

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARTIN OF PORRES ROMAN CATHOLIC  
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

New Southgate, London

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 102150

Headteacher: Ms I Tyrrell

Lead inspector: Ms A Coyle

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Inspection number: 257798

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	219
School address:	Blake Road New Southgate London
Postcode:	N11 2AF
Telephone number:	(020) 8361 1445
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Pugh
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Martin of Porres Primary School is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic school situated in New Southgate, London. It serves a wide catchment area, which consists of privately owned and local authority properties. The school is a little smaller than most other primary schools and there are 219 girls and boys on roll, including 30 children in the reception class. Thirty-two children attend the nursery on a part-time basis and are admitted in the term of their fourth birthday. Most transfer to the reception class, continuing until they leave at the end of Year 6, and attainment on entry is average. Seventy-three per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority families, which is a very high percentage compared with the national figure, but only one per cent learn English as an additional language and are at an early stage of language acquisition. The main language spoken at home, other than English, is Spanish. Eleven per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is lower than in most other schools. Pupils' needs include profound, specific and moderate learning needs, speech and communication difficulties and autism. Three pupils have statements for their special educational needs. The school achieved the Healthy Schools Award in 2002.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20603	Ms A Coyle	Lead inspector	French, English as an additional language
19322	Ms J Bedawi	Lay inspector	
31819	Ms S Duggins	Team inspector	Science, Physical education, Foundation Stage
19817	Ms J Dowsett	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Geography, History
30244	Mr R Tapley	Team inspector	English, Art and design, Design and technology, Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school that is led and managed well. It provides **good** value for money and the teaching and learning are predominantly good. Most groups of pupils achieve well, although some of the most capable pupils do not achieve as well as they might because work is not matched closely enough to their abilities. However, the school has recently come through a period of change caused by a high turnover of staff and this has affected its rate of progress over the last two years.

#### The school's main strengths and areas for development are:

- Standards are good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils behave well and show very good attitudes to learning. They display high levels of respect and self-esteem, and are very confident, due to the very good provision for moral development.
- The school takes good care of its pupils within a safe, welcoming and strongly Christian ethos.
- The good leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governing body have helped to steer the school well through its recent changes.
- Strong links with parents, the parish and the community are used well to support pupils' learning.
- The quality of teaching is unduly variable in the junior classes.
- The subject co-ordinators do not monitor provision effectively enough.

The school has improved **satisfactorily** since it was last inspected in 1998. It has rectified the key issue of a lack of appraisal; systems for the professional development of staff are now firmly in place. The school improvement plan has been improved to a satisfactory level and the finances are managed and monitored more effectively than before. However, the plan is still not detailed enough to specify how the funds are to be used. Due to the considerable changes in staffing, the roles of the subject co-ordinators have not been developed as fully as the school had intended.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 6.*

Achievement is **good** overall. The above table shows that standards have been consistently above or well above the national average and the results of similar schools over the last three years by the end of Year 6. However, the results for science show that standards were not as good as in the previous years, although they still matched the national average. At the end of Year 2, the standards attained in 2002 were in line with the national average and the results of similar schools in reading. They were above average in writing and science but well below in mathematics because the most capable pupils did not attain high enough standards. The inspection evidence largely concurs with these results; standards are currently above the national expectations by Year 6 in the core subjects and most pupils achieve well.<sup>1</sup> However, although the majority do well in relation to their capabilities

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<sup>1</sup> **ON LEVELS**

and those with special educational needs make as much progress as others, the higher attainers do not achieve as well as they might. This is an area for further development.

Whilst the latest 2003 results indicate that standards are better than 2002, and the current inspection findings show that standards are above the national expectations overall, by the time pupils are in Year 6, it is clear that the brightest pupils could achieve even more.

Children in the reception classes increase their knowledge and skills well. From an average starting point on entry, they make good progress so that by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage,<sup>2</sup> most attain the stepping stones set out in the Early Learning Goals<sup>3</sup> in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. Standards are higher than expected in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development by the end of the reception year.

The majority of pupils show very good attitudes to learning and behave well. Satisfactory attendance and **good** spiritual, social and cultural development lead to clear gains in pupils' personal qualities. The school's **very good** provision for promoting pupils' moral development is clearly evident in its daily life.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **good** in Years 1 and 2 and in the nursery and reception classes. However, the high turnover of staff has led to a recent lack of consistency in teaching and learning in the junior classes, which is nevertheless satisfactory overall, but this has resulted in some under-achievement by the most capable pupils.

The **good** curriculum is extended by strong links with parents, the parish and the local community. Pupils are cared for and supported well in a strongly Christian environment.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher and governing body have steered the school closely through its recent time of change. However, the high staff turnover has meant that the roles of the subject co-ordinators have not been developed fully.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very pleased with the quality of education the school provides. Pupils also speak highly of their teachers and are proud to be associated with the school. It has a very good reputation within the community and the headteacher is well respected.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

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By the end of Year 6, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected levels. By the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected levels.

<sup>2</sup> **FOUNDATION STAGE** - This stage of learning refers to children aged between three and six years. In this school, it refers to children in the nursery and reception classes.

<sup>3</sup> **ON EARLY LEARNING GOALS** - From September 2000, QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) have introduced a set of 'Early Learning Goals for children's learning'. These goals are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the end of the reception year in the areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development; and personal, social and emotional development.

- celebrate, share and spread the best practice in teaching by developing lesson planning to include tasks that are more closely matched to pupils' abilities; improve the quality of marking and make more use of assessment to set targets for pupils; and extend the provision for the most capable, gifted and talented pupils; and
- strengthen the roles of the subject co-ordinators by developing the management and monitoring responsibilities across the school.

Also, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that the required information is published in the prospectus and governors' annual reports to parents.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is **good**. Standards are above average in all the core subjects.

#### Main strengths and areas for development

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress.
- There is some under-achievement of the most capable pupils.

