

INSPECTION REPORT

ST LUKE'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Isle of Dogs

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100954

Headteacher: Mr Ian Jones

Lead inspector: David G Collard

Dates of inspection: 6th - 8th October 2003

Inspection number: 257774

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:	196
School address:	Saunders Ness Road London
Postcode:	E14 3EB
Telephone number:	(0207) 987 1753
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Martin Seeley
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Luke's is an inner city school on the Isle of Dogs in London's East End. This former dock area consists of mixed housing, some of which is very expensive. However, the vast majority of pupils come from rented housing, significant proportions of which are flats. Because of the extensive regeneration of the area, it is part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ). Both a breakfast club and after school club run regularly during term time and through school holidays. The school gained an achievement award in 2002 and 2003 for the improvement made in national test results. It also has accreditation for Investors in People (IIP) and a Healthy Schools Quality Mark. There are fairly equal numbers of boys and girls. There has been some mobility of pupils. Following the last inspection, the school's quality of education declined and there was a loss of confidence within the community. This resulted in falling rolls although numbers are now increasing. A residual effect is that the numbers in Year 6 for the last two years have been much smaller than in other years. Approximately half of the school population is White British. The remainder are of different ethnic origin, mainly Asian or Black Afro-Caribbean. A quarter of the children come into school at an early stage of learning English. There are no traveller or refugee pupils. When children enter the school, they are attaining at levels below that expected for their age. A higher than average number of pupils have some form of special educational need (31 per cent); most of these are for learning or behavioural difficulties. The number of statemented children is low (0.5 per cent).

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 English as an additional language
11072	Shirley Elomari	Lay inspector	
27602	Richard Perkins	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. After a period of turbulence, there is now a good capacity to develop and improve further. By addressing the correct priorities, standards have risen, particularly in English and science. This has only happened in the last 18 months and is a result of the strong leadership, and improved teaching and opportunities for learning. The governors and headteacher understood the need for rapid improvements and have tackled them well. The behaviour of pupils has improved very significantly and the school is a secure environment for learning. It provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the better achievement of pupils in literacy by the time they leave school, and better achievement more recently in science, although there has not been the same level of improvement in mathematics;
- the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs;
- the level of improvement in the behaviour of children, although some lessons are still too noisy;
- the improved teaching, although there is still some variability;
- the very good level of leadership provided by the headteacher, who has been able to drive developments forward with the help of supportive governors; and
- the lack of a broad enough curriculum that would make for exciting and stimulating learning.

After the last inspection in 1998, the quality of education fell and the local education authority gave high levels of support. A new headteacher was appointed and a clear set of priorities centred on stabilising the situation. Poor behaviour, as well as the quality of teaching and learning, quickly improved. Firm foundations have been laid which are setting the tone for sustained improvement. Issues from the previous inspection have all been 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	E	E	D	B
mathematics	E	E	E	C
science	E	E	E	E

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

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement through the school is sound. Children enter the school with below average standards and progress satisfactorily through the Foundation Stage. Few reach the targets of the Early Learning Goals, except in physical and creative development. In the infants, pupils achieve satisfactorily and make significant gains in reading and literacy skills. By the end of Year 2, standards are still below average in reading, writing and mathematics, which is also reflected in national tests. They reach the nationally expected levels in science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils achieve satisfactorily through Years 3 to 6. Standards have improved and for those in the present Year 6 they are at average levels in English and science. This has been sustained from last year and is confirmed by the 2003 national tests. Standards are still below average in mathematics, but are noticeably better this term. Standards in ICT are below those expected because, until recently, pupils had not used the computer suite regularly. In other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and a number perform at levels close to average. Those who speak English as an additional language achieve soundly and quickly learn to communicate.

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils, and their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, is satisfactory. There has been considerable improvement in behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are more willing participants, but are sometimes over-enthusiastic and noisy. Attendance is well below the national average, despite the very good procedures for monitoring it. Most children arrive punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education because the quality of teaching is satisfactory. A significant number of lessons are now good or very good across all areas of the school and pupils are learning more consistently. More needs to be done to ensure that the variability is eliminated. Lesson plans focus on achievement and are linked to the capabilities of the children. The confident support assistants are used well, particularly when teaching small groups. Pupils are applying themselves to their work and take a pride in what they are doing. The curriculum has concentrated on a rapid improvement in literacy and the lessons learnt are being transferred to numeracy. More attention is being paid to broadening the range of learning opportunities. Pupils are looked after very well and the school is a safe environment. Parents recognise the many improvements that have been made and are pleased with the result.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has a very good understanding about the priorities needed to move the school forward. He has managed to unite the staff and has implemented some difficult decisions. Much more attention is paid to the use of assessment data and how this can be used to raise the aspirations of teachers and children. The governors have a clear view about their roles and are able to provide supportive challenge because they are better informed. They understand that more needs to be done and are realistic about how to change things. Good administrative procedures are enabling budgetary difficulties to be resolved.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the changes that have taken place. They now feel the school is a safe and warmer environment and that their children are taking a more active role in their learning. Pupils are content to be at school but do not show high levels of pride in it.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the variability in teaching and thus improve the quality of learning by:
 - sharing the best practices through a training programme that will raise the quality of satisfactory teaching to that of the best; and
 - finding ways of reducing the level of noise both in lessons and around the school.
- raise the standards in mathematics by:
 - analysing the performance of pupils with a similar thoroughness to that already undertaken in English and science; and
 - developing an informed and robust co-ordination of the subject that will direct change.
- continue to work on improving the breadth of curriculum experiences, particularly to include more attention to aesthetic and creative elements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **average** by the time pupils leave the school. Through the school, achievement is **satisfactory** because pupils start school with below average standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improving standards of pupils by the end of Year 6, particularly in English and science.
- The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
- The improved standards in reading and writing in the infants, although standards in mathematics fell slightly last year.
- The slower achievement in information and communication technology, which has affected the longer-term progress of older pupils.

