

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL RC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Pimlico, London

LEA area: City of Westminster

Unique reference number: 101146

Headteacher: Mr J M Hartnett

Lead inspector: Mr P Howlett

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 258380

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:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	191
School address:	Bessborough Place London
Postcode:	SW1V 3SE
Telephone number:	(020) 7641 5915
Fax number:	(020) 7641 6384
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Pilgrim
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school with currently 191 pupils on roll. It serves the two parishes of Westminster Cathedral and the Holy Apostles. Its strongest links are with the Holy Apostles parish, as the majority of pupils live there. The school is surrounded by privately-owned housing, but most pupils live in rented accommodation in four nearby local housing estates. Many pupils come from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds and the proportion entitled to free school meals is just above the national average. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Just over half of the school population are from white UK background, and over a quarter are from other white ethnic groups, mostly European. About ten per cent are English-speaking pupils from ethnic minorities, mostly black Caribbean and African. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language (38 per cent) is very high, mostly Spanish and Portuguese. There is a high proportion (20 per cent) at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs (24 per cent) is above average. Four have a statement of special educational need. The attainment of many pupils on entry to the school is below that typically found nationally.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23744	Mr Peter Howlett	Lead inspector	Mathematics Physical education
9519	Mrs Sue Pritchard	Lay inspector	
3574	Mrs Kawaljit Singh	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Music Design and technology English as an additional language
8440	Mr Stephen Beaumont	Team inspector	English Art and design
2229	Mrs Doreen Hansen	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History Special educational needs.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Westminster Cathedral is a good school.** It provides pupils with a good education and a very positive and supportive ethos underpinned by Christian values and beliefs. Pupils from all backgrounds achieve well because of good teaching and standards are generally as expected by the time pupils leave school. The school is well led and managed. It gives **good value** for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above nationally expected levels in English, music and design and technology by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned.
- Pupils' interest in their work and their behaviour are very good.
- The school's very positive ethos and purposeful learning environment contribute well to pupils' personal and academic progress.
- The school has a strong commitment to inclusion, and the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by staff and governors.
- The school development plan is effective in the short term, but it lacks a longer-term strategic vision for the future development of the whole school.
- The organisation of teaching time is inefficient because lessons are often too long.

**Improvement since the last inspection is good.** Pupils' achievement is better because of improvements in teaching and in the use of assessment information in targeting support where it is most needed. The main points for action in the previous inspection report have been addressed well, notably in the provision made for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language. The school has done its best to improve its accommodation and the governing body has improved the way its committees work.

Care needs to be exercised when considering the national tests results in the table below because of the small number in each year group. However, overall school averages for the past three years in the Year 6 tests were above the national figures in English and in line in mathematics and science. This represents good achievement from their starting points in Reception.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	C	D
mathematics	A	B	D	D
science	A	B	D	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.*

**Pupils achieve well**, given their starting points on entry to the school. Children achieve well in the Reception class. They settle well into school and make good progress, although standards overall are likely to be below those expected by the end of Reception. Pupils continue to do well in Years 1 to 6 because of the good support the school gives to pupils with different learning needs. Pupils with special educational needs, with English as an additional language and from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well. Pupils achieve particularly well in English. By Year 2, standards are in line with those expected and by Year 6 they are above. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science, and standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are as expected in both subjects. Standards are above

expectations in design and technology and music. Standards are as expected in ICT, history, geography and art and design. No overall judgement can be made on overall standards in physical education.

**Pupils' personal development is good.** They are happy at school and show real interest in their work. They work and play well together, behaving very well in class and at playtimes. They show respect for the views of others, a clear sense of right and wrong and a good understanding of life in a multicultural society as a result of the school's good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is good and most pupils are punctual. These personal qualities make an effective contribution to their learning.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **good education** for its pupils. The curriculum offers a good range of well-planned learning opportunities that meet the needs of pupils. **The quality of teaching and learning is good.** Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, music and history. The many positive aspects of teaching that contribute well to pupils' learning include teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour, their very good relationships with them, the effectiveness of their planning and the variety of methods used to meet individual learning needs. However, lessons are often too long and the pace of learning sometimes slackens. There is good support for pupils' personal and academic progress and the procedures for monitoring their progress over time are good overall and very good in English and mathematics. Effective use of information from assessments and good links with parents also help pupils achieve well. Resources are good, but there are some shortcomings in the accommodation that affect pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by an effective deputy headteacher and other staff with key management responsibilities. An effective governing body provides good support and challenge for the school and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. The school has a very positive ethos and commitment to inclusion is very good. The short-term school improvement plan is effective as far as it goes, but does not allow for the longer-term development of initiatives. Finances are managed prudently.

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

Parents hold the school and its management in high regard. They have a very good opinion of nearly all aspects of the school. Pupils' views are also very positive. They feel very supported and know that if they have a problem someone in school will help them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Develop a longer-term and strategic school improvement plan.
- Review the organisation of the school day so that teaching sessions are more productive.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

**Pupils achieve well**, given their starting points on entry to the school. Children achieve well in the Reception class and continue to do so in Years 1 to 6 because of good teaching and the good support the school gives to pupils with different learning needs. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Standards are above expected levels in English, music and design and technology.
- Pupils also achieve well in mathematics and science.
- Standards seen in gymnastics are below those expected.

#### Commentary

##### *Starting school*

1. There is a wide spread of attainment when children join the Reception class, and it varies from year to year. Generally, however, the skills, knowledge and understanding of children entering school are below expectations. A large number of children have little English and many have none. Many children come into the Reception class with no experience of any early years' education.

##### *School's results in national tests*

2. Care needs to be exercised when considering the results in the national tests in any one year because of the small number of pupils involved. In addition, the overall levels of attainment fluctuate from year to year as a result of differing proportions of pupils in each cohort whose mother tongue is not English or who have special educational needs. It is unwise therefore to put too much emphasis on trends in national tests results for the school. For example, the relatively poor results in 2003 were preceded by very good results in 2001 in the Year 6 tests. Statistically these results indicate that overall trends were below the national trend. However, this is misleading as both results were atypical for the school and results to 2002 broadly followed the national trend.
3. The table below shows that in the Year 2 tests in 2003, results were average in reading but below average in writing and mathematics. However, results in 2002 were much better, well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Overall, school averages for the past three years were above the national figures in reading and broadly in line in writing and mathematics.

##### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (17.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.9 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (17.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*



4. In the Year 6 national tests, overall school averages for the past three years were above the national figures in English and in line in mathematics and science. However, the table below shows that in the tests in 2003, results were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. When compared with those for similar schools (schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2), results were below average in English and mathematics and well below in science. The school acknowledges that results for this cohort were disappointing but not surprising. It had identified its concerns about this group of pupils at an early stage and put in place additional support. Its own assessment data indicates that results for most pupils in the tests at Year 6 represented at least satisfactory progress from the Year 2 test results.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (28.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.0 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.6 (28.5)	28.6 (28.3)

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

*Inspection findings*

5. When the children in the current Reception class started school, their attainment was poor in communication, language and literacy (nearly half of the class are at early stages of fluency in English), well below expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and below those expected in other areas of learning. As a result of good teaching, these children are achieving well and overall standards have improved. By the time they leave the Reception, children's attainment is likely to be close to expected levels in all areas except communication, language and literacy, which are still well below expectations and in knowledge and understanding of the world, which remain below expectations.
6. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good. This is a result of good teaching and very effective use of assessment information to target support to where it is most needed. The school has made good efforts to improve the achievement of pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection. These pupils achieve at their individual levels of ability at least as well as their peers. The school has made equally good efforts to improve the achievement of pupils with English as an additional language. With good support from their teachers and teaching assistants from the Reception class onwards, pupils make good progress and achieve well. The children who join the Reception class with little or no English make very good progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are lower than their English-speaking peers, for the obvious reason that they have not yet acquired the appropriate skills in the language. By the end of Year 6, most pupils whose mother tongue is not English attain standards that are similar to those of their peers.
7. Pupils from ethnic minority background who are English speakers are well integrated within the school. They make good progress overall and attain standards similar to those of their peers. Those who have special educational needs are well supported. However, most do not require any support other than that provided for other pupils. School records for the last seven years show that in the Years 2 and 6 national tests pupils' results overall are similar to those of their peers, most achieving at least in line with expected levels, and more-able pupils attaining higher levels. No differences were noted in the performance between boys and girls in lessons during the inspection. There are some sound extension opportunities for gifted and very able pupils, although occasionally more-able pupils are insufficiently challenged in lessons.
8. Pupils achieve particularly well in English because much of the additional support is focused on helping pupils with English as an additional language. By Year 2, standards are in line with

those expected and by Year 6 they are above. However, pupils' skills in getting information from library books are underdeveloped. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science, and standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are as expected in both subjects. Pupils achieve well in design and technology and music to reach standards above those expected. The quality of singing is well above that usually found. Achievement in history, geography and art and design is satisfactory and standards are as expected. Shortcomings in the accommodation are a barrier to higher achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. Achievement is satisfactory in ICT because the school does well to overcome the inadequate ICT suite and teachers make good use of ICT in other subjects. Standards in ICT are as expected in Years 2 and 6. No overall judgement can be made on physical education; standards seen in a games lesson were as expected, but standards seen in gymnastics were below those expected.

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

Pupils' **behaviour is very good** by the time they leave school. They show **very good attitudes** throughout their time in school, have good rates of attendance and are punctual. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good relationships and respect for others are important parts of the school's Christian ethos.
- Assemblies and lessons promote and develop pupils' spiritual and moral development well.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have in school to make friends and socialise.
- The school's good provision results in pupils who have empathy and a good understanding of life in a multicultural society.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils are very happy to come to school and are keen to learn. Children start school with very good attitudes which they retain to both work and play throughout their time there. Their behaviour is good when they start school and very good by the time they leave. Children adapt to not being able to run freely in the restricted space available in the infant playground. By the time they join the junior playground, they have become practised in inventing playground games, as well as in playing some of the old familiar ones.
10. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the sort of personal qualities the school tries hard to promote. Pupils and their individuality are valued. Assembly themes often relate to being part of one big family - 'God's family'. In lessons, teachers identify good opportunities that give pupils space for their own thoughts. Pupils' knowledge of cultures and religions is good. Important festivals and traditions are celebrated. A good range of dual-language books and well-sited notices and displays around the school reflect the languages spoken at home and the distinctive features of other world religions. Visitors to the school and trips out, such as those made to Southwark Cathedral, are well chosen to allow pupils to get a real feel for their own and other cultures.
11. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to put their personal and social skills into practice. They regularly work in groups or pairs to come up with ideas or find solutions to a particular problem. The recently elected school councillors have already come up with some ideas for improving the playground. Extra-curricular projects, such as an exchange of letters with pupils in French, Italian and Portuguese schools, plus their everyday experiences of playing with pupils from different ethnic groups, has resulted in happy, well adjusted children who have empathy and a good understanding of life in a multicultural society. Bullying and racism is rare and a clear moral code forms the basis of their very good behaviour. Inspectors agree with the parents that the school is a harmonious place. Disciplinary measures work well.

12. Most children have good records of attendance and most are punctual. Much has been done to educate parents about how regular attendance and punctuality help children adopt responsible attitudes to work. As a result, the school has managed to alter the trend, evident at the time of the last inspection, of families taking too many holidays during term time.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

No exclusions have been made for many years.

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	98	0	0
White - Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	48	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed- White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British	1	0	0
Black or Black British- Caribbean	8	0	0
Black or Black British-African	6	0	0
Black or Black British- other	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	12	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good education** for its pupils because it offers a good range of well- planned learning opportunities and good teaching that meets the needs of its pupils. Good support for pupils' personal and academic progress, effective use of information from assessments and good links with parents help pupils achieve well. Resources are good but there are some shortcomings in the accommodation that affect pupils' learning.

## Teaching and learning

**The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.** The procedures for checking and tracking pupils' progress over time are good overall and very good in English and mathematics.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good across the school.
- Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, music and history.
- Learning support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good.
- Teachers promote a positive and purposeful ethos for learning that greatly encourages pupils.
- Lessons are well planned and teaching methods are good.
- Systems for monitoring children's progress in the Reception class and pupils' progress in English and mathematics as they move through the school are very good.

**Commentary**

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good, as it was at the last inspection. Moreover, the proportion of good teaching has improved with more than three-quarters of the lessons seen at least good. Teaching is good throughout the school in English, mathematics and science. It is also good in music and history. Teaching in the Reception class is good. All teachers work well together and there are many strengths in teaching that contribute well to pupils' learning. The strong features of teaching throughout the school include teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their very good relationships with them, the effectiveness of their planning and the variety of methods used to meet the individual learning needs of pupils.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (13%)	26 (65%)	9 (22%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. In all classes, teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and foster a purposeful ethos for learning. Teachers know their pupils very well, insist on high standards of behaviour and have high expectations of them. This helps to build very good relationships and helps pupils feel confident about expressing views and opinions. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work hard to ensure that pupils acquire appropriate knowledge and skills. Almost all pupils respond very positively to their teachers' encouragement and this positive learning environment contributes greatly to their good achievement. However, whilst generally teachers maintain a brisk pace in lessons and pupils apply themselves well to their tasks, the pace of learning sometimes slackens because lessons are often too long for pupils to maintain good levels of concentration.
15. Lessons are well planned. Teachers set clear learning objectives and pupils are aware of what is expected of them. Teachers are reflective about their classroom practice. They evaluate well the outcomes of their lessons, assessing how effectively pupils have learnt and use this information in further planning. This means that pupils' new learning builds well upon what they have already learnt and work is generally well matched to their prior levels of attainment. So, for example, the good learning of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is the result of the thorough assessment of their progress used effectively by teachers when planning work.
16. An improvement since the last inspection is that provision in lessons for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is much better planned, and support for their educational needs is more effective, so that their learning is good. The special needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants provide effective and

focused support for the learning of pupils who have special educational needs. However, occasionally, teachers' concern for the learning needs of these pupils results in insufficient challenge for more-able pupils. Teachers use a variety of ways to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language are sufficiently challenged. The support teachers work closely with class teachers and help pupils within classes in English, mathematics and science. Teachers use good questioning, explain key vocabulary well, mime actions, use resources with a strong visual content to ensure that pupils understand what they are required to learn and maintain high expectations of work and behaviour. As a result, pupils successfully complete their work and achieve as well as their peers.

17. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods to stimulate pupils' interest. Their clear explanations, instructions and demonstrations help them with their learning. Effective questioning challenges pupils to think for themselves and involves all of them during whole-class discussions. Teachers help pupils to have a clear understanding about how they can improve by clearly displaying learning targets. They use visual resources well to make learning interesting and make good use of ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. They make effective use of additional adults to help pupils. Teaching assistants know the children well and make a valuable contribution to the quality of their learning, particularly that of lower-attaining pupils. However, sometimes, teaching assistants are not used effectively in the introductory part of lessons.
18. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and are good overall. Detailed and precise assessment of children's educational needs takes place when they are admitted and continues through their time in the school. Procedures for checking and tracking pupils' progress are very good in Reception because they give clear information. Likewise, systems for checking and tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics over the long term are very good. Individual progress is assessed against national benchmarks on a regular basis and the information is used well to set group and individual learning targets. Senior management uses the information from assessments very effectively to monitor the performance of individuals and different groups and to target support for pupils judged not to be making sufficient progress. The teachers plan an effective range of assessments for ICT and science that enable them to track the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils and plan accordingly. Assessments in other subjects are generally satisfactory.
19. The assessment of pupils with English as an additional language is very good. All pupils are assessed. Their stages of language acquisition are determined and recorded and their progress is tracked and monitored against the targets set for raising standards. All data from statutory and optional tests is analysed very well and the school has very good and well-established systems of analysing data according to ethnicity.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides **a good curriculum**. A good range of opportunities contributes well to pupils' learning and achievement. Resources are good but there are some shortcomings in the accommodation that affect pupils' learning.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is broad, and well planned so as to meet pupils' needs.
- There is a good range of clubs and visits to extend opportunities for learning.
- There is good provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language, and for those with special educational needs.
- The school's curriculum reflects other cultures positively and promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- The organisation of teaching is unsatisfactory because it does not make the best use of the time available.
- The hall has shortcomings, limiting its use, especially for physical education.

- Aspects of the scheme of work for personal, health and social education have still to be implemented.

## Commentary

20. The school provides a wide range of teaching and learning opportunities. The Reception teacher plans very well a full range of learning experiences for children based on the national guidelines. Subject co-ordinators have prepared very detailed schemes of work for pupils in Years 1 to 6 which state what is to be taught and when. This helps to ensure that skills are developed in the right order and that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. There are good schemes of work for all National Curriculum subjects. These are updated regularly and, although they are based on national guidance, they have been adapted to meet the needs of the school. All teachers from Reception to Year 6 plan their lessons carefully to make sure that skills are taught which build on pupils' previous experiences, and this helps those of all abilities to make good progress. Although personal, health and social education is taught, a scheme of work which includes sex education and citizenship has not been finalised.
21. The organisation of teaching time is unsatisfactory and inefficient, with some lessons being too long. Several lessons are timetabled to cover periods of well over an hour, and almost all English and mathematics lessons are given in the mornings. This means that there is often not enough variety in the activities that pupils get, and they sometimes become bored with what they are doing. The headteacher accepts that a careful review of timetabling and the organisation of the school day is needed in order to make better use of time.
22. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities during the year, covering sport, creative, environmental, community and artistic activities. All classes have good opportunities to visit places of interest, and pupils enjoy visitors who come into the school, and this makes their learning come alive. Good arrangements are made to extend learning through clubs and other after school-activities. The school provides a wide range of activities, including team sports, fencing, choir, French and gymnastics. The residential visit for Year 6 pupils to a field centre has a very positive effect on their social development.
23. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and this means that they all have good opportunities for learning. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection, notably in the provision made for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language. The school manages a range of special educational needs well and particular care is given to supporting pupils' self-esteem and social development. The support for these pupils is good and additional strategies support well the needs of the less able in the basic skills of English and mathematics. Staff who speak different languages provide good support for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. There are sound opportunities for gifted and very able pupils from Year 6 to attend extension classes at the Isaac Newton Centre on some Saturday mornings.
24. The school's curriculum reflects other cultures positively, adding to the confidence and self-esteem of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language. For instance, there are plans to introduce the teaching of Spanish, reflecting the school's intake, to pupils in Years 5 and 6. There are many notices, signs and books in other languages to show that the school values other cultures and languages. Pupils get good opportunities to gain confidence about other cultures through assemblies, celebrations of Black History Month, history, music and art. Teachers' positive acceptance of a diversity of languages in their classes adds significantly to their bilingual pupils' ease, who, as a result, are confident and proud of their command of more than one language.
25. There are sufficient teachers and a high number of teaching assistants. These work well together and have a positive effect on pupils' achievement. However, the deployment of teaching assistants is not always maximised. Sometimes, when they are used to support the

learning of specific pupils, there are missed opportunities to include other pupils who could benefit from extra support. There are enough teaching resources available for all subjects, and these are used well. There has been a notable increase in the number of computers available to support pupils' learning.

26. Accommodation is satisfactory and has been improved since the last inspection, notably in providing a small-group teaching room and extending the library/ICT suite. However, there are still limitations. The hall is a thoroughfare, and this interrupts some activities. It is used to store tables and chairs, which restricts the space available for physical education lessons. There is no attached covered area for the Reception class.

### **Care, guidance and support**

**The arrangements for pupils' care, health and safety are good.** The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring pupils' needs is also good. The school takes good account of pupils' views.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good and trusting relationships with adults in school.
- Health, safety and child protection issues are dealt with efficiently by vigilant staff.
- Well-targeted support is given to pupils through careful observation of their needs.

### **Commentary**

27. The school provides a caring and supportive environment for its pupils. Teachers and support staff talk enthusiastically about their pupils and exercise a high degree of patience and goodwill in their dealings with them. They call on a wide range of persuasive and supportive tactics, chosen wisely to meet the needs of the children. This has a noticeable and positive impact on the pupils' personal development.
28. The school takes good care to ensure that every pupil, regardless of age, gender or ability, has regular opportunities to enjoy responsibility and to understand the merits of it. This results in pupils who are proud of their school and like being part of it. The school has begun to consult pupils on ways of improving it. School councillors have made sensible suggestions on developing the playground and raising money for charitable appeals. Lessons often pick up on themes explored in assemblies that invariably promote a sense of belonging and place in a caring and Catholic community. The school recognises the need to enhance aspects of pupils' understanding of personal, social and health issues.
29. Child protection procedures are well known to staff and carefully monitored in the first instance by the headteacher, who has good contacts and is well versed in local procedures. First-aid arrangements are good. Pupils are reassured by the presence of well-trained staff, who deal calmly and efficiently with accidents and injuries. The measures taken to promote pupils' health and safety are good. Staff and governors work very hard to eliminate risks as soon as they are found. The school views all incidents of racism or bullying as reportable and works to eliminate intolerance.
30. The school has good ways of checking and recording how well pupils are doing in most subjects. The information gained from monitoring progress is used effectively to provide suitably challenging yet realistic targeted support for individual pupils. As a result, pupils know what they have to do to achieve better standards and those with special educational needs receive good support. Their learning, social and emotional needs are clearly identified and addressed at an early stage. Their day-to-day care is well managed. The content of individual education plans and regular reviews of pupils' progress are very focused and designed to support improved attainment.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's **partnership with parents is good**. Parents hold the school in high regard. Links with the local community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents receive very good information about the school and what it provides.
- Links with the community broaden pupils' experience of other cultures.
- Links with other schools, through local initiatives, are good.
- Few parents volunteer to help in and around the school on a routine basis.