#### Commentary

##### **Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002**

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	97 (80)	84 (84)
writing	97 (90)	86 (86)
mathematics	90 (100)	90 (91)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	85 (100)	75 (75)
mathematics	89 (89)	73 (71)
science	93 (100)	86 (87)

*There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

1. Most pupils achieve well in English. Standards have been consistently above or well above the national average and the results of similar schools over the last three years. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 were above the national average in English, with 85 per cent at Level 4 and 44 per cent at the higher Level 5. The results were much higher compared to those of pupils in similar schools. By Year 2, standards were average in reading and above average in writing with 97 per cent at Level 2, although only 14 per cent attained the higher Level 3 in reading. These results represent a similar picture to that of the last inspection, when standards were good, and the indications are that pupils have improved even more on this in the 2003 tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. Most have made good progress since joining the school, and basic literacy skills are taught well across the curriculum. By Year 6, pupils' speaking, listening and reading, and the quality of their written work, are good.
2. Achievement in mathematics is good amongst most groups of pupils, except for the most capable, who could do better. In the 2002 national tests, standards were above the national average and those of similar schools at the end of Year 6, with 89 per cent of pupils at Level 4, but only 19 per cent achieved the higher Level 5, although four per cent achieved very well, reaching Level 6. However, pupils in Year 2 did not do as well because too few of them attained the higher levels. Standards were well below the national average and those of similar schools because, although 93 per cent attained Level 2, only 17 per cent attained the higher Level 3.

Whilst the latest 2003 results indicate that standards are better than last year's, and the current inspection findings show that standards are above the national expectations overall, by the time pupils are in Year 6, it is clear that the brightest pupils could achieve even more.

3. In the national tests for science, the 2002 results show that 93 per cent of pupils in Year 6 attained Level 4 and 37 per cent reached the higher Level 5, which was in line with the national figures. The teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well above average for Level 2 at 100 per cent, and an average 24 per cent reached the higher Level 3. The evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards are currently above the expected levels by Year 6. Pupils generally make good progress, and literacy and numeracy skills are used well to help them increase their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts.
4. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress so that by the end of the reception year they exceed the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. They are likely to attain, and many will probably exceed, the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. This represents good achievement from average attainment on entry.
5. Achievement is mainly good and most groups of pupils achieve well. No significant variations were identified during the inspection between the progress of girls and boys with special educational needs and those of other capabilities, or ethnic backgrounds, because the school works hard to raise the standards of pupils. However, there is some underachievement amongst one group, namely the most capable, who are not attaining as well as they might. This is because the quality of teaching is inconsistent due to the high turnover of staff, although the school has identified this as an area to improve on quickly. More generally, standards are good by the time pupils reach the top end of the school in Year 6 and learning is promoted well through good subject link with topics.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress. During lessons, pupils achieve at least as well as their peers. For example, in mathematics, an older pupil was able to apply the strategies of doubling and addition to calculate multiples of 12, whilst in a physical education lesson, a younger pupil participated well, with adult help. When working individually or in a small group, pupils' progress is good. Pupils identified for booster classes achieve well, as indicated by their test results. Specialised small group work, using computer-based programmes, has resulted in some exceptional progress in pupils' ability to communicate effectively.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils have **very good** attitudes to school. Their behaviour is **good** overall, but a few are sometimes thoughtless at break times. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Very good attention is paid to building pupils' self-esteem and confidence, so that they respect the views of others.
- The warm, very positive relationships between everyone, and the good levels of responsibility, make a significant contribution to school life.
- Pupils have strong principles with a very good sense of right and wrong.
- At play, a few pupils sometimes forget to be considerate and kind to others.
- Pupils do not have enough exposure to their own and other cultural experiences.

## Commentary

7. Pupils are happy, like school and arrive on time. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are good. They show interest, know that they are expected to learn, and act sensibly. Participation is good, even where there is insufficient challenge for more capable pupils, or a lack of planned independent learning. Moving around the school, pupils show maturity. Doors are held open with a friendly smile. Pupils do their best to fulfil the school's realistic expectations. At play, the majority mix well, showing an awareness of others. They are caring towards shy or lonely children, or those who fall on their knees. However, a few pupils forget the playground rules about being considerate, acting thoughtlessly, throwing skipping ropes, or interrupting quieter games. There are satisfactory procedures to prevent bullying.
8. There is very successful promotion of individual self-esteem, confidence and personal worth, very well reinforced by the example shown by all adults in school. This enables pupils to feel secure in their personal and academic lives, yet want to improve, whatever their abilities. They are able to celebrate others' efforts generously; for example, by sharing the joy of a pupil with special educational needs who achieved particularly well in a literacy lesson.
9. The very good, warm relationships have a significant impact on school life. Whatever the social or ethnic background, pupils and adults share experiences, building relationships that are firm and positive, often with a touch of humour, so that there is genuine harmony in the school. Pupils mix together easily, readily offering help if there is need. However, the school recognises that it could do more to promote pupils' cultural and multicultural awareness, across the curriculum and through more first-hand experiences. Given the schools' location, relatively little use is made of the rich cultural opportunities that are accessible, including, for example, hands-on workshops.
10. Pupils develop strong principles. They understand the difference between right and wrong, and have a keen sense of fairness. This is successfully reflected in school. Mutual trust is entrenched; staff are involved in their pupils' interests and will always listen. Pupils know that all adults want the best for them, academically and personally. Three Year 6 pupils spoke of their sadness at starting Year 6, because they will soon leave. Responsibility is relished, as 'playtime buddies', taking on individual tasks or helping a friend in lessons. The school council is firmly established; its members are looking forward to Years 1 and 2 joining. They like the school acting on some of their ideas, giving them some money to buy small playground equipment. They feel this has improved playtimes enormously. There is a quiet, understated air of spirituality about the school. Pupils are able to understand and reflect on the lives and problems of others. This was seen in lessons when discussions led to pupils asking questions that probed unknown elements, such as the lives of Ancient Greeks, or showing delight when they took a real step forward in learning.

## Attendance

### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.8
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.*

## Exclusions

There were no exclusions during this year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. Its broad curriculum is extended well by the good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and the effective support for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**.

### Main strengths and areas for development

- Teaching is sometimes very good in English, French, mathematics, science, art and design, history and physical education.
- Teachers encourage and praise pupils well.
- Teaching assistants are deployed carefully to help and guide pupils.
- Pupils work very well independently, and they collaborate closely when asked to do so.
- Provision for the most capable pupils is not yet fully developed, although the school has clearly identified it as an area for improvement.