Commentary

1. The below average standards of children on entry are confirmed by tests conducted in their first term at the school. The satisfactory achievement of children through the Nursery and Reception year, particularly in developing better social skills and language, gives a good basis for future learning. Nevertheless, they do not reach the targets set by the Early Learning Goals as they enter Year 1, except in physical and creative development.
2. Pupils make sound progress in the infants and achieve satisfactorily through the two years. Again, standards overall are still below those nationally, and this is confirmed in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2002, results measured against similar schools were at average levels in reading and mathematics, and well below in writing. Initial analysis of the 2003 results show that standards have improved in reading and writing, but dropped slightly in mathematics. This is because of the school's correct focus on developing the skills of reading and writing, which were unacceptably low. The measures taken have been successful and indications are that this is sustainable. Provision through the School Improvement Plan will now continue to target mathematics in a drive to raise standards. Pupils in the present Year 2 are still not reaching the national average, but from the work seen in lessons and from pupils' books, there is evidence that writing in particular is improving, and the majority of pupils are developing the mechanics of reading. Number work is showing signs of improvement in the work this term.
3. Through Years 3 to 6, standards are at a higher level because the right building blocks are being put in place. In the 2002 national tests, standards measured against all schools did not reach national averages. However, when measured against similar schools, they were above average in English, average in mathematics, and well below average in science. Other indicators suggest that pupils have achieved at least satisfactorily in their time at the school. When comparing the improvement between tests in Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieved well in English and soundly in mathematics. Initial indications in the 2003 tests, although not confirmed, suggest that pupils have done equally well in English, have improved greatly in science and fallen back slightly in mathematics. This, despite a significant number (15 per cent) of higher attaining pupils leaving the school before the tests were taken, which depressed the overall percentages.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (23.5)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	25.3 (24.7)	26.7 (26.6)
science	25.8 (26.1)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Those in the present Year 6 have standards that are at average levels nationally in English and science, a marked improvement, and below average standards in mathematics. Through their junior years, pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. There are indications that, with the emphasis now being given to improving teaching in mathematics, pupils in Year 6 are in line to get close to the national averages by the end of this year. In most other subjects, achievement is at least satisfactory, although in information and communication technology standards are below those expected by the end of Year 6. This is because the introduction of work in the new computer suite is only just starting to affect attainment. While progress in lessons is good, achievement over the longer term has not been so high because older pupils have not had access to the hardware.
- It is clear from discussions with parents, staff and pupils that since the last inspection the school's difficulties led to variability in teaching and affected the performance of pupils. Behaviour deteriorated and pupils were not willing learners. With the appointment of the new headteacher, and a concentration on the correct priorities, the school has stemmed this downturn, and achievement is improving. Pupils are enjoying their work, making better progress and teachers have better expectations about what pupils are capable of. This is reflected in the realistic and challenging targets that have been set.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. *(See separate section at the end of Part B.)* Pupils' behaviour is closely monitored and good support is given to develop better social skills through the use of discussions, time out and adult mentoring. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given concentrated work to develop their reading and writing skills, in particular, and this is working well. From analysis of data, there are clear signs of improvement in these areas so that by Year 6 a small but significant number are reaching standards comparable to others in the year group. Similar procedures exist for those with English as an additional language and progress is sound. They quickly pick up basic spoken English and are able to communicate with their friends. In the older classes, teachers are aware of the need to develop the nuances within written English and pay particular attention to ensuring these children are given more support. Pupils from an ethnic minority progress similarly to other groups. Their achievements are closely monitored to ensure that this remains the case. The school is now much more aware of the need to target any children with particular talents, although work on this is at a very early stage.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to their schooling are **satisfactory**. Behaviour is **satisfactory**. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is **satisfactory overall**, but cultural development is good. Attendance is well **below the national average**, but punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behaviour has improved over recent years and the rate of exclusions has fallen.
- Attendance is low.
- Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good.
- Pupils develop a good knowledge of and respect for their own and other cultures.

Commentary

7. Pupils' behaviour shows signs of considerable improvement. The rate of exclusions has fallen very significantly in the last year, marking pupils' response to new behaviour management strategies. Most pupils now behave well when supervised but are not able to sustain these standards without supervision. Each class sets its own rules at the start of the year, which helps pupils to begin to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The school is very noisy. Although this is due partly to the echoing nature of the building, pupils find it very hard to keep the noise levels down when, for example, they are working in small groups within their classroom. Pupils do not yet take a pride in their school, although they feel safe in it.

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	103	3	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	14	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	20	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	26	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	8	1	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	26	1	0
Chinese	2	0	0

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

8. Although attendance is well below the national average, the school has very good procedures in place. The school is vigilant in its monitoring and has succeeded in improving the level of attendance in 2002-2003. The home school support worker is very effective in supporting individual pupils and families to raise their attendance. Attendance has a high profile within the school; figures are publicised in the foyer and the attendance cup is awarded weekly to the class with the highest attendance. The school has been successful in reducing the amount of holiday absence but levels of unauthorised absence remain very high. Parents and carers are now informing the school of the reason for any absence with more regularity. Punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	1.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

9. Spiritual, social and moral development have been of prime importance in the development of a better learning environment. The school ensures that pupils know the difference between right and wrong and actively promotes an understanding of community responsibilities within a

multicultural society. Close links with the Church and regular services within school are valued by parents, although few attend these celebrations. The success of the programme for developing better social and moral understanding can be seen in the improved environment, fewer exclusions and calmer atmosphere within the school. In discussion, parents and pupils all say that the school is beginning to portray a clear ethos and has raised its own self-esteem. These new systems have resulted in an environment with little bullying, racism or sexism. Pupils from all walks of life play and interact well with each other. Pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn about a range of traditions and festivals by participating in events such as the annual Eid party and Christmas carol singing. They learn about the history and cultural traditions of the immediate area, helped by a good range of photographic evidence. The library has a good range of books about a wide range of cultures as well as a range of fiction and non-fiction books in heritage languages.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. There is a wide spread of teaching capability but variability is improving. The curriculum is generally broad and relevant, with a correct emphasis on improving the basic skills in literacy and numeracy, albeit at the expense of some other subjects. Pupils are cared for satisfactorily and there are good relationships between the school and parents.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching in English, enabling pupils to make significant improvement.
- Better behaviour management in the last year that is producing a calmer atmosphere, though lessons are sometimes too noisy.
- Good use of support staff to help pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, and to help teach small sets.
- Better use of assessment information, but it is not yet consistently used to ensure all pupils are challenged by the work they are set.
- In some lessons, even where teaching is strong, there are children who are not fully engaged, despite the activities being stimulating and exciting.