### **Commentary**

31. Most parents are very supportive of the school. They praise almost all aspects of the school but are particularly impressed by the attention teachers give to meeting the needs of individual children. Parents see this as a major contribution to the good progress children make. The inspection evidence supports their views on this.
32. The quality of the information for parents has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. A climate of trust is built up from parents' first contact with the school. Parents feel that they have no problem getting their views across to staff and feel pleased with the response they receive. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve communications between the school and the parents of those pupils with special educational needs. These parents receive good advice on the support systems available to them and their children. This sensitive approach also ensures that the school enlists the co-operation of parents in finding and providing the right level of support for pupils with English as an additional language. The school makes every effort to involve the parents of these pupils. Staff and parents who can speak more than one language help with interpreting. The home-school agreement and the school brochure are translated into Spanish and Portuguese.
33. Parents feel confident that the school assesses their children's progress accurately. They form this opinion from good information at consultation evenings and in the written reports, where targets provide guidance on the next step forward. Comments made by teachers recognise the good contribution parents make to children's learning. Other activities are well chosen to promote parental interest and support. For example, with help from parents, pupils won a trophy for daffodil growing, awarded by the London Children's Flower Show Society.
34. The school is well thought of by the local community. Parents recommend it to their friends, and many new families are introduced this way. Pupils come into contact with many caring people from the local community through their involvement in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Using his good connections, the headteacher has linked the school with an extensive network of local and European schools. This helps broaden both staff and pupils' knowledge of schools and the different ways things are done. Teachers have good opportunities to take part in joint training sessions, and pupils are able to build up good relationships with staff and pupils from other schools, helping them transfer with confidence to the next stage of their education. Despite the warm encouragement they receive, few parents are currently involved in the daily life of the school. Many only come into school for events which directly involve their own children. Not enough parents help the hardworking core of volunteers who run the Friends Association. Money raised by their events increases resources for the benefit of all pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are good**. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by an effective deputy headteacher and other staff. The governance of the school is good. The school gives good value for money.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**



- The strong partnership of headteacher and deputy headteacher provides effective educational leadership for the school.
- The school has a very positive ethos, and commitment to inclusion is very good.
- Teamwork is good, with all staff working well together for the benefit of the pupils.
- The governing body makes a valuable contribution to the leadership of the school.
- The school has effective procedures to check how well it is doing. In particular, it makes very effective use of assessment data to monitor the performance of different groups and individuals.
- The school has a clear agenda for improvement but it does not have a longer-term strategic plan.

## Commentary

35. The headteacher is providing good leadership, as he was when the school was last inspected. He provides a clear sense of purpose and direction and has high expectations of pupils' personal and academic development. He is firmly committed to running an equitable and inclusive school where each individual matters, and this is evident in the care which is taken to support staff and all pupils. He is held in high regard by staff, governors and parents. Parents and pupils appreciate the family atmosphere, the warm and harmonious relationships and the Christian values that permeate the life of the school. They believe that the school is well led and managed. All the staff work well together for the benefit of the pupils. They support the aims of the school and show good commitment to improving pupils' achievement and contributing to the school's very good ethos.
36. There is clear commitment to supporting and promoting the wellbeing of all, identifying and supporting the learning needs of different groups and ensuring that the more vulnerable are well looked after. Careful attention is paid to ensuring that all pupils' standards, including those from ethnic minorities and those who speak English as an additional language, are raised. Provision for these pupils is well led and managed; a good improvement since the last inspection, when the provision was poorly organised. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and has brought about good improvement in a number of areas. The headteacher has been similarly effective in ensuring improvements in provision for pupils with English as an additional language and monitoring the performance of different ethnic groups.
37. The school has a clear agenda for improvement, and the main points for action in the previous inspection have been addressed well. Development planning has some strong features. There is a clearly-structured annual development planning process, with educational priorities set out for one year at a time. The plan is comprehensive in scope and is a useful good tool for improvement, giving the school a clear set of priorities and setting out how they are to be achieved. However, whilst there is a clear sense of purpose and overall aims within the school, a weakness is that there is no strategic plan formally setting out longer-term goals.
38. The school is well managed. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher make an effective and experienced partnership, clearly focused on raising standards. The headteacher delegates responsibilities appropriately and this leads to good management of the curriculum. Subject co-ordinators are effective in their management roles, and the co-ordinators of English and mathematics are very good. Well-established performance management procedures lead to good staff development. The administrative staff run the school office efficiently. Policies and procedures are clearly set out and communicated.
39. Under the direction of the headteacher, the school has become more systematic in reviewing its work. It has a range of self-evaluation procedures in place. In addition to the rigorous monitoring of performance data in the core subjects, there is systematic monitoring of curriculum plans, with helpful feedback, an analysis of pupils' work and a programme of

observation of teaching and learning in classrooms. Development planning is informed by reviews of current provision and standards but is not clearly linked to evaluating the success or otherwise of past actions and initiatives.

40. Finances are managed prudently. Financial decisions are based on clear criteria in keeping with the priorities identified by the school. There are effective procedures for constructing, administering, controlling and monitoring the budget. The school development plan incorporates costings but as this plan is for one year only, the school does not have a longer-term budget plan. It has improved the involvement of the governing body in overseeing the school's finances since the last inspection and there are now effective procedures to enable governors to play an appropriate role in financial matters. Best-value principles are recognised, but there is no formal statement to guide practice.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	651,839	Balance from previous year	47,929
Total expenditure	654,596	Balance carried forward to the next	45,172
Expenditure per pupil	3,208		

41. The governance of the school is good. The governors are highly committed and make a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. They provide good levels of support, show good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that statutory responsibilities are fully met. They conduct their business efficiently and play a purposeful and effective role in shaping the direction of the school. Whilst they take careful account of the school's policies and aims, the lack of a long-term school improvement plan hinders their role in guiding the school's work. The governing body takes its monitoring role seriously. For example, the results of statutory testing are considered thoroughly. Governors responded well to the findings of the last inspection, rectifying effectively the weaknesses that were identified then. For example, the monitoring of provision for special educational needs is good and both finance and curriculum committees perform their roles satisfactorily.

