

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rotherhithe

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100833

Headteacher: Sister Norma Kirkby

Lead inspector: David G Collard

Dates of inspection: 15th - 17th September 2003

Inspection number: 257748

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:	204
School address:	Gomm Road Lower Road Rotherhithe London
Postcode:	SE16 2TY
Telephone number:	(0207) 237 4036
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	John Kinlough
Date of previous inspection:	15 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The catchment area of St Joseph's is typical of an inner city school. The majority of families have low income and live in tenanted, council or housing association accommodation. The numbers on roll are falling because of a local regeneration programme linked to local and European funding. Over the last four years, the school has been subject to a major renovation project due to the very poor state of the buildings and only became fully operational again in July 2002. Approximately half of the pupils are of Black African origin, a proportion that has been rising for the last three years, and the other half are white. Ten per cent of pupils are supported in learning English as a second language, of which five per cent are at an early stage of spoken language development. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average (24%) as is the number of pupils with a formal statement of particular need (3%). The attainment of pupils when they enter the school at three years old is well below that expected nationally. Due to the progress that children have made through the school, it has received Achievement Awards in both 2002 and 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11122	David Collard	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language
9465	Elizabeth Cooke	Lay inspector	
20707	David Brettell	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Foundation stage
18344	David Earley	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. The well-established systems and procedures have ensured that standards have been maintained through a period of turbulence. The complete rebuilding of the school was finished in July 2002. Despite the upheaval, standards rose and were then maintained in Year 6 and a substantial increase has been made in the standards in Year 2. A significant factor in the continued progress has been the very good quality of personal development and a strong Christian ethos that are at the core of the learning. Teaching is good with a number of strengths although some aspects of the curriculum for nursery children need improvement. The school is led and managed well and this has ensured that there are high aspirations about what the pupils can achieve. The high costs of improving the structure of the school in conjunction with the disruption to the curriculum means that the school provides good value for money but has the potential and capacity to improve.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the good and often high standards that pupils achieve by the time they leave the school and particularly the improvement in standards for pupils at the end of Year 2;
- the many ways of promoting good personal development and a thirst for learning;
- the quality of leadership and management particularly by the headteacher
- the guidance provided by the governing body which has been of good quality for a number of years but has continued to improve since the last inspection;
- the good quality of teaching, planning and the use of assessment except in the nursery which, although sound, is not as consistently strong as other areas of the school;
- the balance of work between subjects, the range of visits, visitors and out-of-lesson activities that are planned and the links that are fostered within the local and business community; and
- the relationships between the staff, pupils and the parents that provide a good environment for learning.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in 1998. The key issues noted then have been acted upon, the main one being to improve the quality of the school buildings. Although there was some delay in implementing this, it is now fully completed and provides a good environment for learning. Other issues relating to assessment and some minor statutory omissions from reporting were quickly addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	B	A
mathematics	C	D	B	A
science	D	B	A	A*

Key: A - very high; 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.

Pupils achieve well. Children enter the school with standards well below those expected nationally. Through the Foundation Stage, they make satisfactory progress although by the beginning of Year 1, they have still not achieved the outcomes expected from the Early Learning Goals. During Years 1 and 2 the good teaching ensures that pupils acquire new knowledge but also learn about how they can take charge of their own learning. They achieve at least average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Through Years 3 to 6, the building blocks are in place so that by the end of Year 6,

pupils are achieving standards above those expected, particularly in English, mathematics and science and achievement for those with English as an additional language is sound. In science in 2002, their achievement between Year 2 and Year 6 tests was in the top five per cent nationally. Initial information, although not confirmed, suggests that the trend is continuing. Older pupils could have achieved more in information and communication technology if there had not been so many difficulties in establishing reliable hardware but this is now improving.

Pupil's personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. Attitudes to learning are good and pupils gain in maturity as they get older. They are enthusiastic about being at school and as a consequence of this, and the good quality teaching, behaviour is good. Pupils have a healthy understanding about their own and others' values and beliefs and a developing sense of responsibility. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average even though the school has to work very hard to keep it at this level.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good because the **quality of teaching is equally good.** Strong leadership ensures that pupils receive a balance of quality teaching that leads to good progress. There are high aspirations about what pupils are capable of and they are expected to do well. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory because the staff are less experienced. Through the rest of the school, there is a good depth of very good and some excellent teaching centred on careful planning, the assessment of children and an enriched curriculum. There is a consistent focus on improving basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Linkage between subjects provides a stimulating and balanced school life. Pupils respond positively and are proud of their school. Pupils are looked after well and their personal qualities are carefully nurtured. This enables rapid intervention when necessary. Careful analysis is made of different groups such as checking the performance of the increasing numbers of Black African children who are attending the school. Parents are welcomed at the school with strong support. Very effective procedures for the care, welfare and safety of children are shared and understood.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good; and particularly well led by the headteacher. There is a clear vision centred on high achievement. Staff have a shared view about their work and are all pulling in the same direction. The governing body is financially astute and able to deal with difficult budgetary decisions. They provided good 'hands-on' support during the long-term renovations and acknowledge this has strengthened their understanding of the need for critical challenge.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are highly supportive of what the school is achieving and there were no significant negative views expressed either at the parents' meeting or through the questionnaires for the inspection and those undertaken by the school. Pupils are equally pleased with what they are offered although understandable comments about individual circumstances were noted in their responses. Overall, they very much enjoy school and relish the work they are set to do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the provision in the nursery by;
 - providing more structure to the planned activities;
 - a regular and useful assessment of children that will help inform the work that goes on; and
 - more opportunities to develop early writing skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils achieve well. Pupils achieve well overall, although achievement is only satisfactory for children in the nursery and for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). Standards are above average overall by Year 6, but below average at the end of Reception and average in Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improvement in standards by the end of Year 2 and the maintaining of good standards by the end of Year 6;
- the achievement that pupils make across all subjects, particularly in light of the difficulties that have been overcome during the recent rebuilding of the school but the progress made in nursery which, although sound, is not as good as through the rest of the school;
- the achievement made in personal development by all pupils; and
- the progress that pupils with special educational needs make.

