English. Staff illness has meant that a number of classes have had several changes of teacher during the course of this year and more staff changes are due as a result of teachers leaving. The recruitment and retention of staff is a recurring problem for the school. Although the transient temporary and overseas teachers have contributed much to the work of the school, the many changes have been disruptive for the pupils affected. Parallel classes catering for pupils of similar ages have

had different learning experiences. In some year groups, standards are notably higher in the class that has benefited from stable staffing than in the class where learning has been interrupted through a succession of changes of teacher.

21. The school buildings do not provide a suitable environment for learning. Accommodation for children in the nursery and reception years is poor because the reception classrooms are too cramped and have no outside area. The nursery classroom has many nooks and crannies that make it difficult to provide adequate supervision. The old part of the school is badly in need of repair and redecoration and its neglected appearance is dispiriting for staff and pupils. The new classrooms become unbearably hot and humid in summer weather and teachers have spoken of the problems of coping in temperatures that have reportedly reached as high as 36°C this term. It is unreasonable to expect staff or children to suffer these conditions. Apart from a mural, organised this year by the new headteacher, little has been done to improve the playground area, described as “barren and unstimulating” in the last inspection report although the school has plans to develop the playground over the coming year.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory, with inadequate classroom support and insufficient attention given to their needs in lesson planning. Emphasis has been put on identifying the individual needs of pupils and catching up on the paperwork but there has been little focus on meeting pupils’ specific needs in the classroom. Many pupils with special educational needs do not have sufficient support and, consequently, they do not make enough progress. There is insufficient sensitivity to the needs of some individual pupils.
23. The school has a large number of pupils whose home language is not English, and some arrive in class with very little or no English. The presence of another pupil or a teacher who speaks the same language is helpful but it is not a substitute for properly planned provision. There is urgent need for a programme to enable class teachers to cope with this situation and to ensure access to advice and resources. Some withdrawal and in-class support is provided by two teaching assistants, but a one-to-one session observed took place in a corridor, with a window sill as a table. In one class lesson observed, a boy with virtually no English had no work to do, no materials, no dual-language book or dictionary. He could take no part in the work of the class. The school has a sound policy document for the support of pupils learning English as an additional language, but its good intentions are not being fulfilled in practice
24. Other than in music, where good use is made of visits, there is insufficient enrichment or extension of the curriculum through extracurricular activities. Some visits take place, but the school does not make good use of the many ready opportunities offered by its proximity to London museums, galleries, and theatres. Parents were concerned about the lack of lunchtime activities and there are very few clubs or activities in either the lunch break or at the end of the school day.
25. The school is not making the best use of its resources. The library is underused. During the inspection, no classes or pupils were observed using the library and its computer system has been out of action since the autumn term. Parents complain that this has meant that children have not been permitted to take home library books all year. The school has data projectors that teachers are able to link up to computers but these valuable resources cannot be used properly because of the lack of relatively inexpensive projector screens. Teachers were seen struggling to use projectors on coloured walls with

pupils having to hunt out the image amid the fixed displays. Nonetheless, resources are very good in ICT, good in music and adequate in other subjects. In the nursery and reception classes they are poor.

26. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Some improvements have been made in broadening the curriculum and there is now very good provision for ICT. However, the school no longer provides as well for pupils with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language. The wide range of extracurricular activities praised in the last report is no longer in evidence.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety of pupils are **unsatisfactory**. The support, advice and guidance that pupils receive about their achievements and their personal development are also unsatisfactory. The school successfully involves pupils in its work and development

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pastoral care and general welfare of the majority of pupils are good.
- There are several health and safety concerns.
- Pupils' support, advice and guidance are not based on effective monitoring and recording of their academic or personal development.
- The school has been effective in identifying pupils' special educational needs and in setting their targets, but these are insufficiently followed up in lessons.