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

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

42. The good provision in the Foundation Stage has been maintained since the last inspection. The attainment of children joining Reception varies from year to year. The attainment of current Reception children was poor in communication, language and literacy, well below expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and below in other areas. A large number of children join the school with little, and many with no, English. Many have no experience of any early years education. As a result of good teaching, they achieve well and by the time they join Year 1 their attainment improves and is generally close to that expected in all areas, except in communication, language and literacy, which are still well below expectations. In knowledge and understanding of the world, attainment is below expectations.
43. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all the areas of learning. Planning takes good account of children's targets for learning and is adapted well to individual needs. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are supported well by skilled teachers and their assistants and achieve well. Some who come with little or no English make very good progress. The children from ethnic minorities achieve as well as their peers. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
44. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Assessment procedures are very good and give clear information on children's progress and achievement. Parents have good opportunities to visit the school and are kept very well informed about their children's achievement through review meetings and the home-school reading partnership. The accommodation is satisfactory and the outdoor area is used well to extend the curriculum. The resources are well used for both indoor and outdoor activities.

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

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are good; children have a great interest in their learning and are confident to try out new activities.
- Children have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy being in school.

#### **Commentary**

45. Children enter school with immature personal and social skills, but settle down quickly. The quality of the curriculum and the staff's good knowledge of the needs of young children ensure success in developing the children's interest in their activities and their ability to sustain concentration. Children have many opportunities in circle time to talk about who is their friend and what they like doing together. This is reflected in the way they are learning to share resources, take turns and respect each other and play together. They help each other to put aprons on and take turns when they play with bats and balls.
46. The approach to behaviour management is positive. Most children are attentive and eager to learn, and find it easy to conform to the appropriate standards of behaviour set by the staff. Children of different backgrounds work and play in harmony. There are appropriate expectations for children to be active sometimes and at other times to sit and concentrate, as was seen in literacy and numeracy lessons. They develop a good understanding of how to

behave in different circumstances. Teaching is good so that children achieve well and are on course to meet the nationally-expected levels by the end of Reception.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of reading and writing skills is good and children achieve well.
- Staff provide good role-models of language; however, opportunities for children to speak are not extensive.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported.

### **Commentary**

47. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. Staff give good attention to explaining vocabulary and developing children's understanding through stories. Good use of materials such as books, pictures, cards, explanations of vocabulary and modelling of language help children to develop speaking and listening skills. However, most children still give one-word answers. Staff do not always give children enough opportunities to speak and by not accepting one word answers encourage them to speak in sentences.
48. Most children know letter names and their sounds. More-able children can link these sounds to create whole words and can read simple text. However, a significant minority are still learning letter sounds and many average ability children cannot yet read familiar words. The reading skills of half the children in the class who speak English as an additional language are still underdeveloped. Children take books home to share with their parents and this effectively enhances their love for books and develops their early reading skills.
49. Children practise their writing skills and most can write their names unaided, but with capital and small letters mixed up. There is an effective partnership of teachers and support teachers allowing children to learn skills in small groups tailored to their capability. Specific skills, such as using knowledge of letter sounds to read and spell, and analysing the picture clues in stories, are taught well. Children are praised for their successes, and teaching picks up well on their responses to take the learning forward. Many are beginning to link sounds with letters and are attempting to write simple two- and three-letter words. However, a significant minority still write strings of letters. Overall, children's attainment is likely to be well below expected levels by the end of Reception.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well.
- Practical activities support children's mathematical development well.

### **Commentary**

50. Most children achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good. They make good progress from standards below those expected on entry to attain standards that are likely to be close to those expected by the end of Reception. Children are given many opportunities to sing number rhymes and songs, to learn to count and understand the concept of taking away and adding more. Most children can count to 20 and more-able can count beyond. Children can recognise and write numbers to 10 and most are secure with their counting and are able to solve simple problems, involving the phrases of 'one more than' and 'one less than'.

More-able children can add and subtract numbers to 10 and can record accurately. Lessons in cooking allow children to learn through practical activities; they are learning the concepts of measuring, weight and volume when they cook. Children are learning to recognise simple two- and three-dimensional shapes. The staff have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well. They track children's progress very well and use this when planning the next steps in learning.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The staff plan a good range of practical opportunities and resources to help children learn.

### **Commentary**

51. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children's achievement is good. They learn about a variety of materials, and are able to select tools and techniques when they make models using construction toys, sand, water, clay and play-dough. In one lesson, children were making sunglasses, lollipops and ice-cream cones in connection with their topic about the beach. They chose materials such as card, tissue and felt-tips to create their own designs. Good questioning from the teacher, such as 'Do we eat ice-cream when we are hot?' extends children's learning. However, many children answer with a nod or just 'Yes'. Lack of language skills hinders learning in this area, and standards are likely to be below the expected levels by the end of Reception.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and children learn to move with control and confidence.
- Children have access to a good range of tools to improve hand-eye co-ordination.

### **Commentary**

52. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and children's achievement is good. The staff allow them to be adventurous in climbing, balancing on and jumping off equipment without jeopardising safety or reducing challenge. They learn to use the wheeled toys with confidence, negotiating space safely. They are taught well to use the space appropriately with small equipment. Consequently, they are confident in controlling their movements. Children have access to a good range of tools, different-sized paintbrushes, pencils, felt tips, the computer mouse, scissors and jigsaw puzzles. As a result, most have good hand-eye co-ordination. They hold a pencil correctly when they write and use scissors well to cut in straight lines. Their attainment is as expected.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good teaching about the ways in which a range of materials can be used and children achieve well.



## Commentary

53. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and children achieve well. They are introduced to a range of media, for example, painting, song, dance and role-play. They learn to sing simple songs in numeracy and literacy lessons. They make good use of the role-play areas and join in singing in school assemblies and achieve well. They draw, paint and make collages about the animals under the sea. Children who speak English as an additional language show good ability in using tools and making pictures. They experiment with paint and use their observations to create pleasing results. Their attainment is as expected.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities make good progress as they move through the school and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The curriculum co-ordinator gives very good leadership and manages the subject very well.
- Pupils do not use the school library enough, and their skills in getting information from library books are underdeveloped.
- Lessons are often too long and pupils cannot always sustain good levels of application. Handwriting skills are not taught well enough in the early stages.