Commentary

10. The variation in teaching quality is because the same teacher can sometimes teach one subject very well but others only satisfactorily. The School Improvement Plan recognises the need to address the variability and has a clear set of actions that will help achieve this. After a significant drop in the quality of teaching following the last inspection, there has been noticeable improvement, and the school provides a much more purposeful learning environment. Planning for lessons is good and enables pupils to learn steadily through each year. At a strategic level, the assessment of pupils' achievements is good, and the school uses its findings to help develop realistic targets. Again, the use of assessment by individual teachers varies between excellent and satisfactory, but is sound overall.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (28%)	7 (28%)	10 (40%)	0	1 (4%)	0

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

11. Children in the Nursery and Reception year make a sound start to their learning. Teachers are able to provide a positive, warm and attractive environment, good teaching of literacy and numeracy, and form a good team. They plan work together and, particularly in the Reception class, these activities are linked well to the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals. Teachers and the experienced assistants ensure that children have the opportunities to choose their own activities. They then encourage the development of a wider vocabulary, to count or to describe their work. By doing this, children play in a constructive way, but also have a structure in which to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills. The children enjoy what they are given to do and take an active interest. Unfortunately, even though they achieve well and make good progress, few reach the expected outcomes of the Early Learning Goals because of the low levels of attainment that they start with.
12. Teaching and learning, both in the infants and the juniors, is sound. This is similar to the finding of the last inspection, but information from the management team and from parents, suggests that during the interim it deteriorated and has only started to improve over the last 18 months. In particular, the quality of behaviour of children was poor and lessons were often disrupted. The new leadership of the school has dealt with this quickly. Teachers have begun to understand the need for common approaches based upon positive as well as negative comment. Poor behaviour is no longer tolerated and, as a result, there is now an environment conducive to better learning. In addition, the expectations about what pupils can achieve have been raised and there has been a positive effect in terms of achievement. It is acknowledged that more needs to be done, which will eliminate the variability, for instance, when a very good lesson seen in history in the juniors contrasted with a satisfactory lesson by the same teacher in science. In some lessons, there is a lot of excited noise, although children are getting on with what is expected of them. In discussion with pupils, they talk about these differences and about how it is improving. They agree that they now learn much better than they did in the past and are beginning to enjoy school, something that was not the case in earlier years.
13. Most teachers have suitable understanding of subjects. This understanding is good in English, where the school is using a new commercial scheme designed to raise attainment quickly. There is a commitment to the approach and its benefit can be seen, especially with younger children, in the improved results. The use of setting throughout the school and the use of learning support assistants has been a very positive move and has resulted in good quality work. In these lessons, the pace of learning is rapid, pupils enjoy the work and have developed very good relationships with the adults. In a number of these small groups, the level of self-esteem of pupils with special educational needs has been raised because they can see the success they are having. Those at an early stage of learning English are supported well to develop their language. Older children who have developed a good command of spoken English are actively encouraged to think about different types of written language, such as in a Year 6 class, where the teacher was making specific reference to Shakespearean and Victorian words, and how they might have been used. In mathematics, the teaching methods are sound, although not enough attention has been paid to setting personal targets and so giving more challenge, particularly to those with higher attainment.
14. Better planning is evident, with teachers often telling the class what they are expected to learn, and then recapping upon it during a discussion at the end of the session. Work is generally set to different ability levels, although in subjects that have not been a priority, such as history, teachers too often set single tasks across a whole group. It has improved in mathematics this year. In books seen from last year, a number of classes were consistently given a single task, even though their abilities were clearly different. This has changed. In a Year 5 lesson, a lively start gained pupils' interest and, subsequently, the well-defined independent work was scrutinised carefully, and those finding difficulties were given extra teaching time. In the feedback at the end, the children were proud of their achievements and knew how far they had come. Teachers make much better use of information and communication technology. They are confident users of the interactive whiteboards, which provide both excitement and a visual stimulus. In a Year 1 class, it was used well to illustrate points the teacher was making, and

pupils' concentration levels increased, as they were diverted from another activity when their attention started to wander.

15. In the one poor lesson seen, the teacher did not plan well enough and no contingency plan operated when an outside specialist failed to turn up for a games lesson. The half-hour session lacked any structure and the pupils did not respond to the activities that they were set. Although the school has come a long way, this lesson demonstrated how fragile the improvement is. The residual effect means that, on occasions, some pupils are not inspired sufficiently and do not always enjoy their learning. However, the correct priorities are being targeted through raising the general quality of teaching and thus the learning of all pupils.
16. Much better use is made of the assessment data and thus teachers are able to provide much higher levels of challenge. Teaching groups are formed from an analysis of test data and teachers are collecting useful information about individuals. Planning of work centres on this type of analysis, but some teachers are more organised than others. The school has undertaken some good training work and as a result pupils have better understanding about their own learning and what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **sound overall**. Curriculum enrichment is **satisfactory**. Accommodation is **good**; resources for learning are **satisfactory** and good in the Nursery and Reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-structured and focussed literacy strategy for below average attainers.
- Good provision for special educational needs.
- Very good quality and spacious accommodation in the Nursery and Reception.
- Improved levels of challenging work in lessons for all pupils.
- Lack of imaginative and creative curriculum development through the foundation subjects and through extra-curricular activities.
- The slow speed of implementing a secure provision for sex and relationships education.

Commentary

17. The weaknesses in subject standards at the time of the last inspection have largely been addressed. All statutory requirements are met, but with the concentration on improving the learning environment and basic skills, there are not yet enough imaginative cross-curricular links. As a result, children are not always sufficiently inspired or motivated by lessons. The decision has only recently been taken to form a policy for teaching about sex and relationships. Governors have informed parents of their decision but there has been too long a delay in implementing the full teaching programmes, other than those statutorily required in science. The effective use of discussions, known as 'Circle Time', has supported the drive for improved behaviour and better relationships in the school's personal, social and health education provision. The school works hard to include all pupils and provides good levels of support in lessons for those with behaviour or learning difficulties, and those for whom English is an additional language.
18. The impact of a commercial literacy programme and the organisation of lessons has been significant in raising standards. The lessons learnt are being transferred to mathematics. Science standards have improved because the co-ordinator has a firm grasp on the priorities and has closely monitored its implementation. There are now plans to improve other subjects, particularly the more practical ones such as art and design, physical education, and design and technology. This has become part of a well-formulated plan over the next two years. The headteacher has rightly recognised that improving standards of literacy and strategic allocation of staffing and resources have been the first priority, and that the next phase of development, identified in the three-year improvement plan, will be focused on widening the curriculum

provision. As yet, the rather rigid programme is not allowing pupils to become excited or highly motivated by their time at school.