### Commentary

11. The quality of teaching is good overall and never less than satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, and the good teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' positive attitudes to their work. Teaching is generally good in the nursery and reception classes, and also in Years 1 and 2. It is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and pupils use their knowledge well in other subjects, which enables them to make good progress in the learning of basic skills. Lessons are managed well and teaching assistants provide good additional guidance for pupils with special educational needs.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	13 (36%)	10 (28%)	13 (36%)	0	0	0

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

12. Children in the nursery and reception class are provided with a good start to their education. Teaching and learning are good and the adults working with them have a clear understanding of their needs. Good links are forged with other areas of the curriculum when teachers use numbers well to reinforce counting and help the children to improve their knowledge of mathematics. Children enjoy learning, which contributes to their growing levels of confidence, and the ends of lessons are used well to help them consider their successes.
13. The quality of teaching and learning in English is very good in the infant classes; it is satisfactory overall in the juniors and sometimes very good, notably in Year 3. Generally, all teachers have secure subject knowledge and the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well since the last inspection. Basic skills are taught well to ensure that pupils make good progress in learning, and the good links with other subjects include the study of poetry in the upper junior classes and discussions about stories in the infant classes. The teachers are skilful in identifying ways to interest and motivate pupils in learning, particularly by including pupils with special educational needs in question-and-answer sessions and by praising their responses.

Pupils undertake work that makes increasing demands on their knowledge and understanding and, as a result, they learn well and standards are good.

14. Basic numeracy skills are taught well in mathematics. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and levels of attention. They treat pupils with great respect and use praise well to enhance their self-esteem and confidence. Teachers evaluate their work daily to assess progress and plan for the next stage of learning. Lessons are made interesting because the staff use learning resources well to help pupils understand new ideas. The use of computers has been improved since the last inspection to support learning across the curriculum. However, teachers do not plan sufficiently well for pupils of differing abilities and the quality of marking is unsatisfactory. This limits the achievement of the most capable.
15. Teaching and learning are good in science, art and design, history, information and communication technology, and music, especially when the teacher's skilful questioning and very good use of praise lead to a significant increase in pupils' learning. Teaching is sound in all other subjects and good links are made between subjects such as English, art and design, and history through stories about famous people and practical work on computers. The work produced by pupils is displayed well throughout the school and helps to provide a stimulating environment for pupils, staff, visitors and parents. Generally, good learning is a result of the teachers' strong subject knowledge and a good emphasis on key concepts.
16. Assessment procedures are good and the quality of teachers' daily planning is satisfactory because it identifies learning intentions clearly. However, the two are not linked well enough. Although teachers assess pupils' work effectively, the information is not used consistently to provide support for the most capable pupils to extend their learning. Variable quality marking means that, although some pupils are guided well by teachers' written comments, others are not. Most pupils have homework regularly and this helps them to increase their skills at home with parents, but the setting of homework is inconsistent across the year groups. Nevertheless, a particular strength is in the good deployment of teaching assistants, particularly in English and mathematics, and all staff work in good partnership with each other. All know what they are expected to do and they enable pupils to make good progress.
17. The management of pupils is good. This helps to ensure that time is used well in lessons. Teachers promote a classroom atmosphere that encourages hard work, as well as a good sense of enjoyment. In the best lessons, the teachers motivate the pupils so well that learning is fun! For example, good praise celebrates pupils' success and inspires them to achieve well. Most pupils listen very attentively to the advice given, so that constructive criticism leads to better attitudes.
18. Support teachers and assistants know the pupils well and give good personal and academic support during lessons and during withdrawal sessions, assisting them to achieve the targets set out in their individual education plans. However, the quality of the plans is variable because some indicate confusion between what a pupil needs to achieve and the action required, potentially leading to less effective support. Nevertheless, a new computer-based system is being introduced to make sure that targets are clear and appropriate, and that strategies to support the targets are realistic and practical. Teachers make good use of the skilled support teachers and assistants when they are timetabled to be with the class.

## The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum provided by the school is **good**. Accommodation and resources are **adequate** to meet the needs of the curriculum.

## Main strengths and areas for development

- Provision is good for areas of learning in the reception class.
- Effective provision for personal, social and health education.

- The school's participation in sport and physical activities is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There are effective links between stages in pupils' education.
- Computers are not used systematically to support and enhance subjects across the curriculum.
- Insufficient opportunities are given to pupils to use and independently apply their scientific skills in a range of situations.

## Commentary

19. The curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements. The good system for reviewing and updating policies and schemes of work helps the school to take account of new developments and improve provision. Good curricular links between subjects enable teachers to extend pupils' learning and the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are used well. However, computers are not used enough in the classrooms to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their skills because the school has had technical difficulties that have hindered the use of technology in the classrooms, and it has identified this as an area for improvement. French is taught during the school week to pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. This enables them to have a firm foundation in a second language before commencing the secondary phase of their education. The use of music and physical education specialists effectively supports the teaching and learning of skills, knowledge and understanding within the school.
20. The programme for personal, social and health education successfully underpins the caring ethos of the school. Its links with the Healthy School Standard has helped to raise pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. The good use of a well-qualified teacher of physical education throughout the school establishes a secure agenda for health and fitness. The importance of physical fitness and healthy living is promoted well by the annual Health and Fitness week, along with the range of awards available for pupils of all ages to achieve. Appropriate policies are in place for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness.
21. Provision for special educational needs is good overall. All pupils on the special needs register have access to the full curriculum. Pupils with statements for their needs receive full entitlement of support. The joint co-ordinators work tirelessly to ensure that pupils on the register receive expert advice and support from a range of specialist agencies. For example, one pupil has received additional specialist support through local education authority funding and the resulting expertise of the support assistant benefits other staff and pupils. The school makes very good use of specific group teaching, such as booster classes for Year 6 pupils and a computer-based programme of work for pupils with dyslexia. The school has the benefit of three part-time special needs support teachers, one teaching assistant and a nursery nurse in Year 1, in addition to three assistants for pupils with statements. However, the level of in-class support is variable throughout the school, being greater in the infants than in the juniors.
22. Appropriate strategies are in place to ensure the early identification of young pupils with learning difficulties. Once pupils are identified, careful records are kept of their progress. Individual education plans are reviewed termly and parents are fully involved in this process.
23. Appropriate use is made of visitors and visits to enhance the curriculum. Curricular activities outside the school day are limited. Those available are mainly linked to physical activities, of which netball is the only free club. Specialists take dance and football, which are paid for by parents, and an outdoor activity club started during the week of the inspection.
24. The school provides a secure, attractive and supportive learning environment for all of the pupils. The accommodation is very compact and presents some restrictions. For example, although the school is surrounded by tarmac and grassed areas, there is no large field area in which pupils can effectively develop their skills in team sports. Storage space for resources within the school is limited. However, the school makes the best use of the facilities available and has initiated plans to improve the outdoor area for the reception and nursery classes. There is a

small, well-resourced room for group work and a number of other areas around the school suitable for teaching pupils with special needs. The school makes good use of its teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and for the number of pupils in the school. Resources are generally satisfactory and the school is well served by administrative and ancillary staff. It is kept clean by a dedicated team of cleaning and care-taking staff.