## Commentary

54. Children enter the school with skills well below those expected, notably in speaking and listening. At the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those of pupils of this age, and at the end of Year 6, standards are above those achieved nationally. Pupils of all abilities make good progress as they move through the school. This has been a regular pattern of performance in the school, except for the Year 6 results in 2003. In this year, there was a marked decline because only a very small number of pupils attained the level gained by higher-attaining pupils nationally. When the comparative data for the 2004 tests becomes available, it is likely that standards will be in line with those achieved nationally at the end of Year 2, and above them at the end of Year 6.
55. All pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, where provision for pupils with English as an additional language or with special educational needs was unsatisfactory. It is now good and these pupils are given effective support which meets their needs. The school carefully analyses results from regular testing and has made particular efforts to narrow the gap in levels of performance in reading and writing, and between boys and girls. This has had a very positive effect in raising standards. Standards in reading are good because teachers use a variety of methods, including phonics, in their teaching, use their class book collections well, and maintain home and school links in reading right through to Year 6. All teachers give time for reading, and volunteers from a national government department hear individuals and groups on a regular basis. Pupils read well and enjoy it. Most older pupils belong to local libraries. The school has made good improvements to the library since the last inspection. It now has enough space, and there is a satisfactory collection of books. However, pupils do not use them enough, either to borrow or to find information. An interview with a sample of pupils in Year 6 revealed that their skills in finding relevant books and using contents and index pages were underdeveloped.
56. Standards in writing are good because pupils are taught to write in a wide range of styles. In doing this, they are taught to make notes, order their thoughts and redraft their work. There was good evidence of letter writing (including a draft letter to the newly appointed Indian Prime

Minister concerning child labour), factual writing, poetry, creative writing and play scripts. Pupils learn to punctuate their work well, and use grammar and vocabulary effectively. Although there is a good policy and scheme of work for teaching handwriting, they are not being applied effectively, especially in Years 1 and 2. Many pupils in all classes were seen holding pencils with contorted grips and writing from poor postures. Unjoined script was common among many pupils in Year 6 and very few used pens for their work. These factors mean that the quality of presentation is not always as high as it should be, and the process of writing is slow.

57. Teaching is good throughout the school. All teachers prepare their lessons well. They plan carefully to build on previous skills, and set work carefully matched to pupils' different needs. This helps to ensure that pupils are supported yet challenged and that they achieve their potential. Teachers use visual materials well. A good example of this was in a Year 1 lesson where pupils had to write a poem about a polar bear. Short of actually bringing in a polar bear, the teacher had provided every visual and tactile aid imaginable. Teachers also use a variety of techniques and groupings. They give good attention to developing pupils' listening and speaking skills. They use questions well, and give pupils time to answer. They encourage them to discuss and work in pairs, small groups and individually, and this has a positive effect on standards. Teachers mark pupils' work well, noting where it should be better. They regularly check on individual progress and set targets for improvement. The only noted weaknesses in teaching were that teaching assistants were not always active in the initial sessions of a lesson, and that timetabling meant that lessons were always in the morning and often too long and pupils' concentration slips.
58. The curriculum co-ordinator gives very good leadership and management. She has a very good understanding of what can be achieved, has analysed the strengths and weaknesses of performance, and has a clear vision of what needs to be done. There is a very good and up-to-date policy and scheme of work. This is based on national suggestions, but these have been adapted to meet the needs of the school. Currently, she is further developing the scheme of work for listening and speaking, and improving how teachers plan to teach these skills. She regularly checks on the quality of planning, teaching and standards by evaluating teachers' planning, looking at samples of books and observing lessons. She meets regularly with the headteacher and the appointed governor for literacy. Minutes of these meetings show that the quality of teaching and learning is improving. She has organised very successful book weeks, arranged for writers and poets to work directly with pupils, and encouraged pupils to take part in local writing competitions. These activities have made learning exciting and have helped to raise standards.

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

59. Pupils gain sufficient skills to enable them to learn in other subjects. Teachers are careful to make sure that they all use their listening, speaking and writing skills in other subjects. Pupils discuss, act and write in their own words, and this helps to ensure that they achieve well. Computers and cassette recorders are used sensibly and appropriately to develop literacy skills.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The analysis and use of assessment information are very good.
- The deputy headteacher provides very effective management.
- Because lessons are generally too long, pupils' productivity sometimes dips towards the end.



- Teachers, in their marking of pupils' work, often do not do enough to indicate to them how they might further improve.

## Commentary

60. Standards seen in the current Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected nationally. These findings are more favourable than the school's national test results in 2003 and are more in line with the overall average for the past three years. Standards vary between year groups and are, for example, above expected levels in some year groups, notably Years 3 and 4.
61. When pupils start school, their basic number skills are below those normally found nationally. By Year 2, most are developing a sound understanding of place value and number operations. Nearly all are confident with numbers to 100 and the more able with numbers to 1000. Most can total sums of money and work out change. They can read metric scales and interpret simple graphs. Nearly all Year 6 pupils have a sound grasp of number operations with decimals, fractions and percentages and can complete written calculations accurately and solve word problems. Pupils' understanding of measures and the properties of shape are appropriate for their age. For example, they have a sound knowledge of angles and estimate and measure angles with reasonable accuracy. They can solve simple problems involving ratio and proportion and interpret a variety of graphical forms.
62. Pupils' achievement is good. An analysis of pupils' work shows good achievement since the beginning of the year and in most lessons seen during the inspection, pupils achieved well. In the work seen, boys and girls achieve equally well. Across the school, pupils of different ethnicity and capability and those who have English as an additional language achieve well. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. There are a number of reasons for this. The subject is planned very carefully and taught well. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' numeracy skills and good use is made of a variety of mental arithmetic exercises at the beginning of lessons. Other aspects of mathematics are also covered well. The school's very effective systems for monitoring pupils' performance enable it to respond effectively to their individual learning needs.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In nearly all lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and manage them well so that they work productively and are attentive and stay focused on their work. Teachers take appropriate account of the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy. They start lessons briskly with an effective oral session to develop pupils' mental arithmetic skills and use questions well to check their understanding and give opportunities for them to explain their answers. The pace of most lessons is quite brisk, but because they are generally too long, pupils' productivity sometimes dips towards the end. There is good emphasis on developing different number strategies and using correct mathematical vocabulary. Lessons are carefully planned with different activities to meet the learning needs of all pupils, including extension activities for the more-able and effective use of assistants to support pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs. However, occasionally, teachers focus so much on the learning needs of other pupils that there is insufficient challenge for more-able pupils.
64. Assessment procedures have some very strong features. Assessments at regular intervals of pupils' achievement in the key objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy help teachers monitor their progress. The school has an effective system for tracking the performance of pupils over their time in the school in relation to National Curriculum levels. Information from assessments is used very effectively; for example, to track the performance and progress of individual pupils and different groups, to identify pupils in need of additional support and to modify teaching plans for lower attaining and more-able pupils. An analysis of pupils' responses to questions in the optional national tests provides useful information on standards. However, whilst teachers are conscientious in marking pupils' work, they do not do enough to indicate to them how they might further improve.

65. The deputy headteacher manages the subject very well and provides a very good role model in subject leadership for her colleagues. Effective monitoring provides her with a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision and in standards achieved. Consequently, she shows clear vision for the future development of the subject and has identified appropriate priorities that have been translated into effective actions.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

66. There are sound opportunities for reinforcing and using mathematics in different subjects, such as science and geography. The use of ICT helps pupils achieve satisfactorily in aspects of data-handling; for example, enabling Year 1 pupils to present data in a pictogram and junior pupils to use databases and spreadsheets.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good across the school.
- Teachers place good emphasis on teaching skills in investigative work.
- The co-ordinator provides effective leadership and manages the subject well.
- Opportunities to apply literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are good.