Commentary

1. In the Foundation Stage, there are many opportunities for involvement in personal, social and emotional development. Interaction between the adults and the children, the use of role-play and the sharing of toys mean that children progress adequately. Despite this, few reach the targets expected of six-year-olds. Good use is made of spoken language and teachers develop this well. This is not so true for the development of early writing, reading and numeracy in the nursery that limits what can be achieved in the Reception class. Children are not reaching the goals expected. Children gain an understanding of the world around them through some exciting activities. Similarly, creative and physical development is planned for well. The outside area is used frequently. Standards in these areas are close to, but still below, those expected nationally. Not all children are ready to start work on the National Curriculum by the time they enter Year 1 because they have not achieved the required levels in relation to the outcomes of the Early Learning Goals.
2. Progress improves swiftly in Year 1 and 2. Over the last two years, teachers have placed a very high emphasis on improving the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Various individual and small groups have been developed from a thorough analysis of assessment data. Those with special educational needs receive good support, as do those who appear to be showing a particularly higher level of attainment. This has meant that pupils have acquired, at a faster rate, the mechanics of reading, grammar and sentence structure and an understanding of the four rules of number. National test results over the last five years have been below or well below those nationally, even when measured against similar schools. However, the success of this programmed and focused teaching has come to fruition this year (2003). Although the final figures have not yet been confirmed, it appears that when measured against similar schools, the figures for reading are at average levels, for writing they are above and in mathematics they are well above. These generally match the findings of the inspection. As part of this provision, pupils whose first language is not English have received better support as a result of appropriate training. The school's own evaluation of its performance shows that there is no complacency and the School Improvement Plan (SIP) focuses on raising the number of pupils achieving higher levels. The work that has gone on in developing teaching and learning and in raising standards has provided a good basis for the work that then continues into the junior years.
3. Pupils in each of the Years 3 to 6 achieve well. As in most schools, there is some fluctuation caused by the usual differences between year groups. At present, for instance, the overall performance of pupils in Year 4 has been consistently lower since they entered the school and this is reflected in the standards that they are achieving. It is a credit to the high focus on

raising achievement that in no year group is attainment below what would be expected nationally. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are above those nationally and pupils have achieved well in speaking and listening, reading and writing. They use these skills to support their learning across a number of other subjects such as history and science. Similarly, the good standards in mathematics come about because pupils gain a good knowledge of the four rules of number and are able to use the information that they know in other subjects such as information and communication technology and geography. Over a number of years, the standards in science have been good and this remains so because teachers are particularly confident and the benefits can be seen in the well above average standards that have been achieved. In all three of these core subjects, the number of pupils achieving above the level expected of their age in national tests is very high and for the last two years has greatly exceeded the expectations of the targets set for them.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 - average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (25.7)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	28.1 (25.7)	26.7 (26.6)
science	30.3 (29.6)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. By the end of Year 2 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, most pupils with special educational needs are below the levels of attainment expected for their ages, although a minority of pupils sometimes achieve in line with what would be expected. However, most pupils make good progress from a very low base and achieve well. This is because the school's provision is good and they are taught well. The school's analysis of different groups shows that all perform at least at the levels expected of them. Recent priorities have centred on boys' achievement, which is now rising, and the increasing proportion of those whose mother tongue is not English. It is evident that these children assimilate spoken English quickly because of the help of their classmates and from the specialist support they receive. While they continue to achieve satisfactorily, the school acknowledges that more needs to be done to encourage them to access better ways of developing their written language skills. So, for instance, while their stories are detailed and thorough, the inference that can be drawn from descriptive language is sometimes missed. A series of training sessions has started to help improve teachers' expertise in this area.
5. Achievement in information and communication technology is sound and, with the introduction of the computer suite, is becoming more rapid. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving standards in line with those expected nationally. Through Years 3 to 6 pupils, have not benefited from the modern equipment for so long and therefore have to catch up quickly. The thorough planning and teaching, as well as a high allocation of time, mean that progress in lessons is good and all indications suggest that standards, while at those expected nationally at present, are now rising. Pupils use these skills in other subjects and again, with increasing confidence, this is consistently improving.
6. The standards in music have improved since the last inspection with a better provision for the subject. Singing is a particular strength. Standards in physical education have been a concern of the school. Despite the lack of appropriate accommodation within the school, the use of other local facilities meant that pupils continued to achieve satisfactorily and, with the reintroduction of a hall and playground, are now making much more rapid progress. Few lessons were seen in art and design and design and technology but both have continued to be satisfactorily developed. Achievement is at least sound and teachers ensure that there is a balance of skills as well as experimentation. Similarly, geography and history have continued to be developed and standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

7. A high value is placed on the development of personal, social, emotional and citizenship skills. The use of in-depth discussions, an active and valued school council, mentors and 'buddies' enhance the learning that takes place. These are a major contributory factors to the good learning that happens in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes towards their schooling are good. They are keen and enthusiastic learners. **Behaviour is good overall.** The youngest children need a higher level of support but this improves through the infant department. Older pupils work well together and become increasingly responsible for their own actions. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good,** they gain awareness of the values and beliefs of others and an understanding of community responsibilities. **Attendance is in line with that nationally.** Initial figures for the present year, although not yet complete, show an improvement.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the latest reporting year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high emphasis placed on good personal standards both formally in lessons and informally in the work of the school;
- good behaviour in and around the school and polite well-mannered pupils;
- pupils feel involved in the way the school moves forward; and
- the good balance between a Catholic approach and a respect and tolerance for all beliefs and cultures.

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	74	0	0
White – Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	57	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

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

Commentary

8. The school is very effective in promoting positive attitudes within the school. The school community works in an atmosphere of mutual respect for one another. Pupils are polite and courteous, talk readily to adults and are proud of their school. In lessons, pupils listen to each other's contribution and wait politely for each other to finish. No poor behaviour was witnessed during the inspection either in lessons or at other times. Play during breaktimes was very well controlled with little intervention needed from adults. Meals at dinnertime are a truly social activity. Pupils show a high level of responsibility as they get older. All this ensures that pupils make good progress both in lessons and through other activities. Assessment of children when they enter the school indicates that their social development is low but because of the consistent and common approaches and clear policies and procedures the older pupils are becoming increasingly mature. They like to get involved in any outside activities offered as well as in performances and links with the community, all of which aid their increasing enthusiasm for learning. Pupils said that there was little or no bullying at the school because:

"It was not the right thing to do and anyway the teachers deal with it quickly".