### Care, guidance and support

The care and welfare offered to pupils are **good**. The monitoring of support and guidance is **satisfactory** overall. Pupils' ideas are sought, with **good** attention paid to their views. Induction procedures are **good**. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety are **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and areas for development

- Pupils who are unwell, or experiencing personal difficulties, feel able to get help and are particularly well supported.
- Induction arrangements are good for all children and pupils.
- Positive action is taken in considering pupils' views.

### Commentary

25. Pupils receive good care and attention, enhanced by the very good relationships. This enables them to get help easily and with confidence. Pupils who are unwell or having difficulties, are cherished, well supported and helped to feel, or do, better. The school has a simple, yet innovative, termly recording system for monitoring minor accidents. If there are any emerging patterns, they can be dealt with quickly.
26. Induction arrangements are good. In the Foundation Stage, a well-established programme involves pre-school visits and sharing information. Children begin school at different times and their parents are initially expected to stay with them. For example, during the inspection, new children were admitted and parents chatted to staff informally, as the children explored their surroundings. Pupils arriving at other times are provided with a 'buddy' to help them 'find their feet'. Teachers watch to see if there are any difficulties. This is particularly important for pupils with special educational needs, or with a home language other than English. These procedures work well so that, after a very short time, most children settle quickly and some even forget to say 'goodbye' to their parents because they are so involved with play!
27. Good attention is given to seeking pupils' views. The school council provides a good forum for debate and involvement in school decisions. Pupils are elected by vote, tackling their duties with maturity. Members organise their own meetings, attended by the headteacher, with pupils acting as 'chair' and 'secretary'. Minutes are thorough with progress on current issues reported back to classes. Recent developments included the council having a budget to buy small play equipment for break times. This money was spent sensibly on items such as 'hula hoops' and soft balls, and pupils are currently considering the development of a 'Peace Garden' for quiet moments. School council members are pleased that the youngest pupils will soon join so that they can have a formal say in the school. Staff take time to listen to pupils individually, resolve any worries and act on good ideas.
28. Arrangements for health, safety and child protection are satisfactory. The school has a child protection policy and staff are qualified, with more training planned when local authority courses take place. The school participates in the 'Stranger Danger' school alert system, run by the local police force. There is an appropriate health and safety policy, which staff can access.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** partnerships with parents, who give much positive support. Parents are pleased with the way that the school works to educate their children. Community links, including those with other schools, are satisfactory. The quality of information that parents receive is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and areas for development

- The partnerships with parents, including the Friends Association, are good.
- The school involves parents well in its plans for improvement.
- Annual pupil reports provide no overall targets for improvement, as was noted in the last inspection report. There is no space for pupils to comment on their own progress.
- The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents do not meet requirements.

### Commentary

29. The school enjoys a positive partnership with parents, who are keenly interested in their children's education. Parents receive a warm and friendly welcome when they visit, reflecting the nature of the school. Several parents give their free time helping in classes, mostly with younger children and pupils. The reception class staff are encouraging new parents to get involved, by using their skills, such as in music. Parents appreciate the need for the school to get police checks completed. More parents help out on trips or attend school functions, including those organised by the very successful Friends Association. Their fundraising efforts provided the school with an additional £9,000 last year, with some of the money being spent on computer equipment. Events such as the Murder Mystery Evening were much enjoyed.
30. Parental opinion is valued. There is regular consultation and questionnaires on parents' views. Parents were involved in the development of 'The Studio' computer suite from design to completion, being invited to the formal opening ceremony. They have been asked about annual pupil reports and what they like and dislike about the school. Currently views are being sought on the development of the accommodation and the outside curriculum.
31. Pupil reports meet requirements. However, pupils have no opportunities to write about their progress over the year and the reports do not provide them with overall targets to help progress; this was noted in the last inspection report. For example, some reports are too impersonal and bland, not reflecting pupil individuality, with comments that are brief and general, particularly in the foundation subjects. Parents are able to discuss their children's progress at well-attended meetings and this helps them to understand how well their children are doing. However, the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not provide enough information on specific areas such as the provision for special educational needs.
32. The school's reputation in the local community is very good and staff are looking forward to extending the links through the Haringey network for learning. Pupils go on to many different secondary schools, which makes close links difficult. Nevertheless, the transfer arrangements are suitable.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides good leadership but the leadership of some key staff, although satisfactory, is less well developed. Governance is good.

### Main strengths and areas for development.

- The good and caring leadership of the headteacher is supporting and motivating teachers.
- The new senior management team is committed to raising standards.



- The governing body is well organised and has a clear focus on raising standards.
- The leadership of some key staff is less well developed.
- Finances are not firmly linked to the school improvement plan.