#### **Commentary**

67. Standards of attainment in the current Year 6 are in line with nationally-expected levels. However, they were above average in the previous inspection. Although results in the 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils were below the national average, results in other years were above the national average. This fluctuation is not significant considering the size and composition of the small cohorts. Teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2003 were similar to the national picture. Standards in Year 2 are in line with nationally-expected levels, as they were at the last inspection.
68. Pupils' achievement is good because pupils make good progress from their starting points on entry into Year 1. Year 2 pupils understand that materials change by such processes as heating and cooling. In one lesson seen, they were learning the concept of 'fair testing' at a level appropriate to their ages. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the science topics they have covered. Their skills are developing well. For example, they can make appropriate hypothesis, adopt a rigorous scientific approach in their work, record their work accurately and communicate reasoned explanations of what they have done. Pupils of all ages apply literacy and numeracy skills well when they record work, and use ICT to find information and record findings in graphical and tabular forms.
69. The attainment of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is similar to that of their peers. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported in lessons and achieve well. Standards achieved by these pupils are lower than their English-speaking peers by the end of Year 2, as they are still developing their scientific vocabulary and language skills. By the end of Year 6, they make up most of the difference and generally attain the nationally-expected standards. However, the proportion of these pupils working at above expected levels is still lower than that of their English-speaking peers, because of their lack of technical language skills. A good proportion of more-able pupils whose mother tongue is English achieve the higher Level 5 in the national tests. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants within classes and their achievement is good. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

70. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. Lesson planning is effective. Teachers set clear learning objectives and pupils are aware of what is expected of them. They understand how the present lesson links to previous work. Pupils are managed well across the school. Their interest is maintained by careful questioning. In all lessons seen, resources were used very well for investigative work; for example, in a lesson on electricity, where Year 4 pupils made electric circuits, predicting and finding out the effect on the light bulb when two batteries were used. There is a good emphasis on developing scientific vocabulary. Teachers use it in their explanations and require pupils to use it in their questions and answers. Support teachers and teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good view of the working of the subject across the school through effective monitoring of teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' books. This leads to appropriate priorities for improvement. Assessment procedures are good. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively and assessment information is analysed and used to provide appropriate additional support where needed. The school has maintained its good provision since the previous inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The computer suite networked to classroom computers enables pupils to develop their ICT skills in other subjects.
- The computer suite is too small for a whole class to be taught together at one time, meaning that pupils' achievement is not as high as it could be.
- The school has good systems for recording and monitoring pupils' skills development.

### **Commentary**

72. Pupils generally achieve standards in line with those expected. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are as expected, although some pupils exceed expectations in Year 6.
73. The achievement of all groups is satisfactory. Over time in the school, pupils have the expected range of opportunities to develop ICT skills in word processing, graphics, data-handling, using the internet and control. Year 1 pupils are developing basic confidence in the use of computers to support work in other subjects. For example, they can click and drag images and input information to create a pictogram. By Year 2, pupils use the keyboard and mouse confidently when using word-processing packages to edit and save their work. They make steady progress in learning how to develop and record a sequence of instructions to control a floor turtle. Pupils throughout the school use a range of software to create their own pictures using a number of tools. Year 5 pupils compose pictures in the style of Mondrian. By Year 6, pupils are able to use a good range of software, including desktop publishing packages and databases, and use the Internet to carry out research. They can import text, pictures and symbols, as well as create a range of graphs to support their work in different areas of the curriculum.
74. There have been some good improvements in provision since the last inspection. A small computer suite has been installed and has been networked to classroom computers to provide pupils with good opportunities to develop ICT skills in other subjects. There are enough computers to enable all pupils to have appropriate opportunities to use computers on a regular basis and to continue their work in the classroom for specifically planned activities. Staff are well trained and teach ICT effectively and use the two interactive whiteboards well. The school has introduced good procedures for recording and monitoring pupils' progress in the

development of ICT skills. These improvements have enabled the school to keep pace with the general improvements in standards and achievement seen nationally.

75. Teaching was good overall in the lessons seen. Lessons in the ICT suite are well organised with the subject co-ordinator, class teachers and part-time technician working in effective partnership. Teachers provide appropriate work for pupils, building effectively on prior learning and frequently linking this with other subjects. Good use is made of praise and encouragement to help the pupils to become more confident.
76. Despite these improvements, pupils' learning and achievement is satisfactory overall. This is because the ICT suite is inadequate for whole-class teaching. There is a shared area for the computer suite and library which can accommodate a whole class, but only with half the class working at tables in the library area. This means that ICT skills need to be taught in groups and that only half the class can use computers at any one time. Although teachers plan these lessons well and organise groupings effectively, the limitations of the ICT suite are a barrier to higher achievement. They reduce the time that pupils have 'direct hands-on' opportunities and pupils cannot fully collaborate with one another or evaluate each other's work.
77. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is well informed about standards and provision, and has appropriate plans to improve the subject further. She is very effective in ensuring that investment in resources provides the best possible opportunities for all pupils within the limitations imposed by a lack of space in the computer suite. All teachers and teaching assistants have received training and this is having a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The co-ordinator has developed a very useful portfolio of pupils' work from Reception to Year 6 which gives a good picture of the work covered. The part-time technician is an asset to teachers and pupils.

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

78. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is good. It supports the development of a wide range of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in a mathematics/ICT lesson linked to musical appreciation, Year 3 pupils created a doorbell sequence. Pupils make good use of ICT for research and word-processing skills to present their work. For example, Year 5 pupils word processed their findings about life in Tudor times, and were able to insert pictures from clipart and the Internet. In science, pupils use ICT to find information and record findings in graphical and tabular forms. They frequently access websites to support their learning.

## **HUMANITIES**

Religious education is covered in a Section 23 report. In geography, only one lesson was seen, so there is insufficient evidence to make judgements on provision, the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement.

### **History**

Provision for history is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- A programme of visits and visitors supports the curriculum well.
- There are good links made with other subject areas, and literacy and ICT skills are used well.

## **Commentary**

79. An analysis of pupils' work in Year 2 shows that in their studies of the Fire of London and of Florence Nightingale, they reach standards appropriate for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving the level expected for their age.
80. Pupils achieve well because the subject is planned and taught well. The curriculum, planned according to the national guidelines, provides appropriate experiences for all pupils. Pupils have opportunities to learn through a range of first-hand experiences, including the use of primary sources of information and role-play. For example, Year 6 pupils in their World War 2 work have studied the contents of a suitcase of a child evacuee to better understand how it might have been to be a child evacuated from home. Artefacts of the period help them appreciate their place in the life of people during World War 2. A dance drama lesson provided an opportunity to develop pupils' empathy for the experience of being in an air-raid shelter during a raid.
81. Teachers are skilled at teaching the subject and use a variety of methods to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. In a Year 3 lesson on Ancient Greek gods, the teacher involved pupils in fruitful discussion in which they recalled a number of previously-learnt facts. They make use of appropriate vocabulary and use their reading skills to read for information. In a link with current events and geography, the pupils are aware that the 2004 Olympics will take place in modern Greece. Assessment information is used to plan the next steps in learning for the different groups of pupils. The overall good teaching ensures that pupils are motivated, build well on their prior learning and achieve well in their knowledge and understanding.
82. Links with other subjects are a positive strength, especially in the use of literacy skills and ICT. Teachers make good use of ICT for research and the development of information-gathering skills. For example, Year 5 pupils collected facts about Henry VIII's wives and sorted them using a spreadsheet. Pupils use a variety of sources, including research packs, reference books and the Internet. Good quality artefacts bring history to life for pupils. Time lines are used well to help them develop a sense of chronology. Art skills are used effectively by pupils to illustrate aspects of their work. Visits to places of interest are planned, including to Southwark Anglican Cathedral for a study of the Tudors. The subject is well led.