19. There is a small number of after-school clubs, such as homework, football, and an environmental group, but they do not always attract significant numbers because there is a lack of tradition for this type of involvement. In addition, the school lacks its own playing field and this limits the amount of physical activity that takes place. To improve this, the staff have made every attempt to be involved in key local and national initiatives, such as Black History Month and World Book Day. A breakfast club and an after school club provide good quality activities before and after school.
20. The spacious and plentiful accommodation allows for the effective delivery of the whole curriculum, although the corridors and rooms echo and amplify high sound levels. Good facilities provided by the learner pool enable swimming to take place throughout the year. The new Nursery and Reception classrooms, their outdoor play area and the resources that have been purchased are all of very good quality. The computer suite is well equipped, and when combined with computers in classrooms, means the school has a slightly better than average pupil-to-computer ratio. Good use has been made of interactive whiteboards, provided by the Education Action Zone. There are sufficient teachers and good levels of support staff that are a satisfactory match to the demands of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare and safety is **very good**. Statutory requirements for health and safety and child protection are fully in place.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The policies and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for are very good.
- All pupils have a good, trusting relationship with at least one member of staff.
- There are thorough systems for the analysis of achievement, and pupils' personal development is carefully monitored, resulting in very high quality advice and guidance being available to all pupils.
- Pupils' views are valued and they are beginning to have a real influence on change.

Commentary

21. Pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance, securely based on monitoring of their achievement and personal development. Pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions through the school council. The safety and well being of children has a very high priority. This includes regular health and safety checks, thorough risk analysis and good attention to health and safety by all staff. The school pays very good attention to healthy eating and to the dietary needs of pupils. At the time of the previous inspection, the school did not have a policy or appropriate procedures in place for child protection. This situation has been addressed so that the school now complies fully with requirements. The child protection officer is trained and regularly updated, and ensures that all staff are aware of the procedures. The school site and buildings are secure, but remain welcoming to visitors and parents. Children feel safe in school and appreciate that staff are always willing to listen to their concerns and offer help when needed.
22. The school monitors pupils very well so that support and guidance are always based on a thorough knowledge of each pupil. The school has developed very good systems for monitoring progress and these enable appropriate targets to be set. The school also analyses results against gender and ethnicity. This has enabled the school to set targets for improving standards in relation to boys and girls in particular. The monitoring of progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good and parents are fully involved.

23. The procedures for monitoring personal development are very good. Teachers know their pupils very well and use their knowledge sensitively in pastoral care. For example, 'Circle Time' is used both to cover the topics of personal, social and health education, and to respond quickly to any issues that arise within the class. Pupils are able to use their diaries to tell their teacher of personal worries; this ensures that they are dealt with confidentially. The home school support worker is available to support pupils and their parents with any concerns about attendance, punctuality and behaviour. The school makes very good use of external support agencies to support individual pupils, for example, learning to deal with anger and modify their behaviour.
24. The school council, established last year, enables pupils to take an active role in improving their school. For example, pupils are getting excited about the imminent delivery of the playground equipment chosen by last year's council. However, the newly-elected council is not yet well versed in the skills of discussion and decision making, and so its meetings require adult guidance.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are **good**. Links with the local community are **satisfactory**. Links with other schools and colleges are **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are positive and most state that their child makes good progress.
- The quality of general information parents receive is good.
- Annual reports do not focus sufficiently on the progress made in each subject.
- Links with other schools are improving through the work of the Education Action Zone.

Commentary

25. Parents are supportive of the school and feel welcome in it. In recent years, the school has worked hard and successfully to gain the support of parents. The school's standing in the community has significantly improved. Most parents think that the teaching is good and that their children make good progress. They also appreciate the breakfast club and after school care facilities. During the meeting with parents, few negative comments were made. The parent teacher association supports the school well, organising a range of events for pupils, parents and families. The school has an open door policy and parents' concerns are taken seriously. Their views are sought and recommendations acted upon. The school works closely with the Bangladeshi community association. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils when they are 11, have become stronger and more links, such as units of work in the summer term, are now being considered.
26. The prospectus, newsletters and other information are of very high quality. Parents are very well informed about the day-to-day running of the school through the prospectus and weekly newsletters. Those whose children have special educational needs are well informed and actively involved at every stage. Parents who have difficulty with spoken English are offered help from translators or friends. The school offers a range of opportunities for parents to find out about the curriculum, and attendance at these, although low, is rising. Parents have the opportunity to consult formally with their child's teacher every term and almost all take advantage of this.
27. Reports show that teachers know the pupils well and provide clear information about each child's work and attitude to learning. However, they are inconsistent in the way they report progress and set targets for improvement, and this means that parents are not consistently well informed about the areas where their child needs support and encouragement.

28. Links with other schools are improving. The school is an active member of the Education Action Zone and, through this, is benefiting from stronger links with other local schools. For example, links between the school and high school to support ICT are now in place. The school has identified the need to develop links with business and has started the process by appointing governors from the business community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management are **good**. Leadership is **good**. Management is **good**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good governance, characterised by a strong, knowledgeable, and supportive yet challenging governing body.
- Good committee structure with terms of reference.
- Very good leadership by the headteacher.
- Good accommodation and learning environment.
- Senior managers and subject co-ordinators have yet to effectively develop foundation subjects.
- Governors and senior managers need to implement a programme for sex and relationships education.

Commentary

29. The weaknesses in governance identified in the last report have been addressed. Governors are knowledgeable and well organised into committees, each with terms of reference. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are demonstrating the ability and willingness to address issues. The governors are making a good contribution towards shaping the vision and direction of the school, as seen in their input into the production of the school improvement plan. The governors have developed considerable expertise and, through the finance committee, are addressing the urgent and serious problems presented by falling rolls and a deficit budget. The governing body is supportive of the school, its headteacher and other key staff, and is prepared to challenge and question decisions and policies. Governors fulfil statutory duties, including the resolution to teach sex and relationships education. It is their delay in implementing a structured programme of teaching, other than that statutorily required in science, which has affected its potential.
30. The headteacher has a very clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school. He has led the school through a difficult time, overcoming many staff changes, low standards and behaviour problems. Standards in the core subjects of English, maths and science are showing an upward trend, the staff situation has stabilised and behaviour is now satisfactory. Other senior staff make a good contribution to the leadership of the school and a strong, mutually supportive senior management team has been created. Unfortunately, with the strong focus needed to bring about such substantive changes, there has been a failure to develop all foundation subjects to the same extent as the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Importantly, it is evident that the school improvement plan has the capacity to make a difference to the full range, breadth and depth of the curriculum.
31. Analysis of different ethnic groups is considered through data held internally and from information supplied by the local education authority. The senior management team have a good understanding of the need to track all pupils' progress carefully, for instance, by looking at how the increasing numbers of Bangladeshi children perform in the classroom and in national tests. The race equality policy has been implemented, it is monitored each year and the outcomes reported to parents.