## Commentary

33. The headteacher was in post at the time of the last inspection. She is a strong and effective leader, who has concentrated well upon standards and improved monitoring, and has liaised well with the local education authority and link advisors. She has a vision for the future of the school and is determined that its aims of an excellent quality education and high standards for the pupils will be achieved. As a result, there is a good focus on promoting achievement, especially of the most capable pupils in mathematics and science. The headteacher promotes a caring, supportive and ordered environment in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to contribute to the life of the school. Daily administrative routines are well established and adhered to, which provides stability within the school. Staff turnover has been high in the last two years and the headteacher has managed this well and been well supported by the governors. The appointment of a new deputy head, who taught at the school previously and therefore has a good understanding of it, is a key factor in raising standards further and in establishing a stable staff. She has adapted quickly to her role and is already helping to raise standards. As a result, the high standards seen in the school have been maintained and compare well with those of similar schools.
34. The subject co-ordinators are positive and hard working, although due to the staff turnover some are not yet carrying out their roles effectively enough. There are good systems for monitoring performance data and teachers' planning but insufficient attention is paid to evaluating the quality of teaching during lessons, except in science. Therefore, variations in the quality of teaching have not been identified and examples of good practice have not been shared. Co-ordinators are not given opportunities to develop their subjects fully. They do not set budgets, and are unsure of how much value for money their subject provides, when providing teaching resources to help pupils improve.
35. Management planning has improved since the last inspection. The school improvement plan is a good working document that is linked clearly to the school's Roman Catholic status and with the local community and parish. It details three key priorities for 2003/4: the development of the school's grounds for learning through the landscape; the leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy head; and the establishment of a register of gifted and talented pupils. Each area of the curriculum has detailed priorities that are clearly set out and have specific targets. Its one weakness is not being linked closely enough to school finances. Therefore, it is difficult to assess expenditure in relation to school development.
36. There is now an effective system in place for the appraisal and performance management of teachers, and staff are supportive. This is an improvement since the last inspection when this was a key issue. Teachers are very aware of the priorities and are fully committed to them.
37. Governors are fully committed and very supportive of the school and they carry out their duties efficiently. They are committed to the principles of inclusion and raising achievement, key elements of the vision of the headteacher. They are well organised and improve their own performance through appropriate training. For example, all governors had received training in preparation for the inspection. Since the last inspection, they have linked their own training to the school improvement plan. The governors and co-ordinators conferences held each year are a key way of providing information on the development of each subject being taught. Governors are willing to challenge and debate with staff at the school. They therefore have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development, and have a significant strategic influence on leading the school's development, with a clear focus on raising standards and improving the quality of provision. Since the last inspection, they have managed grants effectively to provide a computer suite and a new school roof, and replace the boiler. They are working on a feasibility plan for moving the reception class closer to the nursery unit, which would allow for the outdoor curriculum to be developed. They have identified delegating more

responsibility to subject co-ordinators and a focus on teaching the more able pupils as areas for development. The governors are aware that the school prospectus and the annual report to parents do not meet with statutory requirements, and are planning to address this issue.

38. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements. It is some considerable time since the local authority carried out a financial audit and therefore governors cannot easily assure themselves that all procedures are followed correctly. Nevertheless, the inspection evidence indicates that suitable procedures are in place but, without audit documents, no comment can be made on whether procedures meet requirements.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	731,059.49
Total expenditure	723,046.12
Expenditure per pupil	3,038

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	10,000
Balance carried forward to the next	8,013

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Children enter the nursery in the September following their third birthday, and the reception class following their fourth. There is a good induction process that ensures children settle happily and feel secure in their new environments. Parents feel welcome in both classes. The curriculum offered is good in terms of balance between adult and child selected activities, particularly in the reception class.

The two classes are well staffed and the teachers and support staff work well together. There are some deficiencies in the provision for outdoor play for reception class children with, for example, no large climbing equipment available. The school has initiated a useful plan to reorganise and structure the facilities to enable the nursery and reception classes to be closer together and run as a unit for these young children that will facilitate the provision of suitable equipment to support all areas of physical development.

The management of the Foundation Stage is good because the co-ordinator is well aware of the principles that should underpin a good early years curriculum. Teaching is good in the reception class and effective support is given to the newly qualified teacher in the nursery. The nursery teacher has made a sound start to her career.

Regular assessment plays an important part in the school day, particularly in reception. Both the teachers and the assistants note any significant strengths or areas for development in children's performance to help plan activities. This enables children to achieve well and make good progress.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Children do better than is usually expected for their age.
- Children are polite and well behaved.
- They make good progress in this aspect of their development.
- Adults provide good role models.
- Opportunities are given for developing independence.

#### **Commentary**

39. The new entrants into the nursery are effectively helped to work and play together and quickly learn to share and take turns. In the reception class, children concentrate well in teacher directed sessions and spend sustained periods on tasks they have chosen themselves. Adults in both classes provide good role models for children and treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. The intake of children is staggered and still not complete. At this early time in a new school year, children are settling well into their new environments.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Children have well-developed skills in speaking and listening.

- Adults interact well with children.
- Good provision is made for imaginative role-play.
- Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to develop writing skills.

### **Commentary**

40. The teachers and assistants involve children successfully in conversations, and this helps them to increase their skills well and take an interest in their surroundings. For example, in the nursery, the teacher enlivened the interaction with plenty of discussions about a new baby expected in a family. Reception-aged children converse clearly with each other and adults, mostly using full sentences, and they are successful when making marks on paper to recall the story they have been told.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Teaching and learning are very good in the reception class.
- Many reception children achieve well and exceed the expected standards.

### **Commentary**

41. The very good teaching in the reception class has a positive effect on children's learning, which is rapid as they extend their knowledge of the numbers 1 to 5 in songs. They achieve well when counting up and back to nine, and sometimes beyond, with the most capable counting to 21 confidently. Opportunities are used well to consolidate children's understanding of number throughout the day.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

No specific sessions were seen in the nursery or reception classes during the inspection and activities related to this area were of brief duration. As a result, a secure judgement on teaching is not possible. Children in the nursery showed good interest in the teacher's demonstration of using a juicer. The opportunity was also used to introduce associated vocabulary. Children in the reception class named their facial features confidently as they drew their faces for the cover of a book. Judged on a scrutiny of last year's books, it is clear that children make good progress during their time in the reception class.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Children use pencils and tools with increasing dexterity.
- Children in the reception class demonstrate confident skills on tricycles and scooters.
- There are no large pieces of apparatus, such as a climbing frame, on which children can practise their physical skills.

### **Commentary**

42. Throughout the day, children in both the nursery and reception classes have a wide range of opportunities to develop the finer skills of using pencils, crayons or paints. The majority of reception children show sound pencil control when drawing or writing by mark making. Children

enter the nursery with the expected level of physical skills that enable them to use the resources. Reception children move freely with pleasure and confidence when using outdoor equipment. For example, they adjust speed and confidently change direction when demonstrating good strong movements to peddle tricycles and push scooters.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

A secure judgement on teaching in this area is not possible as no specific activities were seen during the inspection. The opportunity for children to paint and use construction materials is freely available in both classes and used regularly as one of their choice activities. Adults successfully support children's creative skills through participating in their role-play, so learning is suitably extended.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

*English was inspected in detail. French lessons and pupils' work in Years 4 and 5 were sampled.*

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- The high standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
- Teaching is often good and sometimes very good.
- Pupils' literacy skills are developed well through subjects other than English.
- Support staff are deployed well to help improve standards.
- Marking does not identify what pupils need to do next to improve.
- The subject co-ordinator has not been given opportunities to fully develop her role.