## **Geography**

83. Geography was not a focus in this inspection. The subject is normally taught in blocks of time, generally alternating with history. Evidence from the work seen in samples of pupils' books shows that standards are as expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils receive a satisfactory geography curriculum covering a sound range of themes and skills. Year 1 pupils learn about the location of major countries by following the progress of Barnaby Bear. They have some knowledge about the locality of their school and the route they take to school each day. In Year 2, pupils learn about life on the island of Struay and a range of holiday locations, both in the United Kingdom and overseas, and consider recycling as a means of avoiding polluting the planet and avoiding waste. By the end of Year 6, pupils know about different types of maps, identify contour lines and other symbols and accurately describe their purpose. Year 4 pupils learn about the climate of rainforests and the natural life they support. Pupils know something of the world's mountains, rivers and deserts and of how weather affects different parts of the world and communities.
84. Pupils' use of ICT to support their learning is good, including research for information. Good links are made with literacy and numeracy, and good opportunities are provided for writing. Teachers teach geographical knowledge and skills in a logical order. A range of visits enhances learning and includes a residential visit to Sayers Croft Centre. Assessment arrangements are appropriate.

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

85. It is not possible to report in detail on subjects, other than music, within this curriculum area. Only two lessons were seen in physical education and none in design and technology or art and design. No judgement can be made about provision, teaching, learning and improvements made since the previous inspection or how well pupils achieve in these subjects, although there is sufficient evidence available to judge standards in design and technology.

### **Art and design**

86. It is evident from teachers' planning, and the range of pupils' work examined, that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being met. Pupils are given worthwhile experiences in drawing from first-hand observation, painting using their imaginations, studying the works of famous painters and creating pictures based on their styles. They make prints and construct collages, using a variety of materials, and in Years 1 and 2 use clay to make simple sculptures.
87. Teaching is supported by satisfactory subject guidance and enough resources. At present, the subject is overseen by the senior management team, awaiting the arrival of the new co-ordinator at the beginning of the next academic year. Because of this, there has been little development in the past year. There have been no visits to the nearby galleries, and few artists have visited the school to work directly with pupils. This has limited the experiences that pupils should have had and contributed to the fact that work produced does not show real excitement. Pupils' art work is well displayed in most classrooms and around the school, but its effect is not as dramatic as it should be.

### **Design and technology**

88. The analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and a meeting with the co-ordinator indicate that the curriculum is covered well and pupils' standards throughout the school are above those found nationally. Pupils are given good opportunities to design and make things and evaluate their end products. Slippers made by Year 6 were of good quality and Year 4 had successfully designed and made chairs. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. She monitors teachers' planning to ensure coverage and undertakes an analysis of pupils' work to ascertain standards. Her evaluations are used to develop additional strategies to further improve standards. Assessment arrangements are appropriate. Teachers assess pupils' work at the end of each unit, matching against the National Curriculum levels.

### **Music**

Provision for music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' singing is well above expected levels, and standards of appraising and composing are above expectations throughout the school.
- Pupils receive good teaching from the music specialist and, as a result, pupils have positive attitudes and participate well in lessons.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

### **Commentary**

89. Pupils' attainment in music in Years 2 and 6 is above that expected. The quality of singing and playing recorders in assembly is well above that usually found. The choir sings melodious songs that demand high standards of phrasing, tempo and pitch. The recorder group is a strength of the school. Pupils show great talent and pleasure in playing in the assemblies and in lessons. They read music well.

90. Pupils' achievement is good. Relationships are very good and pupils enjoy making music together in pairs and groups. For example, when Year 6 composed variations of 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little star', they worked in pairs, evaluated their peers' compositions and made very good suggestions, such as varying the tempo for better effects. They are familiar with terms such as 'timbre' and 'texture'. Year 2 pupils sang in two parts working well together. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and take full part in all lessons. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully integrated and their achievement is similar to that of their peers. English-speaking pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well. The school makes very good effort to ensure that music is entirely inclusive and embraces the whole school. The co-ordinator's tracking of progress indicates that a quarter of the choir membership is made up of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
91. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good, with all classes having music lessons with the visiting specialist teacher. This gives pupils a good start in singing, composing, playing and appraising music. Pupils are given many opportunities to listen to music from different countries and cultures. Assessment is good. Pupils' progress is monitored well and the teacher gives good verbal feedback on how to improve. The progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language and of those who have special educational needs is very well tracked and indicates that their achievement is good.
92. The music specialist provides good leadership and management. Although she works part-time, she teaches all classes and promotes music well. The range of music resources are good and are well used and maintained. Priorities for future development appropriately include the use of ICT in music. The school has maintained its good provision since the previous inspection.

### **Physical education**

93. The lack of an adequate hall, limited hard surface areas and no regular access to grass areas hinder pupils' learning in physical education. Nevertheless, the school does its best to overcome these restrictions and offer pupils a broad curriculum. From viewing planning and discussions, it is clear that all strands of the subject are regularly taught and assessment procedures are satisfactory. Provision is enhanced by opportunities to participate in competitive sport, extra-curricular activities, swimming throughout the junior years and a residential trip in Year 6. Management of the subject is satisfactory, but there is a lack of critical evaluation of standards. For example, the school does not record the number of pupils who attain the national expectation for swimming at least 25 metres.
94. In lessons seen, Year 4 pupils' skills in games were as expected but Year 5 pupils' standards in gymnastics were below those normally found at this age. The quality of teaching was good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. Teaching was good where the lesson was well organised and planned so that pupils revised previous learning and successfully built upon the skills already acquired. Activities were well tailored to the different capabilities of the pupils. Teachers paid good attention to health and safety.

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

95. No specific lessons were inspected in this area of the school's work so no judgements can be made on overall provision. The provision for this aspect of the curriculum was sampled by observing assemblies and a 'circle-time' session and speaking to pupils, school councillors and the co-ordinator.
96. Teachers take appropriate opportunities as they arise to discuss personal and social issues with their class groups. Although this meets a need at the time, the practice does not ensure that all pupils are given regular opportunities to build on their knowledge of personal and social issues in stages relevant to their age. The co-ordinator has identified the need to strengthen

the programme, particularly the aspects relating to sex and relationships. Written guidance is in its latter stages of development.

97. Personal and social education is, however, implicit in many aspects of school life. Good use is made of visitors such as the Portobello Trust to alert pupils to the dangers of drug abuse. Healthy living and exercise are promoted well in pupils' sporting activities, physical education and science lessons, for example, in the Year 3 topic on 'Teeth'. The school council introduces pupils to the concept of democracy and is giving them an opportunity to suggest improvements to it. Topics in assemblies often relate to the theme of being a responsible citizen and a good friend. Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of the importance of teamwork in lessons and the need for rules in the playground.



## 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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).*