9. All ethnic groups of pupils get on with each other. The school has actively monitored this and a series of training sessions has included ideas to address any potential incidents. These included the avoiding of stereotypes such as in books, and about looking at the influence of major world figures. In lessons, positive moves are made for frank and open discussions about people's feelings and how to learn from different cultures. This has also had a positive effect in raising the self-esteem of all groups but particularly those from a Black African background. There are clear views about right and wrong, again actively promoted by the school. A clear 'Children's Mission Statement' is displayed prominently next to the 'School Mission Statement'. Pupils are aware of its content because they formulated what it contains and act on its recommendations.
10. The high expectations of behaviour, tolerance, self-esteem and respect pervade all work of the school. It is because these systems are so well established that the atmosphere for learning is so positive. There is no doubt that this helped the school when, during the rebuilding, classes were moved, playgrounds and the hall were out of use and the curriculum seriously disrupted. Within the school's own evaluation, they rightly feel that their own systems were tested to the limit and not found wanting. Pupils feel that the whole operation went very smoothly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. There are some significant strengths in teaching and learning although it is not so strong in the nursery. A good, enriched curriculum is offered that places a high emphasis on academic and personal achievement. Pupils' welfare is of prime importance and their views are valued. The school encourages parents to be active participants in their children's learning by providing them with relevant information.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is sound in the Foundation Stage, good through Years 1 and 2 and very good through Years 3 to 6. Pupils achieve well in their time at the school because the pace of learning speeds up as they move through each year. Relevant methods are used to excite interest and motivate pupils and, except in the nursery, assessment is used well to help inform the work that follows.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of planning, the relevance of the tasks that are set and the high expectations of the teachers that help pupils acquire and use the knowledge that they have gained;
- the urgency and good pace of lessons that ensure learning is exciting and challenging;

- the good use of everyday assessment to plan work for the next lesson except in the nursery where not enough attention is placed on assessing what children have achieved, thus enabling the planning to address any shortcomings; and
- the teachers' confidence in allowing pupils to be independent, make choices and pose questions that challenge their understanding.

Commentary

11. During lessons, the best teaching was seen in Years 2, 5 and 6. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in the Foundation Stage because the children's learning was not directed closely enough and as a result, they did not make enough progress. The good, very good and excellent teaching was characterised by a good subject knowledge combined with careful planning, high aspirations about what pupils could achieve and a clear idea about what was going to be learnt, both in the short term and over a longer period. From a scrutiny of the work seen from last year, it is clear that the staffing instability has caused some fluctuation between year groups which are different to those this year. Monitoring reports suggest that the management of teachers has played an influential role in flattening any peaks and troughs in this quality so that all pupils are able to achieve well by the time they leave the school. Teachers are encouraged to make their lessons exciting and to move learning on at a fast pace. Both last year's books and the lessons seen demonstrated how successful this approach has been. The better level of challenge for pupils is a major contributory reason for the improvement in standards particularly in Years 1 and 2.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	4	9	9	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

12. Opportunities for the youngest children include a well-planned spacious room with some stimulating toys, a role-play area and outside facilities. Themes are used to give relevance to the play and the teacher has been offered advice about improving these. Good questioning techniques are used and when specific tasks are being undertaken such as cooking, there is a high level of adult-child interaction. However, too often children are rightly able to choose their own activities but then opportunities are missed to engage their thinking and stimulate their learning. A reason for this is the lack of continuity in the ad-hoc systems for daily assessment. Too much reliance is placed on the teacher's own knowledge about the class. This shortcoming has been present for the last year. Prior to this, the work in the nursery was of a high order and was commented upon favourably at the last inspection. The school has tried to improve the quality of teaching in the nursery by asking for outside advice. However, despite the persistence of the school, this has been slow because of a lack of expert personnel. Recent monitoring has started to address the issue and improvement is beginning to be seen in the organisation. Pupils are progressing much better in the Reception year. Here, work is linked well to the Early Learning Goals but there is an understanding about the need for a clear structure to the planned activities balanced with the opportunity for children to make choices.
13. Pupils in Year 1 are having to be taught the elements of more formalised learning. They find difficulty in sitting still and paying attention. During discussion sessions many are keen to answer questions but do not understand the need to wait for other's contributions. The teaching here is planned to address such issues as well as providing the initial stages of work on the National Curriculum. By Year 2, the strong teaching is much more focused on developing new skills and knowledge and its success can be seen in the improved results in national and internal tests. Good quality marking and understanding about the balance needed between reinforcement as well as moving learning on help pupils to achieve well. The recent focus on providing pupils at an early stage of learning English with appropriate opportunities to develop their written as well as spoken language means that they have progressed equally well. Those

with special educational needs are supported through small-group work linked well to their individual education plans.

14. Through Years 3 to 6, learning steadily becomes more rapid so that in Years 5 and 6 there are very high expectations about what will be completed. Pupils know they must present their work neatly and to the best of their ability. Teachers value work done in the class and at home and this can be seen in the very focused comments that are used. There is an appropriate balance between praise, assessment and advice. So, for instance, comments such as:

" You really know about how seeds are produced, perhaps you could look at your conclusion again".

are both helpful and informative. Unfortunately the handwriting of some teachers does not present good role models for the pupils - an area that is highlighted in the School Improvement Plan. Teachers plan lessons carefully, making links between subjects wherever possible. Evidence was seen of work on computers linked to mathematics, geography and science and in art and design, links to science and design and technology. This makes for an efficient use of time and helps stimulate and interest pupils. In discussion, they talked with enthusiasm about themes and topics they had studied and about how they enjoyed their lessons. Pupils in Year 6 are very independent as was witnessed by one recently appointed but experienced teacher who remarked:

"I was surprised at how mature the children were in this school".

15. Teaching throughout the school is well managed. The strengths of individuals are exploited as far as possible and the regular monitoring that takes place provides pointers for improvement in a constructive way. The detail in these reports indicates an improvement in the quality of teaching and this has had a positive effect on the learning that is happening at the school. There is an expectation that teachers will use the assessment information that they and the school have gathered to help them plan for the next lesson. A good example of how this is developed was seen in Year 3 where the teacher only plans part of the week and then adds the finer points in light of the assessment after the first day. Unfortunately, this has not been so successful in the nursery.
16. Overall, the quality of teaching is central to the steady improvement that has been made since the last inspection. Despite a number of staffing issues, turbulence in curriculum provision and the changing school roll, learning has not been adversely affected. On the contrary, pupils have moved on well, have achieved good standards relative to their own capability and have gained an appreciation of the diversity of their community.

The curriculum

The quality and breadth of curricular opportunities are **good**. The school has quickly addressed shortfalls. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. The accommodation is good and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The balance given to subjects from a thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses;
- the range of extra curricular activities, visits and visitors;
- the fully inclusive curriculum offered to all irrespective of their ability, gender or ethnicity;
- the high degree of importance placed on personal development within the curriculum; and
- the detrimental effect that staffing changes have had on the continuity of provision.