#### **Commentary**

43. Pupils attain good standards by the time they reach Year 6 and most achieve well. Throughout the school the teaching of reading is well organised and managed. In the infant classes, teachers give attention to teaching the letter sounds and patterns in a stimulating way. For example, a teacher in a Year 1 class used a hand puppet to teach letter sounds, and pupils spotted the deliberate mistakes the puppet made. By doing this, they learnt the correct pronunciation and letter forms. Pupils with special educational needs achieved well during the lesson. They were supported well by teaching assistants. They were able to identify the letter sounds correctly at the beginning and end of words. In Year 2, most pupils can locate information in non-fiction books using their knowledge of the alphabet. For example, they locate books on the human body in the library and use the index to find the correct page for information about human lungs. By Year 6, the more capable pupils use a thesaurus well. Most use dictionaries effectively. They are interested in reading and fascinated how authors use words for effect in horror stories. However, missed opportunities limit reading at times; for example, when the more capable pupils are not encouraged to choose from a wider range of their own choice.
44. The good teaching has meant that there has been sound development of writing skills in both the infant and the junior classes. A teacher in a Year 2 class gave a very good lesson on how to write a simple story. The pupils attempted the tasks set in small steps, looking at how to write the beginning, middle and end of a story. As a result, all pupils achieved well during the lesson. They were able to place a capital letter and full stop accurately. By Year 6 pupils are writing about their opinions on authors and texts, such as 'Harry Potter'. Teaching assistants are well deployed during lessons and work in close harmony with the teachers. This ensures that pupils

with special educational needs achieve well, as seen in Year 3 when pupils traced the words on a shape poem entitled 'The Winding River'. However, the quality of marking is too variable because, although teachers mark work regularly, they do not give enough advice about what pupils need to do next to improve.

45. The teachers are alert to developing pupils' literacy skills through subjects other than English. For example, in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to discuss and extend their knowledge of texture and the shape of seashells by using challenging questions and prompts. This led to good achievement in the use of adjectives to describe shells as 'spiky' and 'scratchy'. In Year 4, pupils have written moving accounts after listening to 'Night on Bare Mountain' by Mussorgsky:

*'...Thoughts kept going through my head. Run fast, don't stop, run down the steep rock. Mountain bumpy, heart thumpy. Help me someone. Help me!'*

46. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, works hard and has a clear view of the strengths and needs of the subject. Assessment procedures are used well, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Recently, pupils' achievement in spelling has been improved by the introduction of the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme. Successful work has been carried out to extend pupils' skills in the infant and junior classes and handwriting is now taught systematically throughout the school, which has raised standards. However, the co-ordinator has not had enough time to observe lessons on a regular basis, particularly in the junior classes, and there are too few opportunities to share best practice. As she has not been required to evaluate provision on a financial basis, she has not been able to plan or review development effectively.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

47. Throughout the school staff work hard to ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills of speaking and listening. In Year 1, pupils are given time to share their news. In Year 2, they are given time to predict what happens in stories they are told and the teacher asks questions to extend what they say. A teacher in Year 6 prepared the class well before watching a video by insisting on attentive attitudes.

### **Modern foreign languages**

Provision in French is **good**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of learning.

### **Commentary**

48. French is taught well. The inspection findings show that the specialist language teacher from a local secondary school, who teaches pupils weekly in Years 4, 5 and 6, provides good opportunities for them to learn a second language. As a result of the very good teaching and learning, the pupils display secure knowledge of basic French vocabulary and are able to extend their learning well during practical activities. They practise pronunciation by copying simple words and phrases, using them to make short questions requiring three or four-word answers. They repeat and devise simple sentences, and record them in written form. They recognise that nouns have a masculine or feminine gender. Pupils acquire a feeling for the rhythm of the language by learning rhymes and many count accurately up to 30 and beyond.

49. The good curriculum has been developed especially for pupils learning French as a foreign language. As they follow the scheme of work, pupils develop good knowledge of the culture that in turn enhances their interest in the subject. The teacher makes sure that pupils are challenged well to answer questions individually and repeat phrases so that they are learnt by heart and thus, pupils begin to develop a real confidence in speaking the language. She has built up good working relationship with the pupils, all of whom enjoy their lessons, and her questioning is used very effectively to determine pupils' levels of knowledge and to lead them towards new learning. Her explanations of grammar are very clear, and well understood. This leads to good achievement amongst all groups of pupils and lessons are well-focused and briskly paced. Learning makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development because many of the activities require them to work with a partner and their self-esteem and confidence grow as they become more fluent. Pupils pursue their foreign language skills when they transfer to secondary school and this continuity is enhanced by their good preparation for the next stage of learning in the juniors.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Standards are above national averages overall.
- Number work and mental calculation are particular strengths.
- Mathematics across the curriculum is good.
- Pupils in the infants and juniors achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good in the infant classes.
- Teachers do not plan sufficiently well for pupils of differing abilities.
- Marking is unsatisfactory.
- The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning is an area for development.

### **Commentary**

50. Standards in the infant classes are above national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 can successfully answer questions such as  $16 + ? = 20$ . Most can add three numbers below 20 in their heads. Less capable pupils can add three numbers below ten, with the aid of a number line, but find it difficult to do so mentally. More capable pupils are beginning to apply their knowledge to more complex problems such as 'How many ways can you score six?' and 'What is the highest score you can get with three bean bags?'. Pupils were able to discuss their strategies for working out confidently, the majority having quick recall of all number bonds to ten, saying, for example, 'I just know  $6+4$  is 10' and ' $10 + 7$  must be 17'. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and boys and girls perform equally as well.

51. Standards in junior classes are above the national expectations overall. Number work and pupils' ability to perform mental calculations are strengths. The inspection found that the standard of work in pupils' books is above expectations but the level of some work in lessons was broadly average. However, in discussion, pupils' knowledge and understanding clearly indicated above average standards, especially taking account of the early timing of the inspection in the academic year. In Year 6, pupils know and understand the terms 'factor', 'multiple' and 'prime'. They use their knowledge of tables and doubling to find the factors of 72. They mentally double numbers such as 288 and use doubling as a strategy to work out problems such as  $5 \times 36$ . Less capable pupils use quick recall to find all the factors of 24 and can successfully repeatedly double 12. More capable pupils know that half of 9 is 4.5 and can use a range of strategies to work out problems involving multiplication, division, addition and subtraction.