32. Management is **good**. The school has managed the improvement in standards well. Monitoring performance in core subjects and taking action, such as the use of a commercial literacy scheme, are having a positive effect on achievement and test results. The staff performance management programme has been effectively linked to continuous professional development. Until recently, the school was not being used for initial teacher training, but now trainee teachers and other Nursery and support staff are receiving training in the school. Recruitment and retention of staff has improved and the school offers good induction for newly-qualified teachers. Financial management is sound, with good procedures in place for monitoring spending. Senior managers and governors are working well, in consultation with the local education authority, to overcome budget issues created by falling rolls. They are aware of, and exercise the principles of, best value in making decisions.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	716,142	Balance from previous year	-45,452
Total expenditure	790,906	Balance carried forward to the next	-74,764
Expenditure per pupil	4,077		

The effectiveness of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Provision for Special Educational Needs is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of leadership and governance.
- The thoroughness of record keeping and pupil tracking information.
- The early identification of needs and subsequent improvements, especially in behaviour.
- The good level of support from adults in the classroom, especially classroom assistants.
- The high level of parental involvement in target setting for pupils with learning and behaviour difficulties.

Commentary

33. There are above average numbers of pupils in the school with special educational needs, the majority of which are at the school action stage. There is only one child with a statement of special needs. Needs are varied but the majority are associated with learning difficulties, particularly in literacy. Needs are identified early so that they can be met as soon as possible.
34. Pupils' attainment tends to be low on entry, but those with learning difficulties achieve well, particularly where work is challenging and there is a good level of adult support in class. Improvements in literacy have come about as a result of a focused programme of speaking, reading and writing development, targeted at all those who underachieve. This is only just beginning to have an impact on standards in the other core subjects.
35. Year 5 pupils spoke warmly about the school and the support they receive and were able to explain why they receive help and what they want to improve. Constructive relationships are forged between staff and children, with a good level of care, especially for those with emotional and behavioural needs.
36. Children with difficulties in literacy from Year 3 onwards are provided with focused teaching. Their progress is beginning to allow them better access to other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics. Comprehensive planning now enables teachers to make provision for all

ability groups. Support staff are well trained in providing targeted support and are well deployed and well managed by the co-ordinator. Good quality individual education plans set out clear targets and strategies, and teachers ensure that they are regularly reviewed. Sensible use is made in some instances of group plans where there is more than one child with a similar need. Children's views are taken into account at the review stage. The school involves parents very well in reviews of progress and the majority of parents take an active part in the process.

37. On his arrival, the headteacher identified behaviour management and literacy as priorities for improvement. His determination to eliminate unsatisfactory behaviour has been largely successful, due, among other strategies, to sustained efforts through the provision for special needs. The governor for special needs is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and committed. She meets the co-ordinator regularly and reports to the governing body. The co-ordinator is experienced, appropriately trained and makes good use of support services.
38. Good use is made of a computer program provided by the local education authority for mapping provision for pupils with needs. This is to be extended in collaboration with the Education Action Zone. There is a suitable action plan to ensure this aspect of the school's work continues to develop.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

All six areas are delivered well and the newly-created unit provides a very good learning environment. Children have below average attainment on entry to the Nursery, especially in terms of their listening and speaking skills, and their social development. They make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, though attainment is still below average at the start of Year 1. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good, with very good use made of the literacy scheme. Accommodation and resources are very good.

Children are admitted to the Nursery at age three. There are 28 full-time Nursery and 29 Reception age children in the unit. Although accommodated for some work in separate areas, in practice there is much movement of children into groupings appropriate for their needs. Children choose their activities, with some focus groups operated by the adults. Literacy and numeracy are taught to the whole classes, with small groups withdrawn to follow a literacy scheme.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good and very good elements. There is very good co-operation and teamwork and teachers share their expertise to good effect. Work is very well planned with support staff sharing in the process. Planning and assessment have shown much improvement since the last inspection, with good tracking of children's performance in each of the planned activities. There now needs to be further development of the assessment process, linking it to planning more effectively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good focus on developing and sharing work and ideas.
- The high emphasis on improving the low social skills and involving those who speak little English.

Commentary

39. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**. As they enter the Nursery, few children have developed social skills appropriate for their age; by the end of the Reception year, most of them have made good progress, even though they may not achieve the early learning goal. Children are encouraged to share equipment and co-operate in their play activity. A good example of social development can be seen during the morning break, fruit and drink time, where children sit in small groups, joining in a prayer of thanks as they talk quietly, behaving well, demonstrating a growing awareness of each other. Particularly good is the way that all adults support those children who speak little or no English. They are encouraged to have friends and to share their experiences.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good formal teaching plan for developing communication skills.
- The focus on improving speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- The use of small group sessions.
- The need to develop more assessment strategies that will link better to planning.

Commentary

40. Provision is **good**. The formal teaching of literacy skills is conducted well in both Nursery and Reception classes. Children enjoy particularly good development in their literacy groups, where all children make good progress towards learning to read and learning how different blends of letters form sounds. Those who have found difficulty gain in confidence and make very good progress. In a focused writing activity, children were making labels for parcels, learning to form their letters properly by tracing. The good ratio of adults to children was exploited well and provided many opportunities for children to engage in conversation and to express their feelings. Children achieve well, but despite good progress, few will attain the early learning goal. Those who have little English quickly pick up words and are able to share their experiences. Good account is taken of different cultural backgrounds when sharing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching that develops simple number skills.
- The use of practical experiences.
- Better use of assessment to direct what work will take place next.

Commentary

41. Provision is **good**. Numeracy is taught well to the whole class in both Nursery and Reception. Children are developing a good understanding of numbers by counting, use of cards and number lines, identifying the missing number in a sequence. In a Nursery lesson, children were learning to recognise numbers one to six. The good planning linked together various activities. Children played a guessing game to find the missing number and later used a bingo-type game with dice to reinforce their understanding of numbers one to six. Many different methods are used so that the children enjoy playing number games and singing action songs about numbers and counting. Teachers do make formal assessments, but these are not always used well enough to plan the next stage of work. Achievement is good, though attainment of the early learning goal is unlikely for many, because of the low base on entry.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good balance between different activities.
- The low starting point of children from experiences they have gained before starting school.

Commentary

42. Provision is **good**. A current project in the Nursery is for children to talk about their journeys to school, walking, by car, bus or train. They draw pictures of their journey, showing and talking about them in small groups. Groups, accompanied by adults, go for a walk into main school, to find the library, choose a book, and listen to a story before returning to the Nursery. They write about their experience, draw a picture and describe how they made the journey. A scientific investigation enabled children to test and describe surfaces and texture of a range of materials. Children are achieving well in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Despite the good teaching and progress being made, most children will fall short of fully attaining the early learning goal because their life experiences are low when they enter the school.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good range of toys, equipment and outside play areas.
- The time allowed to play.