Commentary

17. The curriculum provides a good range of worthwhile opportunities that cater for the interests, aptitudes and needs of pupils. All statutory requirements are now being met, There are a number of good learning opportunities provided through extra-curricular clubs and these are

being extended to include more sporting activities. The quality of accommodation is good and allows for effective delivery of the curriculum. Resources are adequate and are currently being increased and improved as and when funding allows. The school is very active in reviewing how and what will be included in each year's curriculum. New initiatives are incorporated well but staff discuss at length how best this will fit into the school's own circumstances.

18. The curriculum provides the whole range of statutory requirements, including subjects that were causes for concern at the last inspection. It is not developed so well in the Foundation Stage because there is a need in the nursery to provide more structure, higher expectations and an effective process for tracking and evaluating the achievements of children. In the rest of the school, music and physical education have shown improvement since the last inspection. In view of the fact that very little indoor physical education was possible for 18 months, the school has done very well to re-establish a satisfactory provision which is showing good potential for future development. Pupils with identified special educational needs are well supported and provided with equal access to all the opportunities offered by the school's curriculum. The curriculum is fully inclusive, affording equality of opportunity and access to all pupils. It is starting to take good account of the school's changing ethnic mix, particularly in relation to raising the profile of positive black role models and to the small number of pupils from European background. This links well to the school's particularly effective personal, social and health education which links well to the study of citizenship. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a significant contribution to the school's positive ethos.
19. Enrichment is brought to the curriculum through its range of opportunities outside the school day. After-school clubs offer opportunities for drama, music and gardening and there are plans to develop sporting activities now that facilities are available. Drama, singing and dancing provide scope for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and work is presently going on towards a performance of "Oliver". Visits to places of historical interest and museums all add enrichment to the curriculum. A geography project has been enhanced by a visit to the "London Eye" and a group of pupils has planned and organised the development of the school grounds. An additional advantage of these initiatives is the contribution they make to pupils in helping them to develop their initiative and sense of responsibility.
20. The school has sufficient teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum, though there are a small number of unqualified teachers who are employed on temporary contracts. There have been many changes in staffing recently, suggesting the need for a period of stability. Accommodation is good, the "new" building provides a bright and fresh environment for learning and resources continue to improve.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupil's care, welfare and safety is **very good**. Statutory requirements for health and safety and child protection are fully in place. Procedures are monitored very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very strong area of the school's work which is at the core of all improvement;
- there are very good systems to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for;
- pupils' views are valued and they have a real influence on change;
- trusting relationships are fostered as soon as pupils enter the school; and
- there are thorough systems for the analysis of achievement which have helped to improve standards; these are not so rigorous for the youngest children.

Commentary

21. A high priority is placed on keeping children safe. This includes regular health and safety checks by the governors, risk analysis and the vigilance of staff. Pupils also have a part to play in this by making suggestions through their representatives on the School Council. The majority of teachers have been trained in the procedures of Child Protection and there are details of how those new to the school will have their induction. Arrangements for entry to the

building, playground and other areas have been carefully thought out and ensure that security is sufficiently tight but not oppressive. In this way, visitors and parents feel welcome at the school. Children are ready to help and assist visitors by opening doors and with polite conversation. This is encouraged by all staff and helps develop good interpersonal skills.

22. The school prides itself on the well-established procedures for monitoring personal development. These have been in place for many years and have been honed into a useful tool that is practical and helpful. It is one reason why behaviour and attitudes are so good because problems are quickly dealt with before they reach crisis point.
23. The School Council is a very good example of how pupils' views are valued. The Year 6 group was seen deciding on their representatives. While the teacher was present, she only took a minimal part in pointing the way forward. Two children chaired the discussion, another minuted the proceedings and all views were considerably heard. The ideas that were floated will be passed onto the full School Council for their decision. The Council has already made influential decisions about playground equipment and dinner arrangements.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **good**. There is an open door policy. Links with the local community are very good. Links with other schools and colleges are sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are very positive and they feel supported;
- annual reports and other information are of good quality;
- the school uses church and community links to very good effect; and
- links with other schools, including the sharing of good practice are in need of improvement.

Commentary

24. Over a long period of time, the school has forged positive links with parents and because of this the local community holds the school in high esteem. The vast majority of parents think that the school does a good job and that children make good progress. During the meeting with parents, there were almost no negative comments and the parents clearly support the work of the school. They were kept fully informed about changes that have needed to take place such as moving into mobile classrooms, combining year groups and tailoring the curriculum to the needs of individuals. Parents whose children have special educational needs are kept up to date with the progress that is being made and have the opportunity to discuss how they can help. Those who have difficulty with spoken English are asked if they would like help from translators or friends. Most parents make the most of these formal discussions.
25. Parents feel that the school is approachable. They are kept well-informed by regular newsletters and the annual reports show that teachers know their pupils well. They not only contain information about what children are able to do but also an analysis of how children have progressed, based on good quality monitoring. There are good opportunities for classteachers and parents to talk about what the reports contain and to identify how progress can be improved. Parents rightly feel that the school is now much safer and that the general ethos has improved. Prior to the rebuilding, the walls were shabby, classrooms were damp and cold and, despite the best efforts of teachers, it was difficult to make the school attractive and welcoming. This has all changed with a bright environment that is now much more conducive to learning. The school is good at consulting with parents about any new innovations and to ask for help. Only a small number become actively involved, such as with hearing reading or helping in lessons, but no offers are refused.
26. Links with the local community are strong. A good example of this was the development of baskets and tubs for the outside area. A national bank was approached and supplied personnel, some of them at a very senior level, to work alongside the children designing and painting the stone containers. Both sides found value in the link that was forged and there has

been a promise of further support in the future. The school is always looking out for these types of initiative that will enhance and enrich the environment. The church has very good connections with the school and becomes actively involved in celebrations.

27. There is only a small number of links with other schools and colleges and this has been identified as an area that needs improvement. The School Improvement Plan suggests how these can be improved, particularly in relation to the further development of the Foundation Stage. Examples of best practice are being sought and teachers will have the opportunity to visit these schools as a way of improving their own teaching. Parents are happy with the way that transfer arrangements work when pupils move on to their next school. Good analysis and documentation is passed on and there are some initial attempts at transition programmes that start towards the end of the Summer term in Year 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are good. This was a strong area at the time of the last inspection and has continued to improve through a turbulent four-year period. **Leadership is good.** Issues have been handled professionally and to good effect. **Management is good.** Standards have continued to improve. **Governance is good.** Issues have been carefully analysed and correct priorities have been identified.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteachers' very strong lead leadership;
- self-evaluation is at the root of all improvements;
- good use of outside evaluation to provide a benchmark for improvement; and
- good governor support and financial management.