Commentary

27. Policies and procedures for child protection and for promoting the general welfare of pupils are good and have improved since the last inspection. The school's pastoral care system is effective. Teachers and support staff, even when very new to the school, know pupils well and pupils develop trusting relationships with the adults in the school. Staff provide good role models for the pupils.
28. The school has taken action this year in a number of areas to improve health and safety. Nevertheless, inspectors identified further health and safety concerns. These include equipment and supervision in the nursery, a heavy obscured door opening out on to the landing in the Year 2 area, and the new classrooms that become excessively hot and humid in the summer despite the introduction of fans. There is insufficient regard for the needs of pupils with physical disabilities. Governors need to establish more rigorous risk assessment procedures.
29. The advice, support and guidance that pupils receive throughout their time at school are unsatisfactory and have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. Although the school has begun to keep better track of pupils' progress, not enough use is made of the information from assessment to set pupils' individual targets to help them focus on what they need to learn. Arrangements for the induction of pupils into the school and their transfer to the next phase of their education are satisfactory. The school actively seeks and acts upon the views of pupils through the developing school council, and this is an improvement since the last inspection.
30. Procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs are newly established. The school has focused on preparing the individual education plans for these pupils and not enough time has been spent in actually meeting their needs in the classroom. Individual education plans identify the main concerns the school has about a pupil and detail appropriately the small steps the pupil needs to make to overcome their difficulties. However,

teachers' planning and work in books do not take account of the targets in the individual education plans and, therefore, the needs of each pupil are not adequately met.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **satisfactory**. Links with the community are unsatisfactory. The links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities are missed to use local facilities to enrich pupils' experience.
- Parents are increasingly being encouraged to come into school and to help their children learn.

Commentary

31. The small number of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and who attended the parents' meeting expressed mixed views about the school. The questionnaires were mainly positive, while parents at the meeting voiced quite strong dissatisfaction. The concerns of parents about behaviour and bullying are not substantiated by the inspection evidence. However, concerns voiced by a minority of parents about the way the school is run and managed are, to some extent, justified. Generally, links with parents have improved since the last inspection.
32. The information that parents receive, through meetings, newsletters, noticeboards and reports, is satisfactory. Newsletters are regular and informative but include little that celebrates the school's or the pupils' achievements and successes. Current pupils' reports are satisfactory and a new, improved format is to be used from this year that the school hopes will give parents greater insight into their children's progress and development. However, the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus do not meet statutory requirements because they do not report sufficiently on attendance or test results. The school is beginning to work more closely with parents of pupils with special educational needs. There is space on the individual education plans for parents and pupils to comment, but to date these have mainly been left blank.
33. The school is now making good efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school and in their children's education and the headteacher is keen that this partnership should be enhanced still further. The parents' room and the courses and activities organised in it are beginning to have a positive effect and there are plans to re-establish a parent teacher association, following the disbanding some years ago of the last one.
34. The school's links with the local community are unsatisfactory overall. Whilst there are strong links with the Cathedral and with Shell, whose headquarters is close by, the school has failed to capitalise on the many resources within the local community to arrange visits, visitors and other activities that would enhance the curriculum and contribute to pupils' attainment and personal development. As parents pointed out, the Imperial War Museum is only a couple of minutes walk from the school, but pupils are not taken there to enrich work in history or literacy. Links with other schools are satisfactory, including with the neighbouring girls' secondary school through which French lessons are arranged for pupils in Year 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **unsatisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher, new this year, is satisfactory but staffing difficulties have been a barrier to improvement.

Management and the leadership of other key staff are unsatisfactory. Governance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The weaknesses identified in the last inspection have not been tackled effectively
- The headteacher recognises some of the improvements that are needed but staffing difficulties have impeded progress
- Staff with leadership responsibility have not been sufficiently focused on improving the quality of education and raising standards
- Governors are not involved enough in the school and do not have enough awareness of what needs to be improved