Commentary

43. Provision is **very good**. There are many opportunities for children to engage in activities to foster their physical development, and teaching is good so that children achieve well. Two outdoor play areas offer a range of surfaces, and a good selection of wheeled and other apparatus on which children can move and balance safely while engaged in imaginative and adventurous play. Physical activity is very well supervised and adults are always on hand to offer help, support and encouragement. In their formal physical education, children are able to balance a beanbag on their bodies, when still and moving. They move with good control and can run, jump, hop and skip. They work well and co-operatively in pairs. The range and quality of apparatus is good, though some additional, fixed climbing apparatus, with a safe landing surface, would further enhance the learning opportunities in physical development. Indoors, there are many activities, placed strategically, inviting children to use scissors, glue, pencils and other resources. In this area of learning, most pupils will achieve the early learning goal.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many different stimulating activities.
- The links made to better language development.

Commentary

44. Provision is **good**. Good teaching is characterised by opportunities for creative development in focused activities, such as where children created pictures of each other, working in pairs across a table. The teacher encouraged children to observe carefully, choosing from pencil, crayon or paint, to best create the portrait. In another creative activity, children selected from a range of textures to create a collage. Materials like wool, paper, glasspaper and bubble wrap were used for the collage, while children were encouraged to talk about their work, using vocabulary to include such words as 'smooth,' 'rough,' 'soft,' 'bumpy.' Children achieve well and most will achieve the early learning goal.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving, and attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 has reached a level comparable with the national average.
- Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, with examples of good and very good teaching.
- The use of a commercial literacy scheme is helping to raise standards in reading, particularly for lower attaining pupils.
- The effective management provided by the co-ordinator and the focus on raising standards.
- The very good support and teamwork provided by learning support assistants.

- The need to focus on raising standards in writing, to follow on from the improvements being made in reading, although still more attention needs to be placed on stretching those with higher ability.

Commentary

45. Standards overall have shown a steady improvement, particularly during the last two years. This is distinct progress from the previous inspection, where reading, writing, handwriting and presentation were judged to be below average. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with the national average, whereas at Year 2, standards are below average, particularly in writing, but this is from a low base on entry to the school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave in Year 6 and the targets they are set have become more challenging.
46. The most significant factor in these improvements is the emphasis the school has placed upon the need to raise standards in English and literacy. The quality of teaching and learning in individual lessons is good overall, and in some classes it is very good, but from evidence of work from last year, there was more inconsistency. Teachers' planning has improved as the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and this has been further supported by the use of the well-structured development provided by a commercial literacy scheme. The use of setting arrangements from the Nursery Year to 6 is having a very positive effect on raising achievement. Since the improvements that have become evident in reading, these sets are placing a much higher emphasis on writing, and this is having a beneficial effect. For instance, older pupils are able to write more detail in their stories and can choose the right type of language when, for instance, writing a letter of complaint, or describing a science experiment. Teachers encourage them to think how this can be developed even further with comments such as:

"Excellent use of features and structures from the general, to detail, to opinion."

47. Teachers use their interactive whiteboards and other technical equipment to stimulate and excite the learning. Pupils have some opportunity to use computers in their lessons but these need exploiting more. Teaching assistants provide very good support when teaching small groups. Their training has been thorough and they show a real confidence in what they are doing. Teachers and learning support assistants have worked hard to ensure that pupils achieve average standards in English, although this has been at the expense of less focus on the small number of more able pupils, who have the potential to achieve higher standards.
48. Teachers manage pupils well, and behaviour, once regarded as a problem, has improved. However, the level of noise from teachers and pupils in some classrooms is unacceptably high and the building itself, which seems to amplify the sound level, makes this worse. A good feature of teachers' practice is the quality of marking of pupils' work. This demonstrates high expectations, as some of the marking contains targets for further improvement. Sensitively written, supportive and helpful comments by the teacher do much to encourage and motivate, such as:

"Well done, you have spelt 12 new words." or "I expect to see these words used in your story."

49. The development of English is well managed by the subject co-ordinator. Along with other curriculum managers, she demonstrates a commitment to raising standards. She has put in place a system which tracks the progress of pupils, year on year, enabling teachers to plan for the individual needs of pupils. She monitors planning, as well as carrying out observation of teaching and learning in classrooms. A good feature of her management is the development of teamwork within the staff and especially in the effective use of learning support assistants.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Scrutiny of pupils' work in other subjects shows that literacy skills are being used across the curriculum. Pupils are practising and developing their writing skills in history, geography and science, for instance, and their speaking and listening skills are being used and supported through oral work in most areas. In a history lesson, Year 6 pupils were making very good use of discussion and argument in their research into the culture and religious practices of the ancient Greeks.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved teachers' planning and their use of electronic whiteboards.
- Good support for least able children.
- Good presentation of work throughout.
- Limited use of computing by children during lessons.
- Limited effectiveness of co-ordinator's role.

Commentary

51. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average, although there has been a slow but steady improvement in the juniors. The school comfortably exceeded its statutory attainment targets for 2003. It is pertinent to note that six of the most able children, as measured by external tests, left at the end of Year 5. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
52. Although achievement is satisfactory in the infants, it is insufficient to speed progress and raise standards by the end of Year 2. Achievement remains satisfactory overall throughout the juniors, although last year, the more able pupils underachieved, due to a lack of suitably challenging activities. Work for this group is now much better and links to them developing their thinking powers, using knowledge they have already gained. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well and make good progress. Children with English as an additional language often achieve higher levels of attainment than the others and are also supported well by classroom assistants.
53. Pupils' enthusiasm for mathematics is not as high as might be expected. A significant number of children are noisy in lessons and staff work hard to manage behaviour and keep noise levels down. Pupils with learning difficulties appreciate the help they receive. Support for children with emotional difficulties is managed sensitively, as seen in a Year 5 class, where a child on a personal support programme stormed out of the room. In the past, the lack of challenge for the more able children has been a factor in the modest levels of enthusiasm for mathematics amongst older pupils.
54. Teaching is variable, but never less than sound, and good overall, and particularly for pupils aged seven and 11. The greatest improvements made recently are in the planned match of work to children's ability levels and the use of interactive whiteboards for teaching. For instance, pupils of all abilities in a Years 5 and 6 lesson were learning well and making good progress in rounding decimals to the nearest whole numbers. The teaching of number is systematic and there is a satisfactory range of investigatory work. Marking seen in the books from last year lacked constructive comment on how pupils could improve and there was no agreed system for the collection of teacher assessments to inform short-term lesson planning. Work in lessons this term is much better and demonstrates the more concentrated focus on mathematics, following on from the success of the literacy programme. There is still not enough connection between mathematics and information and communication technology. This is partly to do with the lack of appropriate software, but also because teachers do not plan

enough work that will develop technological skills in real life situations, such as through surveys or higher class data collection.