Commentary

28. The headteacher provides a very clear, direct and strong steering to all the work of the school. She has a very informed vision of how the school is to develop and high aspirations for pupils and staff. Her emphasis on teamwork and the raising of achievement in all aspects of the school has had a significant impact on the school's improving standards. The headteacher is well supported by the senior management team and staff with management responsibilities. There is a strong commitment in the school to improving the educational provision for all pupils within the school's very strong Christian ethos.
29. The school has in place a system of rigorous self-evaluation in order to identify areas for improvement. It makes good use of this evaluation and the results of pupils' tests in order to plan for future developments, including the monitoring of progress, in conjunction with the local education authority. These outside evaluations help to ensure that the school is able to gauge its success in both a local and national context. Information is quickly assimilated. For instance, the school already has some partially validated data from the 2003 national test results which, although not yet confirmed, has enabled better target-setting early on in the school year. The school has also undertaken a careful breakdown of results against gender and ethnicity. This has enabled the school to set targets for improving boys' writing by purchasing specific books that will interest them. In addition, ways are being found to improve the provision for the higher number of Black African children that are now at the school and monitoring the progress of those whose first language is not English.
30. The improvement in test results in Year 2 is indicative of the way that information is used well. Test data, combined with the monitoring of teaching, has meant that expertise has been better deployed and learning support assistants are targeted to individual need. This has helped to raise standards, for example, at the end of Year 2 where National Curriculum test results have improved significantly. It has also helped the school to recognise the need to improve provision in such subjects as science, information and communication technology, and physical education where the recent building programme adversely affected standards. The school has been aware for some time of the need to improve provision in the Nursery in order to raise

standards and has approached the local education authority for help with this. However, staffing difficulties within the local education authority have prevented it from providing support in the nursery at an earlier stage. Severe reductions in the school's roll, caused by circumstances beyond its control, have resulted in a significant deficit in the budget. The school manages its finances carefully and astutely and is working hard to try to resolve the situation regarding its reduced funding. However, the budget has not yet been set for this year so that the school is not able to link its school improvement planning with its finances sufficiently well.

31. Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors have a much clearer view about what needs to be done to improve the overall provision within the school and are financially astute. They play a significant role in helping to shape the vision and direction of the school. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and work hard to help the school to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided. They act as 'critical friends' and are very supportive. Full discussions take place concerning the setting of targets for pupils' achievement and governors worked well with the school to help reduce the disruption caused by major building works.
32. Because the leadership and management of the school are strong, staff and governors are able to concentrate on raising standards and improving the quality of education for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the mother tongue. This has been significantly effective during a period of disruption caused by building works and at a time when the school is facing problems with the its budget. In spite of this, the school has continued to provide a warm, caring and secure environment where all are respected and valued and where standards in subjects such as English and mathematics are improving.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	724,104
Total expenditure	777,251
Expenditure per pupil	3,828

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	77,257
Balance carried forward to the next	24,110

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall, provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The accommodation and resources are much improved including a well-used outdoor play area;
- work is linked well to the six areas of learning but is not focused enough for the youngest children;
- good relationships exist between the adults and children and they make good progress in their personal and social development and also in creative and physical development; and
- assessment is too informal and does not help when new activities are being planned.

Commentary

33. All six areas of learning are planned for in the newly-designed area. Attainment of children on entry to the nursery is very low and despite them making sound progress, they remain low at the end of the Foundation Stage. It is unlikely that the majority of children will achieve the Early Learning Goals. In the Nursery, there are lower expectations of what pupils can achieve and the assessment and recording of children's achievements are at a very early stage. Accommodation and resources are generally good, with a very good outdoor play area.
34. There are 21 children in the Nursery, a number of whom were admitted only a few days before the inspection. Admission is from age 3. Towards the end of the Nursery year, and in preparation for transfer to the Reception class, full-time places are offered. Although managed as a Foundation Stage Unit, in practice, Nursery and Reception classes operate independently in different class areas. The 8 children in the Reception class will be increased after half-term and this will make for a better use of staffing.
35. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in all areas of learning. Relationships are good, pupils are given the opportunity to decide for themselves what they are going to do and the teacher respects their wishes and views which helps to develop their confidence and esteem. Pupils are secure and happy and the staff exercise their caring role well. However, the planning in the nursery misses opportunities to extend learning. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is not undertaken systematically enough and too much reliance is placed on the knowledge of the teacher. It is better in the Reception class where the tracking of pupils' experiences and achievements is adequate to ensure that they access all the planned experiences. An assessment booklet is kept which, in time, will prove useful for periodic checks on learning.
36. The school recognises the need for improvements in the Foundation Stage and has sought advice and support from the local education authority. However, staff shortages within the LEA have created a barrier to effective development of this area. It is only recently that an advisory teacher has been able to offer effective support so improvement has been slower than elsewhere. Provision is now better in the Reception class. This is a reversal of the provision seen at the last inspection. Overall, progress could have been better with the right kind of support.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

37. Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**. There are many opportunities for pupils to display high levels of involvement in what they are doing. The freedom of choice in outdoor play, for instance, enables children to seek out others to share what they are doing. In the sandpit, children play happily and co-operate with each other and

play easily using wheeled toys, the slide or the climbing apparatus. Children are prepared to take turns and help one another. Teaching is well focused and so in this area of learning, children are achieving well. Despite this, it is unlikely that the majority of children will fully achieve the early learning goal.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

38. The provision and planning for this area are **satisfactory**. Planning sets out a range of appropriate tasks and learning opportunities. Teachers encourage children to use many examples of language; for instance, to express their feelings and to eagerly explain what they are doing in the play-house or the subject of their paintings. The spacious accommodation is used to good effect. This is supported well particularly in the Reception class. Not enough is done in the nursery to exploit early writing such as through children imitating writing lists or notices in their role-play areas. Children do not reach the outcomes suggested in the Early Learning Goals although they do achieve satisfactorily.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

39. Provision is **sound**. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. The good resources are used well. The only example seen of a mathematical activity consisted of a single child sorting small plastic models. She was very eager to talk about what she was doing, although she had not been given any task to complete and had made up her own. The teacher encouraged her to talk about what she had discovered and moved the learning on well. The planning in Reception has started to develop more structured number work and to help children learn about counting, sorting and about shape. However, because standards are so low when children enter school at 3, the majority will not reach the outcomes of the Early Learning Goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