Commentary

35. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership, but, although she has found deficiencies in some of the school's management arrangements and recognised areas that need to be improved, progress in implementing improvements has been slow because of the staffing difficulties over the past year, including several teachers with long-term sickness. These persistent problems have had an adverse impact on the school's capacity to improve.
36. There has been insufficient action taken over the years since the last inspection to remedy the weaknesses that were identified. Many of the issues highlighted in the last report remain to be tackled effectively and there has been insufficient improvement in standards or in the quality of education provided. The school had not met performance management requirements, although a start has now been made on this. Interviews and target setting have taken place for most of the staff, including support staff.
37. The responsibilities of the acting deputy headteacher and the various subject co-ordinators in the monitoring of teaching and learning are not well defined, and, although all staff are given very generous release time from their class teaching to carry out their leadership and management roles, this time is not always used effectively to help support improvements in teaching and to raise standards. In most cases, the regular weekly session given to a subject leader for their management responsibilities does not coincide with any lessons going on in that subject. At present, it is largely only the headteacher who has observed lessons and recorded observations. The co-ordination of special educational needs in the school is unsatisfactory. Too much focus has been on correcting historical omissions and not enough has been spent on working with pupils in the class. This is understandable, as there are no historic documents for pupils with special educational needs, but it does mean that some pupils are struggling in school with physical, emotional or educational difficulties and are not receiving enough support. There are currently only temporary arrangements for managing support for pupils learning English as an additional language. The teacher who has been allocated some time to co-ordinate this work has had no training and was unaware of the availability of any budget.
38. Teaching staff have not been given job descriptions. The absence of these was noted in the 1998 report and the school has been very slow to rectify this. The headteacher has begun work on it, and the first draft documents have been written. Newly-qualified teachers have an appointed mentor, and several newcomers to the staff spoke warmly of the supportive and friendly welcome they had received.

39. Although governors are appreciative and supportive of the school, they do not show a clear enough understanding of its weaknesses and needs. They are very dependent on the headteacher and staff for information about the school. Improving the accommodation has not been seen as a priority in strategic planning, and this may account for the neglected state of decoration and repair of some areas of the school. Governors approved an expansion of pupil numbers some years ago but there is no evidence of detailed costing of any proposals to provide the extra classrooms that will be needed as the increased pupil intake moves up through the school. One option being considered by governors is for the music and new parents' room to be pressed into service as classrooms, but no regard has been given as to the effect of this on, for example, the initiative to involve parents more effectively. Governors have not yet organised the setting of objectives or performance review for the headteacher. Governors no longer have links with particular subject areas, as they did previously. They have not been closely involved in the writing of the school improvement plan or establishing criteria by which they can judge its success. The school does not meet statutory reporting requirements in its annual report to parents or the school prospectus.
40. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Progress was made in three areas, behaviour management, target-setting and strategies for reducing unauthorised absence. There has been inadequate response to the other key issues: the monitoring of both curriculum provision and teaching quality, and long-term development planning with success criteria for evaluating effectiveness. Governance is not as good as it was reported in the last inspection.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,236,615	Balance from previous year	-86,752
Total expenditure	1,217,603	Balance carried forward to the next	-67,740
Expenditure per pupil	3,529		

41. The school has a substantial historic deficit. Although this reduced last year from a previous peak, it has been made worse by the cost of temporary staff brought in to replace teachers who are on long-term sickness. The school has had no insurance policy to cover this cost. The school has not allowed the deficit to adversely affect resources available for pupils but the size of the deficit has been an impediment to carrying out the improvements needed to the buildings.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) is poor. Teaching and learning are poor overall because there are too few opportunities for children to develop their independence as too many activities are adult led. Many of these activities are too easy for the children and do not challenge them enough. Some activities are inappropriate for the age of the children and their stage of development. In the nursery, for example, worksheets are used that limit the opportunities the children have to develop their own ways of recording things, so that they do not make enough progress towards all of the expected goals for children's learning. Overall, although the children come into school with below average ability, they do not make enough progress, and only about half of them are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. This means standards are well below average by the end of the Foundation Stage.
43. Planning and assessment are poor. Teachers plan together across the six areas of learning, but plans mainly identify the activities the children will experience. Learning objectives are too broad and so cannot possibly be achieved in one lesson. Children with special educational needs are not identified in the planning, nor are children who are learning English as an additional language, and all activities are the same for all children. Planning for children in the nursery is especially poor as it refers to the expected goals for children when they are five years old, not to the small steps the children have to take to get to these goals. Assessment is carried out regularly with all staff making notes on children's activities. These are then put into a file under the six areas of learning. However, there is no systematic way of checking that each child is covering all that is expected and no overall system for assessing how much progress the children have made. Comments on each child do not identify what the child cannot do so that activities can be planned to teach children the necessary skills.
44. The curriculum offered to children in the Foundation Stage is too narrow. This is due, in some part, to the poor accommodation. Rooms are too small to have all areas of learning available for all of the children. This is especially true for children in the reception classes, as the rooms are cramped and badly in need of decoration. There is no outside area for the children in the reception classes, and this impacts adversely on their physical development. The nursery classroom has many nooks and crannies that make supervision difficult. Resources are of a poor quality and not used effectively to support learning. Overall, not enough care is taken of the children. Inspectors raised several health and safety concerns over provision for the children in the nursery.
45. The Foundation Stage is poorly co-ordinated in the school. Teachers plan together regularly, but little has been done to ensure that provision is of high enough quality and appropriate for all of the children. This has led to some activities being the same for children in the nursery and in the reception classes. There is no overall view of how well the children are doing or what they should be experiencing and this has led to poor achievement. There has been poor improvement since the last inspection.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too many adult led activities mean that children do not develop independence.
- Children behave well and work together in a friendly way.