55. Leadership in the subject is just satisfactory. Despite the levels of effort in collecting data on pupil achievement, the co-ordinator's ability to monitor the quality of teaching and learning is limited, due in part to the lack of opportunity to observe lessons. She offers advice to teachers by analysing test papers and has led staff meetings and training. Her priorities have centred around establishing the new Nursery, and an inability to offer a role model in National Curriculum teaching has limited the co-ordinator's effectiveness. Numeracy had taken second place to the school's main priority of improving literacy because results from previous national tests suggested that there were not so many significant problems. With a general rise in standards, the school has now rightly targeted this subject for more intense support through the School Improvement Plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. There is some planned use of mathematics across the curriculum, such as in information and communication technology. Teachers are starting to define opportunities as part of their weekly plans, although this is not yet consistent, particularly in the juniors.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good co-ordination of the subject that has ensured common approaches to teaching.
- Good use of scientific language that starts with the younger children.
- A well-balanced curriculum that develops learning through each year.

Commentary

57. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach standards that are at average levels when compared to those nationally. This is better than those at the last inspection, when they were below average. Particularly in Year 6, standards have been steadily rising for the last five years and the number of pupils gaining the higher levels has now begun to increase. This is because the co-ordinator has improved teachers' confidence by providing regular training, consistent monitoring, and has made an analysis of what has worked well and what needs improvement. In addition, there is a more concerted effort to make sure that lessons involve practical experiences and that older pupils are able to use the knowledge they have gained by making a hypothesis during experiments and discovering whether it is true.
58. Teaching is good, which enables pupils to learn well. Their achievement in their time at the school is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught scientific concepts in a structured way. Teachers plan lessons using experiences that children understand, such as those about the different properties of materials. This enables pupils, often with lower general ability, to see the relevance of the work they are doing and relate it to their own background. Lessons are balanced between thinking about an idea, experimenting first hand and then drawing conclusions. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the work that they have done and are beginning to know some basic scientific language. Their books are kept neatly and teachers encourage a structured approach to recording work. It starts with a description of what the experiment will do, how it is done and then a simple conclusion. They are encouraged to think out their own ideas, rather than relying on those of the teacher, or other members of the class. Marking from last year is sometimes thorough, although this is somewhat inconsistent across all classes. In these books, there is very little evidence of the use of computers, although planning this year suggests that more account of this has been taken.

59. Through Years 3 to 6, these early basic skills are developed well. Planning addresses all areas of the subject. A lot of work has been done in biological study, but surprisingly, in the 2002 tests, pupils in Year 6 did not do so well in this area. An analysis of the questions correctly answered, undertaken by the co-ordinator, did not suggest any patterns, but nevertheless more attention has been paid to this area, particularly in learning specific language, such as the parts of a flower. Marking is very thorough in Year 6 and helps children understand what they have learnt and how it can be improved. Again, pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons, sometimes becoming rather noisy in their excitement about contributing to discussions or working in small groups. They do not naturally acquire knowledge quickly and teachers have to recap on what has been learnt previously to ensure it is understood. In internal tests, the areas that appear most difficult are those which involve higher order thinking, such as finding out why things happen. It is when teachers try to give more independence that pupils find they need extra support. In the books from last year, this is very apparent at the start of September, but improved as time moved on. It demonstrated the effectiveness of the teaching and that achievement is at least sound and often good. Those with special educational needs make good progress, and a number have gained national average standards, even when they are not able to do so in English. All this means that the subject is improving their self-esteem and feeling of success. They enjoy their learning.
60. Pupils are provided with a well-balanced curriculum covering all areas. The strong co-ordination of the subject has ensured this has happened. Teachers are consulted about what they think, their views are sought about what to improve, and the final decisions about development are based on analysis as well as a determination to move the subject forward.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved use of ICT since the last inspection; the subject now meets statutory requirements.
- All pupils make good progress in individual lessons, but older pupils have not achieved as much as they might over the longer term.
- The better access to computers and other peripherals in the computer suite, although not enough is done at other times in classrooms.
- The good use of whiteboards in classrooms to support learning in a wide variety of subjects.
- The systematic development of skills, particularly for older pupils, and the use of other schools to develop expertise which is not available at St Luke's.
- The lack of a more formal assessment system to ensure all pupils will continue to progress well.

Commentary

61. Standards have improved since the last inspection, although they are still not high enough for older pupils. By the end of Year 2, pupils are reaching standards close to those expected nationally, but at the end of Year 6 they are below those expected. This is because many of the improvements within the subject have only been recently introduced. As a result, pupils in Years 5 and 6, while making sound progress now, have not achieved these levels for long enough. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving satisfactorily as they have been able to receive regular teaching in the newly-completed computer suite since they started in Year 1.
62. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were not taught well, they did not have regular access to hardware and teachers' confidence was low. The key issue at the time has been addressed well. New hardware has been purchased, the computer suite is timetabled regularly, and most teachers have completed a national training course. Work is now linked more closely to other subjects and skills are taught systematically.

63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Younger pupils in the infants are able to use simple programs with some confidence. They can open programs, use a mouse and print their work. In one lesson, pupils made up faces and then filled and coloured in their drawings. The teacher was able to plan a new skill that followed on from work the previous week. Time was used efficiently as small groups were brought into the suite, while a competent assistant worked with others in the classroom. The children were keen to work on their drawings and concentrated hard on what they were doing. Two or three wanted to carry on when others had finished and were disappointed when they had to stop. By the end of the lesson, the majority of pupils were working at levels that might be expected for their age. When using word processing programs, achievement is limited because of the low level of literacy skills. Pupils have to think both about where letters are on the keyboard as well as how a word is spelt. This limits the amount of work that is completed.
64. In the juniors, most teachers are planning work at a level slightly below that which might be expected. So, for instance, in Year 6, the class is working on a presentation program, but at a level that might be expected in Year 5. The pupils, however, are assimilating skills very quickly and there are indications that older children are progressing at a fast rate. Pupils enjoy the experiences that are being offered and generally work hard, although sometimes quite noisily. Most of the discussion is to do with the work they have been set, and small groups co-operate well.
65. There are some areas that were not planned for last year but will take place later in this year. These include data logging and control technology that will take place at a City Learning Centre. Again, this is one reason why continuous achievement is below that which might be expected. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and an assistant. This ensures that those with behavioural difficulties do not disrupt others. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make equally sound progress as others. The support given to these pupils as well as those with special educational needs means that their self-esteem is raised because they can achieve at similar levels to the rest of the class.
66. The co-ordination of the subject is conducted by the headteacher. He has a good overview about acquiring hardware and appropriate software. There are few systems for assessing attainment, although teachers are beginning to collect information that will be used to move learning on through each year. However, as standards improve, there are no clear long term procedures in place that the school can use to adapt planning and take account of the higher levels that will be achieved.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. There is evidence that teachers now plan the use of computers across a range of subjects, such as history and science. Research using the Internet and annotated diagrams were seen in books from last year and a major project linked to literacy involved the development of newssheets arising from a visit by Year 5 to the Newspaper Education Group. Data collection and spreadsheets have been used in the juniors to link work in numeracy. The school acknowledges that more work is needed in this area to develop the intrinsic use of ICT. At present, it is limited by the lack of computers in classrooms. The Education Action Zone (EAZ) has purchased a whiteboard for each class. These are used well across many lessons, both as a teacher resource and as an interactive tool. While this a relatively recent innovation, teachers are already finding interesting adaptations to their teaching such as the use of presentational programs, and games and simulations on the Internet.