40. Provision is **sound**. At present, a number of planned activities centre around learning about living things and because the teaching is planned and focused well, pupils make sound progress. Children have grown cress and are caring for it by taking turns watering it along with other plants in the class. Two computers in the nursery are in constant use and the children using them showed significant skill in using the mouse and making selections on the screen. Unfortunately, only a small number use the equipment and, more importantly, in the nursery there are no checks made by the adults to ensure all get a turn. This means that some are not getting continuous provision. Construction apparatus is plentiful and very popular. Children achieve closer to but below the outcomes from the Early Learning Goals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

41. Provision is **good**. A great deal of physical activity takes place and children are close to achieving the Early Learning Goals. The attractive, spacious and well-equipped outside area is very well used and children are encouraged to explore the good range of equipment for running, jumping and climbing. The outdoor apparatus is rearranged daily to provide differing stimuli for physical activity. The hall is used by the Reception class for physical activities. A good range of options is offered in terms of fine motor development, which includes activities using fabrics, scissors and glue for the children to create collages which are exploited well by teachers.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

42. Provision and planning for creative development is **good**. It sets out a worthwhile range of planned and spontaneous learning opportunities. The example seen during the inspection gave children the task of creating a picture based on a family photograph brought from home. Teachers use a wide range of media, including paint, crayon and coloured pencils. The

children produced interesting pictures, about which they were very eager to talk and achievement was good. Children are close to, but slightly below, the expected outcomes for learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall the quality of provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment of pupils by the end of Year 6 has been maintained at a good level and has improved this year for those in Year 2;
- the good quality of teaching, although the role models provided by some teachers to develop handwriting are not high enough;
- literacy is used well to support learning in other subjects;
- pupils are managed well in lessons and relationships are good; and
- the clear focus on raising standards provided by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

43. Standards have continuously improved in Year 6 since 2001 and in Year 2 they have shown a substantial improvement. Solid teaching means that pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning.
44. By the end of Year 2, standards are average overall in both reading and writing. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection and an overall improvement on the results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, achieve well, coming from a low base on entry to the school. This good achievement is built on and maintained to the end of Year 6.
45. A significant factor in the good achievement and the improving trends is the overall good quality of teaching and the corresponding good quality of learning. Teachers carefully plan work that is suited to the differing abilities of pupils so that they are challenged to make progress at their own level. They manage pupils well. Pupils behave well, concentrate on their work and lessons usually run smoothly. Relationships are very good so that pupils know that their efforts are valued and they learn to co-operate and collaborate well together. This gives them confidence and helps to improve their knowledge and skills. For example, in Year 6, speaking and listening and reading skills were improved when the teacher provided pupils with opportunities to discuss how newspaper headlines are produced, and then shared and welcomed their suggestions. Because pupils are given many well-planned opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills, by the end of Year 6 most pupils speak confidently and articulately. Teachers use questions well to help pupils to clarify their understanding and to challenge them, for example, to use interesting words and descriptions in their writing. This led a pupil in Year 3 to write:

"The whale song is like the wind, breathing softly..."
46. By the end of Year 6, most pupils organise their writing well and learn to spell and punctuate accurately because teachers usually have high expectations. However, the quality of handwriting is inconsistent throughout the school. This is not helped when teachers do not provide good examples in their marking of pupils' work. The school has already highlighted this as an area for improvement.
47. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain things clearly. This enabled pupils in Year 2, for example, to use a range of strategies when meeting new or unfamiliar words. Teachers

ensure through careful planning that pupils build on their reading skills and achieve well as they move through the school. This is enhanced in all areas by the school's thoughtful use of the National Literacy Strategy. The school makes good use of support assistants who have an important impact on the achievement of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. It has addressed a criticism in the previous inspection and has in place good systems for assessing pupils' progress and this is used well in planning work. Because teachers mark pupils work regularly and provide encouraging and useful comments on how they might improve, most pupils make good progress in a wide range of different forms of writing. In Year 5, the teacher commented on a piece of persuasive writing:

"You have made your point well. Notice how the use of the third person in the last paragraph spoils the effect".

48. The subject is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues, who work well together as a team. This helps to raise standards. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and a clear vision of how the subject is to improve in order to raise standards. Statutory requirements for teaching English are fully met.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to include their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology, science, history and geography. Using their writing in other subjects helps pupils to extend their skills and to see a relevance to their work such as when Year 6 pupils produced a script for a Victorian play. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English have sufficient support so their spoken language improves quickly and they can become fully involved in lessons. However, these pupils often find the nuance and inference in written language more difficult to understand and this can limit work in story-writing, poetry and other more creative dialogue. The school has worked hard to improve the support for written English, particularly with older children. This has been partially successful although the school is pursuing ways in which further expert advice can be sought.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good and very good teaching, particularly in the juniors;
- the thorough planning linked to a high expectation of what pupils should do;
- the good behaviour of pupils that enables them to concentrate on what they are doing;
- the good use of assessment although this is not used so well in Foundation Stage; and
- more attention needs to be given to the presentation of work.

Commentary

50. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 are at average levels and for those in Year 6 they are above average. The tests in 2003 reveal a continued upward trend and a substantial rise in Year 2, indicating that standards are rising and that the correct priorities have been addressed.
51. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory through the school with examples of good and very good teaching in the junior classes. A strong feature of teaching is the good management of pupils' learning and behaviour, which is very good. Teachers foster good relationships. As a result, pupils have good attitudes towards their work and it is very good in Years 3 to 6. They work hard and concentrate well, showing particular enthusiasm for mental maths and maths games. They are expected to be responsible and to show initiative. Their personal development is enhanced, with teaching and learning in mathematics having a positive contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A weakness identified through the scrutiny of pupils' work is in the presentation and marking of some work

in the infant classes. Pupils are not always encouraged to produce their best work or to follow the good examples set by teachers.