Commentary

46. The children in the nursery and reception classes do not make enough progress in this area of learning because there are too few opportunities for them to develop their independence. Most of the activities, especially in the reception classes, are too adult led with no opportunity for children to try things out for themselves. This was evident in a mathematics session where children had pre-printed shells to colour in and arrange in a repeating pattern. There was no opportunity for the children to draw their own patterns or to discuss what a pattern was. However, the children settled to the activity quickly and worked together in a friendly way. Children are well behaved and enjoy coming to school. They listen to their teachers and to each other and good relationships are formed. There are more opportunities for children in the nursery to explore activities for themselves but these activities are not always of a high enough quality. Staff tend to supervise activities rather than encourage children to work hard and concentrate and there are too many examples of the children sitting, inactive, for long periods on the carpet.

Communication, Language and Literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills are not taught in a systematic way.
- The environment does not encourage language skills.
- Too many activities are adult led and not carefully planned.
- Children enjoy storybooks and are keen to learn to read.

Commentary

47. Children in the nursery do not have a rich environment in which to make good progress towards the expected goals for children's learning. The role-play area does not have good writing opportunities for children to practise their skills, nor is it well resourced and inviting so that children can act out their own experiences and make up their own stories. Children in the reception classes do not have a language-rich environment that encourages them to write. The names and sounds of letters are taught, but not in a systematic way. Children have the opportunity to learn the sounds that letters make, but if they are absent there are no procedures for them to catch up on missing work. Too many activities are adult led and this gives the children too few opportunities to try things out for themselves. This means that children have gaps in their knowledge and cannot reach the expected goals for children's learning. The children speak confidently and clearly and listen attentively to each other. However, there are times when they are expected to sit for long periods of time listening to the teacher and this tests their powers of concentration. Role-play opportunities for children in the reception classes are too limited. Resources are sparse and the children are not enthusiastic about using the area. Early reading skills

are developed satisfactorily. Children enjoy books and stories and are keen to learn to read.

Mathematical Development

Provision in mathematical development is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too many activities are adult led.
- Children learn to count accurately.
- There are too few opportunities for children to experience a wide range of mathematical experiences.

Commentary

48. Children's progress in this area of learning is hindered by too many adult led activities. Children are not encouraged to record things for themselves. There are very few practical activities that children can pursue and find out for themselves. They count to ten accurately and confidently and are beginning to add numbers together, but all children experience the same work and there is no account taken of each child's different capabilities. This means that more able children are not challenged sufficiently and become bored with low level, colouring-in activities. There are too few examples in the nursery and reception classes of children experiencing a wide range of mathematical vocabulary. Activities such as sand and water, for example, are not used effectively to promote understanding of *full* or *empty*, or an early understanding of capacity and *more* or *less*.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are not good enough to promote early design skills.
- Computers are used by the children but programs are not always well suited to their needs.
- Children are encouraged to talk about their experiences.