HUMANITIES

68. Only one history lesson was seen in the juniors and no geography lessons were seen. However, inspectors looked at various documentation, photographs and displays of work, as well as talking to teachers and pupils. The achievement of pupils in both subjects is

satisfactory, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. Statutory requirements for history and geography are met and the curriculum for both has been revised to take account of mixed age classes in the juniors; this ensures that pupils do not repeat topics as they progress through the school.

69. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in **geography** are average. In the Nursery and Reception classes, the school building and the surrounding area are used to help pupils develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Educational visits are used from time to time to support work in geography.
70. In the one **history** lesson observed, Year 6 pupils were learning about the beliefs and religious practices of the ancient Greeks. The very good teaching seen was characterised by very good planning, the use of very good quality resources, including books, pictures and research through CD Rom's and the Internet. Excellent management of pupils was reflected in very good behaviour, with pupils engaged in individual and paired investigation. Through this topic, pupils were gaining a very good knowledge and understanding of ancient Greece. The school makes good use of the topic box resources borrowed from the local authority's professional development centre. A recent successful initiative was the 'Black History Week'. This was a well-organised, cross-curricular project, which provided insight into Black culture, religion, music, poetry and literature. Children and their parents were involved and the week culminated in a performance by pupils in traditional dress.
71. The leadership and management of humanities are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subjects and has plans for future development, including the establishment of effective assessment and the creation of a portfolio of pupils' work in geography and history.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Very few lessons were seen in art and design, music, physical education, and design and technology. Work from last year was analysed, as well as teachers' planning, and there were discussions with pupils and teachers. From this evidence, it can be seen that achievement has continued to be satisfactory, but with opportunities not yet taken to enhance and enrich the creative and aesthetic aspect of the curriculum to its fullest extent.
73. As at the time of the last inspection, work in **art and design** continues to be taught systematically through each year. Some of the work is of good quality, particularly where it is linked to the work of artists such as Van Gogh. Posters produced as part of the work in religious education with children in Year 2 give opportunities to think about specific issues. A good start has been made in using computers. Painting programs have been used to draw faces. Skills such as filling and selecting colours have been quickly learnt, but the teacher did not use the lesson to suggest how these could be combined. As yet, the planning for art and design is too informal. No work has been done to build up different skills each year so that pupils can increase their understanding. Links to other subjects are at the discretion of each class teacher and this means that some skills are repeated, while others are not covered in a coherent way. However, better use is made of learning about different styles of art and about the skills associated with pencil shading and drawing. Sketchbooks have been used to keep a portfolio of work in some classes and this enables children to make reference to previous experimentation.
74. In **design and technology**, there is evidence of some improvement by Year 6 since the last inspection. From a low base in Year 2, children's understanding of the subject improves by the end of Year 6, and those children speak with enthusiasm about their experiences. Teachers plan the curriculum using national guidance and there is satisfactory coverage of designing and making processes. One satisfactory lesson was seen, and there was very little work seen, owing to the timing of the inspection. Judging from teachers' planning, an appropriate range of activities is provided, including food technology. Year 2 children have a very limited

understanding of the design and make processes. Year 4 pupils were seen learning the importance of hygiene when handling food. Designing skill is more secure than making. Year 6 pupils visit a local secondary school to experience lessons in workshop facilities. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection, despite the absence of subject leadership and its low priority in the school's curriculum development plans.

75. Learning in **music** is satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses in the areas of listening and appraising. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection, but discussion with the subject co-ordinator, conversations with pupils and scrutiny of planning and resources suggests that provision is satisfactory. As reported in the last inspection, the emphasis and strength in music is singing. Despite not having a specialist musician or pianist, the school manages well to achieve singing to a satisfactory standard. Accompaniment for singing is provided by the headteacher playing the guitar. Pupils sing in class music lessons to recorded song and hymn accompaniments. The weakness in provision is in the areas of listening and appraising, as it was in the previous inspection.
76. Standards in **physical education** are sound by the end of Year 6. Teachers lack confidence in the subject, but their planning enables them to provide satisfactory coverage of the subject curriculum. They rely on external agencies for taking lessons, such as the swimming instructors employed to teach swimming at all levels. Swimming provision is a particular strength, but the absence of a playing field limits development, and, in addition, there is a lack of sporting and physical education culture in the school. Children in Years 2 and 6 spoke enthusiastically about sport, but often as a result of activities either led by those from outside school, or those which take place in their own time. The recent appointment of an Education Action Zone sports co-ordinator to increase sporting activity in local schools and improve the teaching of physical education is viewed optimistically. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. No direct lessons were seen during the inspection, although from discussions with teachers, and more importantly the pupils, it is clear that the school has moved forward a long way in the last two years. This area has had a very high profile and has been used to improve behaviour and general demeanour around the school. Much training has been given to teachers and assistants, and some pupils mentioned successful implementation of a new behaviour code. In discussions, they said that lunch and breaktimes are now much more controlled and they are beginning to enjoy being at school. Regular discussions, known as 'Circle Time', give pupils the opportunity to air their concerns and the School Council is beginning to take more responsibility for improvements. The main thrust of further developments is to revolve around raising self-esteem so that children feel proud to be part of St Luke's.
78. The slow implementation of the sex and relationships programme has been due to a lack of commitment by governors. However, there has been more urgency recently, parents have been informed of the proposals and the planned introduction of a scheme of work will start next term. Despite this, the school has undertaken a sex and drugs education programme through the science themes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	6
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	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).