52. The good quality planning is used to ensure that there is a consistent and appropriate coverage of all aspects of the subject. Teachers conscientiously develop particular learning objectives for each lesson, often referring to these at the beginning and end of lessons, and in the best cases, during the marking of books. This, combined with the thorough assessment of work, ensures that pupils know what is expected and can see whether they have achieved it. This is not so thorough in the Foundation Stage because the comprehensive records available in other parts of the school are not so evident.
53. The school provides a sound curriculum, based upon the National Numeracy Strategy. There are now many more good features in teaching and strengths in the development of planning. This is the reason why the subject has improved since the last inspection. As a result, all pupils, despite some variability between years, achieve well through their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and some manage to achieve the national average by the time they are 11. Those with English as an additional language do equally well although they are given only a lower level of support once they have mastered spoken English.
54. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well and make progress at least as well as other pupils. They are provided with good quality support. No gifted or talented pupils have been identified as yet, but those who have above average ability do well because they are expected to carry out more difficult and challenging tasks. Older pupils, in particular, enjoy the "challenge" activities and the opportunities they are given to carry out an open-ended task.
55. Mathematics is soundly managed by the co-ordinator. She provides suitable advice and support for other teachers and good teamwork is fostered. Although she has not had the opportunity to visit classrooms to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, she does examine teachers' planning, giving them written feedback as to its quality. Resources are improving in quantity and quality, based upon a recent audit.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Numeracy is used well across a range of subjects and teachers try to link mathematical skills that are happening at the same time. So for instance, computers might be used to develop the knowledge of spreadsheets by combining this with data analysis for a history topic. The books in geography, design and technology and science also have examples of numeracy work that enhance the understanding of a specific topic.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. The quality of planning and a balance of work have deepened both the teaching and learning of pupils across all the aspects of the subject. Over a number of years, standards in science by the end of Year 6 have been maintained at good levels and this trend is continuing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn many key facts and are able to talk about these;
- good use is made of investigation and experimentation and teachers try to make the work exciting;
- opportunities are good outside lessons such as in environmental science; and
- good progress is made through each year and so achievement over time is good.

Commentary

57. Children start school with a very low scientific understanding. The opportunities offered in Years 1 and 2 mean that new facts are learned and an interest in the subject is generated.

However, even with the good teaching that is taking place, the group as a whole do not reach the national average standard and in national tests were well below average. Despite this, pupils have made a good start and the groundwork is laid for faster progress in Years 3 to 6. It has resulted in improving standards since 2000 so that in 2002 and 2003, standards have been well above the national average. When individuals are measured against their low starting point, achievement is in the top five per cent nationally. The school has correctly identified the ways in which to teach these children to enable them to make sustained progress.

58. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have a good understanding about the world around them. Their own early experiences have to be enhanced so teachers use clear, simple methods to achieve this. Examples in their books include learning about how seeds grow or the way that the properties of jelly change as it sets. Technical vocabulary is introduced so that in Year 2, some pupils are beginning to take explicit notes, draw annotated diagrams and make simple conclusions from their experiments. Through Years 3 to 6, the teachers ensure there is a balanced programme but in all cases that the themes use practical experience. Investigations about the properties of materials are explained and conclusions reached about any significant differences. Pupils with average or above average ability use technical language well such as translucent and transparent but furthermore understand the correct usage. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress and a number who are unable to gain average levels in English or mathematics do well in test situations in science. Clearly they gain confidence from the regular balanced curriculum they are offered. Those who do not use English as their first language do equally well although the support they need in written technical language could be improved if teachers were given some expert advice about how this could be done.
59. Teaching through all years is good. Teachers have a secure understanding about the need to ensure a balance between all aspects of the subject. Over the last few years, they have been encouraged to use experimentation more and this has helped make the subject stimulating and exciting. They plan confidently, using the expertise of the good number of science specialists on the staff. Marking is undertaken conscientiously and ideas are written down so that they can be followed up. Outside lessons, the school has been innovative in developing science within the school grounds. There is an environmental area and children help grow vegetables in a very well-managed allotment plot. A pond has recently been built that can be used for looking at insects and plant life. Visits include scientific places of interest. All these experiences ensure that pupils are keen to learn and during lessons they concentrate hard and work together well in pairs or small groups. Unfortunately, a number of resources were either destroyed or broken during the rebuilding and so there is an active programme of replacement being undertaken by the enthusiastic co-ordinator. Her analysis has also included looking at how further training of teachers will raise standards even higher. Analysis of the information she has gathered means that the subject is being managed well. Science provides a positive lift to self-esteem amongst the many children whom otherwise find learning difficult.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**. At the time of the last inspection, standards were similar to those now but provision has fluctuated in the interim. There have been difficulties with hardware, a new computer suite has come into operation and there has been a shift in emphasis away from using computers in the class bases. These problems are slowly being overcome although they are inhibiting faster progress, which is frustrating the efforts of the enthusiastic co-ordinator.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A rapid improvement since the computer suite has become more functional; although for older pupils their achievement has faltered;
- a well-balanced programme of activities that combine well with other subjects but not enough work is now done in the classroom which will allow pupils to practise what they have learnt in the suite;

- a commitment by teachers to raise the profile of the subject; and
- the leadership and particularly the management of resources and learning opportunities.

Commentary

60. Information and communication technology has suffered over the last two years because of the lack of resources and the need to vacate classrooms at regular intervals. Because of this, it has been difficult to ensure that all areas and strands were covered sufficiently well. Some pupils have not been able to use communication links while others have not had the right programmes on the computers. This is now being put right and progress is rapid. From lessons and an analysis of work, it can be seen that younger pupils are now achieving as would be expected for their age. They use machines with increasing confidence. They can save and print their work and are starting to think about what program should be used, for instance when they draw a picture. Work over the last year has included word-processing and graphic work but there is not so much evidence of the use of research using the web. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have been given the opportunity to work in all areas of the expected curriculum. There are some presentations, higher-level word-processing and research. However, confidence levels could be higher. For instance, a Year 6 class were working on spreadsheets but at a level expected for Year 5. Through the good teaching, pupils had assimilated the knowledge about the program and were moving on faster than would be expected. The solid quality of teaching through each year means that by the end of this year, these Year 6 pupils are on line to achieve at the level expected for their age but this is not the case at present.
61. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers are fully aware of the shortcomings that have been present within the provision. The national training programme enabled them to have much better subject knowledge and all teachers, even those who considered themselves technophobes, are willing, and capable of teaching the subject. Support from the co-ordinator has been good. She has taken careful account of the need to plug gaps that came about because of the disruption and her confidence is evident from the way that programmes of work for some year groups have been drawn from those in earlier year groups. These are all positive moves and the progress made will ensure that the correct level of provision will be developed in the near future.
62. Resources for the subject are adequate and there is the necessary range of peripheral equipment to enable all areas of the curriculum to be taught. There have been difficulties in ensuring that the new broadband connections work smoothly as well as the network functioning efficiently. This has caused frustration in lessons where computers have failed to work or programs have not loaded. These are still not fully resolved and the school is presently looking at how to gain more robust support.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. There are good examples of ICT work in history, geography, science, design and technology and it is being used to present work professionally. All of these help pupils understand the relevance of the subject in our modern lives. Since the introduction of the computer suite, less time is being used in classroom activities and this is limiting the opportunities for using ICT as an intrinsic tool for learning.