52. Achievement in infant and junior classes is good and pupils make good progress. In Year 2, they begin by using their mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10, but by the end of the key stage they can calculate  $5 \times 6$  by counting an array of dots, work out half of £1.30 and can round three digit numbers to the nearest 100. Pupils in Year 3 can count accurately in 10s and 100s from any given number, including crossing over the hundred and thousand boundaries. Year 4 pupils are able to add mentally £1.70 and 65p, and multiply £1.70 by three. In Year 5, pupils use partitioning to successfully double and halve numbers such as 670 and 890, with more capable pupils able to do this mentally. By Year 6, pupils are confident with multiplication facts; they know how many sevens there are in 49 and can repeatedly double numbers such as 26 and 72 mentally.
53. Teaching and learning in infant classes are good. Teaching and learning in junior classes are more variable, being satisfactory or better, and satisfactory overall. Pupils in most lessons are attentive, sustain concentration and work well at independent tasks. All teachers' plans identify clear aims for learning. They use a good range of teaching methods and resources to interest all pupils. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of number and most teachers use the beginning of the lesson to rehearse number facts and keep pupils' use of mental strategies sharp, as described above. There are a number of common features in the better lessons, which have a positive impact on pupils' learning outcomes. Teachers make good use of questions to enable pupils to explain their ways of calculation and maintain a brisk pace. For example, 'How did you work that out?', 'What made you do it that way?', and 'Is there another way?'. Teachers give clear instructions and provide motivating activities that meet the different pupils' abilities, ages and interests well. In Year 2 and Year 3, rhythms and visual clues were used very effectively to motivate and capture pupils' attention. Teachers used praise and encouragement, which had the effect of raising pupils' interest, confidence and enthusiasm. Most pupils make good progress and the less capable are well supported by knowledgeable support staff. Teachers demonstrate a very effective range of behaviour management strategies, which leads to all children maintaining their concentration. For example, the teacher named a Year 4 pupil, saying 'P..., I'm looking at you now and I'm going to ask you a question'. In Year 5, the teacher used a clapping pattern to refocus attention. In the best lessons, all pupils are sufficiently challenged and supported by teachers and support staff, enabling them to achieve well. The teacher assesses pupils' understanding throughout the lesson and uses the plenary well to address misconceptions and consolidate learning.
54. When teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, a common feature was the lack of planning for different abilities in the class and limited behaviour management strategies. At this early stage in the academic year, some teachers in the juniors have not used assessment information to support their weekly planning for all ability levels. This has the effect of slowing the rate of progress of the more able pupils in particular, limiting achievement. When teachers did not insist on high standards of behaviour, there was some lack of attention; the pace of the lesson slowed and pupils' progress was limited. In addition, the structure of the lesson was not balanced; insufficient time was given to the main learning objective, pupils were left with insufficient time to apply their learning and/or the plenary was curtailed. In both infants and juniors, the marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. The majority of marking is a series of ticks with no indication of what pupils need to do to improve. This is an area for development.
55. Leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The new co-ordinator has a clear picture of standards in the school after analysing test papers and identifying areas for improvement. She has introduced a new scheme but not had time to monitor teaching and learning thoroughly. This has led to a few gaps in provision when teachers do not plan well enough for pupils of different abilities because, although there are appropriate assessment procedures, the information is not used rigorously.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. Mathematics is well developed across the curriculum and the school has plans to improve this further, particularly in data handling. Numeracy skills are taught well and rehearsed frequently.



Pupils devise a range of tables and graphs in science and geography, using computers to present their information. Pattern and shape are explored through art and design, and the emphasis on mathematical language makes a positive contribution to pupils' literacy skills.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and areas for development

- Standards are good by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The majority of pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good for pupils in the infant classes.
- Very detailed analyses of national tests are used well to assist planning.
- Marking is not used well enough to guide teaching and learning.
- Planning for the most capable pupils is inconsistent.
- Computers are not used enough to support learning.

### Commentary

57. Standards are good and pupils achieve well. This is a similar finding to that of the last inspection. Overall, pupils' knowledge and understanding is good. However, the high turnover of teaching staff has resulted in the school adopting a much more focused approach than previously to an investigative and questioning approach to science, interweaving this into other aspects of the subject. Examination of pupils' work and discussions with them showed that, by Year 6, pupils' investigative skills are not completely secure. Pupils carry out a suitable amount of practical work but too many teachers direct this work too much with too few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, understanding and investigative skills to questions they have raised for themselves.
58. Teaching and learning are good for pupils in the infant classes. They are satisfactory in the juniors and sometimes very good when precise technical vocabulary is used to support and challenge pupils' understanding. However, the lack of planning to challenge the full range of ability in classes, particularly the most capable, means that often the other good aspects of teaching do not have the maximum effect. Nevertheless, pupils' work is well presented and marked, although marking does not often guide learning forward. There is not enough evidence across the school of pupils using computers to support their work but pupils with special educational needs receive good support from their teachers and support staff to ensure they understand the tasks.
59. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject. She has started to monitor the teaching of investigative science and identified the need for more opportunities for pupils to develop the ability to work independently, as well as to develop teachers' use of technical vocabulary and questioning techniques, in order to raise standards.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and areas for development

- The new computer suite has been of great benefit to pupils.
- A few technical difficulties have limited the development of the subject.

### Commentary

60. Standards match the national expectations across the school and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 can organise and classify information in the context of eye colour, presenting their work in graphical form. They can enter, save and retrieve their work. They use text, tables and pictures. They speak confidently about what they are doing and demonstrate good control

of the mouse. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils plan for data collection and use computers well to present information in different forms. For example, they add text to a picture accessed on the Internet in their history studies, and some use a graphics package combining and manipulating objects to create a plan of a theme park. Technical difficulties with the network and the computers has limited pupils' progress in Internet-based skills. However, there has been a successful geography project involving Internet-based research and e-mail contact with a European school. Computers have also been used well to improve the communication skills of a group of junior-aged pupils with special educational needs.

61. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Experienced teaching assistants carry out much of the teaching in the computer suite. Plans have clear learning objectives and staff work hard to provide a motivating and relevant context for the pupils' learning. For example, Year 6 pupils are planning a theme park for their studies that will include spreadsheets. Pupils are supported well during lessons and explanations are clear. The facility for teachers to demonstrate skills using the network is currently unavailable, slowing the pace of learning, as they have to use other methods. Computers are used increasingly well to support other subjects of the curriculum.
62. The new co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management, and is receiving training for this role. There have been significant developments over the past two years, including much improvement in the access for pupils, the appointment of specialist teaching assistants, the implementation of the scheme of work and assessment systems. However, these initiatives are relatively new and have yet to raise standards further.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

63. Computers are used appropriately to support learning across the curriculum. Although there have been difficulties attributed to staff changes and the disruption to teaching whilst the suite was being installed, together with ongoing problems encountered with the new network, the plans for future developments are appropriate.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography and History**

Provision for geography and history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has begun monitoring activities.
- Planning does not give clear learning objectives or take enough account of pupils' abilities.