Commentary

49. Resources for promoting this area of learning are poor. This results in children learning early design skills with inappropriate equipment. For example, children in the nursery were using very small building bricks that are more suitable for older children and resources in the reception classes are old and are not inviting or exciting for the children to use. Computers are available in all classes but the programs offered to the children are not appropriate to promote their learning in this technological age. For the most part, children have access to a website, designed for children, but do not have the skills necessary to access the activities. Children are encouraged to talk about what they do at home and about special events. This gives them a good sense of the passing of time and they begin to understand how things change. However, there is too little emphasis on

looking at the natural world so that children can begin to understand about how things grow and learn to take care of plants.

Physical Development

Provision in physical development is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is no outside area for children in the reception classes and this limits their physical development.
- Children do not have enough opportunities to develop their practical skills.

Commentary

50. Planning for children's physical development is poor. The nursery has access to a large outside area, but planning does not show how physical skills of running, jumping, catching and balancing will be promoted effectively. Activities outside are supervised rather than used as purposeful teaching opportunities. There is no outside area for children in the reception classes and too little use is made of the school hall to promote the skills necessary for children to develop physically. Activities within the classroom do not give children enough opportunities to have a go for themselves and learn practical skills, such as cutting. Too many activities have shapes or materials already cut out for the children and other activities are not interesting enough. Although many children can cut accurately, this is more due to what they have learned outside school than the opportunities they get in the Foundation Stage. Not enough emphasis is put on developing children's ideas of being healthy. For example, children in the nursery were not encouraged to wash their hands before they decorated the biscuits they had made.

Creative Development

Provision in creative development is **poor**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Limited space restricts the opportunities for creative activities.

Commentary

51. The main weakness with the programme for creative development is the lack of space to provide many exciting opportunities for the children. This is especially true in the reception classes where it is not possible for there to be painting, gluing, role-play activities and access to sand and water every day. There is more space in the nursery but this is not used effectively to ensure that children are enthusiastic about trying out new activities and learning to respond using all of their senses. Some creative activities, such as making a collage of a gingerbread boy, are too adult-directed and this limits children's creativity. Role-play areas are too small and do not provide a stimulating area for children to act out their own experiences.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 & 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results attained by Year 6 pupils in the 2003 National Tests were well above average.
- Standards of work in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are below average.
- Opportunities are missed for helping to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- There is not enough support for pupils with special educational needs or those at an early stage of learning English.

Commentary

52. In the national tests taken in Year 2, attainment in reading and writing has remained below average for the past three years and standards this year results indicate little improvement. In the national tests taken in Year 6, pupils in 2003 attained outstanding results, which showed marked improvement on those in all recent years and compared very favourably with both national standards and those of similar schools. The results of the 2004 Year 6 tests were not available at the time of the inspection but the work seen and the school's own assessment indicated that standards had dropped sharply and are now once again below average. Given pupils' below average starting point, current achievement is satisfactory at the end both of Year 2 and Year 6. Boys have done much better than girls, particularly in the Year 6 tests. This is the opposite of what is usually found. However, in Year 2, more girls than boys attained the higher reading levels in the 2004 tests.
53. There is a marked contrast between the standards in reading and writing in the two parallel classes in Year 2. The class attaining well has been taught by one experienced teacher throughout the year, while the other has had three teachers since September. Despite the good efforts of temporary teachers, this lack of continuity has affected pupils' progress and often their confidence and enthusiasm. Similar effects are seen in some classes in other year groups that have had a number of changes of teacher.
54. In Years 3 to 6, although most pupils' basic reading skills are satisfactory, too few develop and use higher reading skills. Pupils seldom use the school library or visit other libraries. There is little evidence that they are discussing books and book choices with their teachers or one another or that they are all being introduced to a rich range of fiction and non-fiction. In writing, some pupils do not write enough and they are not using drafting and redrafting techniques to evaluate and improve their own writing with the help of their teachers.
55. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in all year groups. This was evident in lessons observed, and in conversations with pupils about their work. Few pupils talk readily and with confidence and fluency and they are not given enough encouragement to do this in lessons, where giving brief answers to questions is the main speech activity. They are seldom challenged to explain or extend their answers, exchange opinions, act out or recite poetry. Little use is made of drama activities, such as simple role-play or improvisation, to give pupils an opportunity to talk in a range of contexts. The lack of speaking and listening activities was also noted in other subjects and in the whole-

school assembly observed, where, again, pupil participation was limited to answering closed questions.

56. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but some good lessons were seen. The school has paid careful attention to the National Literacy Strategy and most of the new teachers, several of whom were trained overseas, have done their best to understand and fulfil its recommendations. Good relationships between teachers and classes were evident throughout the school. In many lessons, opportunities were missed to enthuse and extend pupils. This was particularly noticeable in some of the lessons with older pupils, who were compliant but unenthusiastic, and sometimes obviously bored. For example, Year 6 pupils who had recently taken their tests and deserved some lively English work, started their lesson changing active to passive in sentences without a meaningful context, then were given a laborious exercise using a box framework for a report writing. There was little to interest them in the work and their lack of enthusiasm was understandable. In contrast, a Year 2 class, working busily at gathering and using information about the Great Fire of London, had been excited by some excellent visual material and the teacher's lively presentation and were eager to talk and write about their findings.
57. Another weak area is in provision for the pupils with special educational needs and those in the early stages of learning English. There is sometimes little or no reference to these pupils in teachers' planning and no materials prepared for them. Class teachers appeared to have no access to suitable materials when coping with new arrivals who speak little English.
58. The limitations in teachers' assessment and marking noted in the previous inspection have not been remedied and the quality of marking is inconsistent. Many of the comments merely tell pupils what they have done but give no targets or suggestions for improvement. Target-setting is by group not for individuals. There is also some carelessness in correcting errors. Though it may not be desirable to correct every spelling mistake, misspellings of key words used in the lesson should not go unchecked.
59. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but co-ordinators have not been expected to monitor classroom teaching or to make use of data to analyse and improve performance. For example, the striking difference between the performance of boys and girls in English and the provision of in-class materials for early learners of English are two areas that have not been sufficiently explored.
60. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Now, as then, changes of teachers have affected continuity and progress, and attainment overall is below the national average. Speaking and listening skills are still insufficiently developed. Support for pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is no longer satisfactory and the valuable links and extracurricular activities described in the last report have not been maintained. The school library, well used in 1998, is now a neglected resource.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Most teachers are using opportunities for language development across different subjects. They are keen to develop subject specific vocabulary and to provide opportunities for writing. This was particularly noted in work being done in the humanities, where some of the work in literacy lessons was based on material being studied in

geography and history. There is less evidence of wider language development in reading and speaking. The library is little used and pupils' research and retrieval skills are not being developed by the use of good reference material in school or public libraries. Use of the Internet may sometimes replace book research but library skills are valuable and are not at present being nurtured. In a school which has given priority to reading development, the neglect of the library is surprising.

62. Across all subjects, speaking skills are insufficiently developed and inspectors noted the over-use of closed questioning. There is little expectation that pupils will develop their ideas orally, tell stories, make presentations, argue or take on roles. Opportunities for these activities are missed in all subjects, with opportunities missed, for example, for the use of drama and speech activities that would benefit all pupils and be of particular value to some of the pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. The school council offers one such opportunity, however, that is being used well.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average and a significant proportion of pupils lack confidence in basic numeracy skills.
- A number of teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of the support of teaching assistants.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and insufficient use is made of assessment to plan what pupils need to learn.

Commentary

63. When pupils enter Year 1, their attainment is below expected levels. From this low starting point, pupils make satisfactory progress. However, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment remains below average. The high standards attained by Year 6 pupils in the 2003 tests have not been sustained. Pupils do not build well on their previous skills and knowledge in mathematics and do not readily apply their skills in different situations.
64. Work in pupils' books shows that a satisfactory range of work is covered, though there is relatively little investigative mathematics and problem-solving. Work is mostly the same for all groups of pupils. This means that lower attaining pupils often find the work too difficult and much of their work is incomplete. More able pupils often appeared to find the work unchallenging. These were weaknesses identified six years ago in the last inspection.
65. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, some unsatisfactory teaching was observed and some other lessons had weaknesses. Some good teaching was also observed. In the more successful lessons, teachers had good subject knowledge and organised time and resources well. They were ably assisted by support staff. Teachers displayed and discussed key mathematical vocabulary and ensured that pupils used it correctly. Where teaching was less successful, there were weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, the pace of lessons was slow and, in one case, there were difficulties with managing

pupils' behaviour. In two lessons, the tasks set failed to engage pupils' interest and activities were not challenging enough for the more able pupils.

66. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Marking of pupils' work is often cursory and rarely gives pupils adequate guidance as to what they need to do to improve. Assessment information is not used effectively to set realistic but challenging targets for pupils and to keep track of their progress.
67. It was not possible to meet the subject co-ordinator who was not in school during the inspection and so inspectors made no judgement on the leadership and management of the subject. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection because some of the weaknesses identified six years ago remain and standards have not risen enough.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. There are satisfactory links between mathematics and other subjects. For example, pupils apply their knowledge of data handling in science and geography, constructing and interpreting graphs and tables. Careful measuring contributes to good quality models in design and technology. Mathematics is further developed through ICT, both in lessons and supplementing work in the classroom.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to learn through scientific investigation and to record their findings.
- Marking does not help pupils improve their work.

Commentary

69. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in science that are below average. This, nevertheless, represents satisfactory achievement as pupils are of below average ability when they start school. Although most of the aspects of science are covered well in Years 1 and 2, there is too little focus on developing the scientific skills of investigating and using scientific language and this is the reason why standards remain below average. In the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, results were high, but these standards have not been maintained. From looking at books and talking to pupils, most lessons emphasise teaching scientific facts and knowledge rather than giving pupils the opportunity to investigate and learn by finding out and recording for themselves. This means that standards overall are well below average and achievement is unsatisfactory.
70. Although pupils across the school learn scientific facts, such as the symbols for drawing an electric circuit, they do not learn how to carry out an experiment or investigation. Many pupils do not know what makes a fair test, or how to predict what they think will happen. They are unsure of how to record their findings and work in the books shows that pupils do not know how to draw reasoned conclusions from their findings.

71. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. Although, in lessons seen, all of the teaching was at least satisfactory, the work in the books demonstrates that expectations are too low and pupils are set work that is not planned to meet their needs. Much of what was seen was copied from the board or books, as the wording and the layout was the same in every exercise book. This suggests that teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils being able to record for themselves. Work is not matched adequately to pupils' different capabilities. On the rare occasions when pupils have conducted an investigation, it has been to repeat work already covered. So, for example, in Year 2, pupils have investigated what cress seeds need to grow, and in Year 6 pupils have carried out the same investigation. This does not show good progress. Most of the work in the books is marked and gives encouragement to pupils with positive phrases. There are few examples, however, of marking in order to guide pupils on how to improve their work.
72. The subject is unsatisfactorily led and managed in the school. Although the fact that there are too few investigations has been identified as a weakness, and a science lesson on investigation has been observed in each class, there has been nothing done to ensure that these lessons continued, and consequently they have not. There has been insufficient focus on identifying strategies for raising standards in science and ensuring that all pupils achieve well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources for ICT are very good.
- Pupils are achieving well.
- ICT is used well to support work across the curriculum.

Commentary

73. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was judged to be average. Whilst it is still average, national expectations for this subject are considerably higher than they were at that time. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils throughout the school greatly enjoy learning and using ICT and are confident in using computers.
74. The school has recently updated its computer suite and resources are very good. In most of the lessons in the suite, each pupil works individually on a computer. This is much better than the provision in most primary schools, where pupils usually have to share a computer. There is a good range of software to support work across the curriculum. Classrooms are generously equipped with networked computers but these were not often seen in use during the inspection. Although there is a data projector in the computer suite, there is currently no screen, and images projected on to the coloured wall are not easily visible.
75. Teaching in ICT is satisfactory. Teachers vary in their confidence and subject knowledge but most are confident and use ICT effectively. Teachers make good use of ICT as a tool for learning across the curriculum. They take care to teach pupils the specific vocabulary

for the subject and ensure that they use it in their work. In the best lessons, teachers make good links between different curriculum areas and help pupils to build well on their previous learning. Tasks are well matched to pupils' different learning needs, which helps them to make good progress. The subject is led well and there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. Provision across the curriculum is good. ICT is being used increasingly to support work in other subjects. In mathematics, pupils create databases, graphs and charts to present their work in different ways. There are many examples of word processing. Pupils use school Internet sites to find information in history and there are several examples of using drawing programs in art. In geography, pupils create multimedia presentations to record their work.