HUMANITIES

Provision for the humanities is **good**. No history or geography lessons were seen in either key stage during the inspection. Inspectors looked at various documentation, photographic evidence, samples of pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils. The school has maintained the standards evident at the previous inspection. In geography and history in both key stages, the achievement of most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the mother tongue, is good. Statutory requirements for both subjects are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum;
- the study of different localities;
- studies that reflect the ethnic diversity of the area; and
- the leadership and management of the subjects.

Commentary

64. Provision in geography is **good**. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are average. In Years 1 and 2, teachers make good use of "Barnaby Bear" in order to enhance pupils' understanding of other localities, so that they know about routes, maps and how lives may be different or similar elsewhere. Between Years 3 and 6, teachers make sure that work is relevant and interesting and build on work in the locality. This helps pupils to achieve well. Pupils have a sound understanding of issues such as pollution and global warming and by the end of Year 6 use a range of maps. They visit places such as Ewhurst to make comparisons with Rotherhithe and to develop their sound field skills. In view of the ethnic diversity of its population, the school made the decision to include countries in Africa as part of the scheme of work in geography. Work was further enhanced when, for example, a parent from Benin came to talk to pupils about life there.
65. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator works hard to support colleagues and to organise planning and schemes of work. She has a good understanding of how the subject is to develop in order to raise standards.
66. Provision in history is **good**. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average. The school makes good use of its location. Pupils in Year 1, for example, have a good knowledge of the history of The Great Fire of London. Teachers ensure that planning helps pupils to build on skills such as the use of comparisons and sources so that Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of famous people from earlier times compared with life today. Older pupils have a good understanding of how books, artefacts, buildings and CD Roms can help in researching periods in the past, such as those of Ancient Greece and Rome, because teachers present work which is interesting. They visit places of historical interest to extend their knowledge. Pupils are actively involved in their work. In Year 6, pupils made good use of their knowledge and skills when writing and producing a Victorian melodrama.
67. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and has a clear idea of how it is to be improved in order to raise standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Very few lessons were seen in art and design, and design and technology as these subjects had few issues at the time of the last inspection. However, an analysis of work from last year was scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils and teachers. In addition, some planning was scrutinised. From this evidence it can be seen that achievement has continued to be at a sound level with some strengths in specific areas.

Commentary

68. Provision in art and design is **good**. Pupils across each year have the opportunity to learn new skills and to practise these at regular intervals. Good use is made of sketchbooks to enable pupils to experiment with colours and different media as well as collect examples of different textures. There is a good balance between skill-building and appreciation of different styles. The school cleverly used art as a focus of work when the buildings returned to normal and its success can be seen in the quality of display now helping to make the accommodation attractive.
69. Provision in design and technology is **sound**. Within each year group there are good examples of practical work across a range of themes. Model-making, the use of cardboard engineering and food technology are all introduced through the year groups and the teachers make good

cross-curricular links such as through ICT, mathematics and art and design. The school works hard to ensure that pupils are given sufficient opportunity to design, evaluate, make and review their work.

Music

Provision in music is **sound**. There have been improvements in both provision and teaching since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of singing and its use in performances; and
- the use of specialist teaching and a dedicated, well-equipped and comfortable room.

Commentary

70. Standards in music are satisfactory. All aspects of the music national curriculum are taught, though only singing was observed during the inspection. However, the teacher's planning documentation covered the other essential areas. Overall, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory and for some it is good. There are opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to learn to play a recorder as an extra-curricular activity, though at present there is no other instrumental tuition offered by the school or local education authority. All pupils have equality of access to the music curriculum and pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well.

71. There is sound co-ordination of the subject ensuring full coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. He is an enthusiastic teacher with high expectations of pupils' performance, especially in singing. He has gathered a wide range of musical instruments, including many which reflect a diverse range of cultures.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**. There has been some distinct improvement since the recent disruption caused by building work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of exciting elements within the subject;
- the good development of dance and other performing arts; and
- the good use of assessment.

Commentary

72. Improvements have been brought about as a result of the following factors. The new appointment of an enthusiastic and able co-ordinator is providing good leadership and the introduction of new and exciting aspects to the physical education curriculum. Significant amongst these is the introduction of the Tops Sport scheme, which provides a range of good resources for physical education, together with training for the teachers. The co-ordinator has introduced new activities and outside coaches have been bought in to help develop the skills and understanding. Indoor physical education, and gymnastics in particular, was not possible for a period of 18 months during building work. This situation has changed markedly, the newly-refurbished hall providing an excellent environment for gymnastics and dance. A noteworthy aspect of physical education is dance. Dance, together with other performing arts, is a strength of the school and there is some very good teaching of dance taking place. A particularly good example was seen in a Year 5 lesson, where pupils working in pairs were developing their interpretations of the music "Zorba the Greek." Very good quality movement was observed, enhanced by high expectation by the teacher, reflected by pupils' critical evaluation of their own performances.

73. Standards in physical education are average throughout the school and they have done very well to achieve so much in terms of standards and progress in the last twelve months. A good

factor in this improvement is the introduction of assessment processes for the various activities within the subject. In the lessons observed, all pupils were fully involved with activities at a level suitable for them. Pupils with special educational needs, for instance, were provided with appropriate support.

74. Teaching of physical education is satisfactory with examples of good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2. The wearing of appropriate clothing and performing in barefoot for indoor work are good. Pupils are particularly well managed, resulting in good behaviour and positive attitudes from the pupils. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge which has been well enhanced by the training provided by Tops Sport. Where there are any deficiencies in teachers' knowledge, the co-ordinator is dealing with it through the outcomes of a well-structured analysis of professional development needs.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's ethos for personal development is very well reflected in the high profile given to raising self-esteem; and
- the school's good record-keeping in this area is used well to support strategies that encourage good behaviour.

Commentary

75. For a number of years, the school has placed a very high emphasis on ensuring that pupils feel valued and their views are taken into account. They have a real influence on change through the class and school councils and by older children providing support for those younger than themselves. In lessons, they are highly supportive of each other and work together well. Good examples of raising self-esteem were seen, such as the way that some pupils whose academic skill is lower are given high levels of responsibility at lunchtime. As would be expected from the secure systems that are in place, these pupils are carefully but unobtrusively monitored. Very good levels of records are kept that link to the personal development of individuals. Specific lessons such as the class discussions known as 'Circle Time' allow pupils to express their feelings in an open but forthright way. In a Year 4 class, for instance, this included a discussion about the different words used for God by different tribes in Africa.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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