### **Commentary**

64. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has drawn up a long-term plan that combines units of work. Over the course of a year, pupils spend sufficient time on both subjects. The scheme of work gives details of each unit and supports teachers in the next stage of planning. However, teachers' termly and weekly plans focus on activities that the pupils will do, rather than on what they will learn. Teachers do not plan learning activities that take sufficient account of the different abilities of pupils in their class. Pupils have been involved in the European Link project that has developed computer skills, as well as an understanding of their link school. Visits to environmental centres, the British Museum, Verulamium (St Alban's), the Victorian School at Hitchin and local gardens further enhance the curriculum. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans but has not had opportunities to undertake the full monitoring of teaching and learning. This is an area for further development. The school makes good use of the library loan service and there are appropriate sets of atlases. However, geographical resources for map work are inadequate. An exciting project to develop the grounds as a cross-curricular study area is planned for 2003-4, and staff and pupils have already received training in

orienteeing skills. The school's basic history resources are supplemented by funds from the parent-teacher association and through the library-museum loan service.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Standards are good.
- The detailed new scheme of work supports teachers well in their planning.
- Very good displays are a feature throughout the school.
- Assessment procedures are not developed fully.

#### **Commentary**

65. Standards are good and pupils achieve well. The recently produced scheme of work has been used effectively to raise standards and the co-ordinator has recently reviewed the school's policy, which is now directly linked to the scheme. As a result, pupils do well; for example, in Year 1, pupils examined shells in preparation for observational drawings and making paper and plasticine sculptures. The aim of the lesson was to give them the opportunity to explore a variety of habitats as a starting point and gain inspiration for their own sculptures. Topics often link well with design and technology, geography and science, and make good use of the work of famous people by focusing on photographs of sculptures by artists such as Barbara Hepworth.
66. As a result of some very good teaching and support given by the teaching assistants, the pupils produced sketches and paper sculptures of high quality. In discussion some Year 6 pupils showed sound knowledge of primary, secondary and tertiary colours and were able to identify examples in the paintings of Tom Schulten. All work seen in the very good displays throughout the school was of a high standard and demonstrated that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop the use of a variety of media, including paint, pastel and crayon. Year 1 pupils have painted patterns in watercolour based on the work of Paul Klee. Year 2 pupils have produced some 'wax resist' pictures of trucks. Pupils in all of the junior classes have designed and effectively coloured pastel 'euros' for a 'Design the Euro' competition. The schools' procedures for assessment are currently unsatisfactory but staff acknowledge this as an area for improvement. Pupil assessment profiles are noted for development this year.

### **Design and technology**

67. Design and technology was not a major focus of the inspection. No lessons were seen or work scrutinised. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, learning and standards. The co-ordinator has recently left the school and a replacement has not been found. A priority in the school improvement plan is a review of the present policy and scheme of work but opportunities are being lost to further develop this subject.

### **Music**

68. Only one lesson was seen and it is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has produced a useful music policy and scheme of work, and she takes classes for singing and percussion on a regular basis. These are enriched by workshops, and pupils have worked with performers of the BBC concert orchestra preparing a performance on the theme of 'The Planets'. For example, pupils in Year 1 prepared a dance drama, whilst pupils in Year 2 composed a percussion piece entitled 'The Ice Maiden'. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 used wood chimes and xylophones when producing an

atmospheric piece on volcanoes, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 sent scary musical messages, using violins, clarinets and wind instruments! Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to perform at the Christmas celebrations each year and this helps them to extend their performing skills. In the lesson observed, the teacher's clear explanations ensured that pupils in Year 4 had a good understanding of the terms 'stave', 'bass' and 'treble clef'. The most capable identified correctly that a thick line on the end of a stave symbolises a repeat. Pupils sing in tune and with enjoyment. They are encouraged to follow instructions; for example, to sing with greater or less volume and to maintain a steady pulse. All pupils are able to clap to both simple and complex repeated patterns. There are plans to review and update the assessment procedures for the monitoring and recording of pupil progress.

## **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and areas for development**

- Standards exceed national expectations in Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well.
- Consistently good specialist teaching enables pupils to make good progress.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
- The school's award schemes motivate and interest pupils.
- Management of the subject is very good.

### **Commentary**

69. Pupils in Year 2 make very good progress in dance because they are taught very well. The specialist teacher conducted a very well-planned session that successfully built on pupils' skills of movement and evaluation. At this early time in the school year, pupils demonstrate the ability to sustain movement over an extended period of time. Their movements are well controlled and of good quality. Following an extremely good demonstration of new skills for playing lacrosse, many Year 6 pupils achieve well. Due to the brisk pace, learning is rapid amongst the majority.
70. All classes have the benefit of the very good specialist teaching for one session per week. This gives a firm foundation on which class teachers can build. Very good support through the school's scheme of work and expertise available encourages good quality teaching and learning.
71. The subject has a high profile and contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development because each class has an award to achieve. For example, in Years 1 and 2 an Excellent PE Award to encourage good practice, British Gymnastics Proficiency Awards in place for Years 2 to 6 and First Step Netball Award for Year 4. Last year, all pupils in the school were successful in achieving an award. The annual Health and Fitness week involves expertise in swimming, orienteering, rugby, tennis and first aid. Sponsored charities, such as the British Heart Foundation, are supported successfully through physical activities.
72. Although there is a suitable range of after-school clubs to extend pupils' skills in dance, football and outdoor activities, including orienteering and netball, only netball is free. Nevertheless, the dance club is very well attended. This good provision extends pupils' skills in body control, movement and modern dance sequences. Skills are taught carefully in the netball club and pupils achieve well.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

73. This area was not a major focus of the inspection and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning overall. Nevertheless, it is clear that pupils achieve well overall because their attitudes and behaviour are good. They are very respectful of others and have a very strong understanding of the difference between right and wrong. These strengths are enhanced by the school's very high expectations of pupils' conduct, and the promotion of Christian values and racial harmony.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### Inspection judgement

### Grade

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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