HUMANITIES

Geography was inspected in full and is reported below. History was sampled. Religious education was not inspected because it is due to be the subject of a separate report.

77. There were too few **history** lessons seen to make an overall judgement on provision. In the one lesson seen, pupils in Year 2 were learning about the Great Fire of London and showed a good understanding of why the fire spread quickly and why it was difficult to put out. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learned about Victorians and what it was like to live in those times. There are few examples of pupils using first-hand sources to support their learning in history. There was no evidence, for example, of pupils studying World War II, although the Imperial War Museum is only yards from the school.

Geography

Provision for geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Good links are made with other subjects.

Commentary

78. In the last two inspections, geography was identified as a subject in which there were weaknesses in provision. It is now a subject in which pupils do particularly well, and this represents good improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils reach standards in geography that are in line with those expected nationally. This represents good achievement because pupils are below average when they come into school. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand about simple maps and use keys to identify the main features of the locality. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress and have a good understanding about rivers and various mountain ranges.
79. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare interesting lessons so that pupils are keen to learn. Good links are made between geography and other subjects, including literacy and work in science on global warming.

When pupils learn about ancient Egypt in history, for example, they also learn about the landscape of Egypt. This means that pupils develop a clear understanding that, although events change, terrain does not and that the most fertile land is alongside the River Nile. There is a weakness, however, in the way in which pupils' work is recorded as it is mixed up with history. This results in pupils not being able to track through the work that they do as some history work appears in the middle of work on geography topics.

80. There is currently no co-ordinator for geography and so inspectors are unable to make judgements about the leadership and management of the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music was inspected and is reported in full. Art and design, design and technology, and physical education were all sampled.

81. No **art** lessons were observed. There was little of the artwork of older pupils displayed around the school and sketchbooks were only available from one class. These contained very little work and there is not enough evidence to make a judgement on teaching and learning.
82. Two lessons were observed in **design and technology**. These were both in Years 3 to 6. Displays and teachers' planning show that a satisfactory range of work is covered. Pupils have satisfactory experience of producing a design specification, then making and evaluating their products.
83. Only two lessons in **physical education** were observed. Pupils understand that they need to warm up before exercise and that exercise increases their heart rate. In the lessons observed, pupils developed their physical skills well.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of singing is good.
- There are good resources for music.
- The time allowed for music lessons is short and so pupils do not have an opportunity to more fully develop their ideas and skills.
- Good use is made of visits and out-of-school activities to enrich provision.

Commentary

84. During the inspection, only a small number of music lessons were observed. Music is taught by a specialist teacher who has good expertise, although the effectiveness of this teaching is limited by the relatively short allocation of time for the subject. The lessons were short and the time allowed was not enough for pupils to develop their composition skills and achieve good standards. Tape recordings of previous work indicate that standards are satisfactory, overall. The quality of singing is good. In singing practices, pupils in Years 3 to 6 sang tunefully. They confidently sang in simple harmonies. A group

of pupils played percussion instruments to piano accompaniment as pupils entered the hall for school Mass. These pupils also played recorders to accompany the hymn.

85. Provision for out-of-school activities and visits are very much better in music than in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to learn the descant and treble recorders and there is also a choir. The curriculum is enriched through a range of additional activities. Pupils have visited the Horniman Museum to see the collection of musical instruments. They regularly take part in local festivals and attend concerts by professional musicians.
86. The subject is well resourced. It is effectively led and managed and there has been good improvement since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education was sampled. Citizenship is not taught as a separate subject, although elements of citizenship are included in the personal, social and health education lessons.

87. Just one **personal, social and health education** lesson was seen during the inspection. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to talk about issues during Circle Time, where the children sit in a circle and take turns to discuss concerns, and have a school council that takes the views of the pupils to the management of the school. Pupils in Year 6 learn about the dangers of misusing drugs. After some uncertainty, the school has decided to include sex education in the curriculum for Year 2 and Year 6. Staff, parents and governors agreed recently on the adaptation of a video presentation for this purpose.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	5
Accommodation and resources	6
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	5
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
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	5
The school's links with other schools and Colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	

