

INSPECTION REPORT

WROTHAM ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gravesend

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118577

Headteacher: Mrs J Hetherington

Lead inspector: Mrs G Kayembe

Dates of inspection: 28th - 30th June 2004

Inspection number: 258518

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	370
School address:	Wrotham Road Gravesend Kent
Postcode:	DA11 OQF
Telephone number:	(01474) 534 540
Fax number:	(01474) 322 413
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Walker

Date of previous inspection: 29th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated near the centre of Gravesend in Kent and has a nursery attached to it. It is of above average size with 370 pupils on roll, including 39 children in the nursery who attend part-time. There are more girls than boys: 176 girls to 155 boys, resulting in two or three more girls than boys in most year groups except in Year 1, where there are nearly twice as many girls as boys and in Year 4 where there are seven more girls than boys. Year 2 is the only group where boys outnumber girls by six.

Close to half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The vast majority are of Asian background, over a third being Indian. A little over half the pupils are of white British heritage, and this is the largest single group. There are very small numbers from African, Caribbean or mixed black and Asian backgrounds. Close to a third of pupils do not have English as their mother tongue, and this is very high when compared to schools nationally. The most frequently spoken home language by far is Punjabi. Most of the 39 pupils (about 11 per cent) who are at an early stage of learning English are in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. About 26 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, and this is a little above the national average. Their needs are mostly moderate learning ones, though there are an increasing number with autistic spectrum disorders. One pupil has a statement.

The overall social and economic backgrounds of pupils are in line with national norms. Attainment on entry is broadly average with respect to social and personal, physical and creative development. However, given the relatively high proportion of pupils learning English, the attainment on entry is lower in other areas such as English language and literacy. Some

year groups are more affected by this than others, for example, about half the pupils in current Year 2 have English as an additional language, and this is exacerbated by the fact that well over a third of Year 2 pupils also have special educational needs.

A small but significant number of pupils leave and join the school at times other than the normal joining and leaving times. They tend to be older and those that leave, usually because their families are moving home, tend to be academically able.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2901	Mrs G Kayembe	Lead inspector	Science French
1112	Mr P Oldfield	Lay inspector	
8183	Ms G Keevill	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Physical education
23412	Mr A Jeffs	Team inspector	English Religious education Special educational needs
23354	Ms E Adams	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Music The Foundation Stage
19227	Mr P Missin	Team inspector	Geography History English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Wrotham Road Primary School is a good school which provides a good quality education for its pupils. The new headteacher has settled in quickly and is very clear about the school's key priorities. These are identified in the school improvement plan and are being systematically addressed. Pupils are happy at the school and do well. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well due to good teaching and their positive attitudes.
- The headteacher has a very good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to raise attainment further.
- Pupils grow into mature and responsible individuals within a very positive and warm ethos.
- Results in the 2004 tests for 11-year-olds in mathematics and science have improved markedly, though aspects of provision in mathematics need further improvement.
- Class teachers assess pupils and keep detailed records, but assessment overall is unsatisfactory.
- Though boys and girls both achieve well, boys' performance in national tests is not as good as that of girls and in particular their written work is not as good as that of girls.
- Pupils get a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils are very well cared for and parents are very happy with the care and education provided.

IMPROVEMENT

Improvement since the last inspection in June 1998 is satisfactory. Though overall standards have kept pace with nationally improving trends, there has been some variation within individual subjects. Improvement has been good in English but a declining trend in mathematics saw results drop to below average in 2003, though the 2004 results were much better and reverse this trend. The good teaching seen during the last inspection has been maintained with distinct improvement in the teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and in the teaching of skills. However, the weaknesses in assessment identified at the last inspection have not been fully addressed and still require attention.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils achieve well through each key stage. Standards are overall average by the end of the reception year and Year 2. They are above average overall, and above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, indicating a marked improvement in attainment in mathematics and science since last year's national tests. Standards are average in information and communication technology (ICT) by Year 6. Standards are above average in English by Year 2 and average in mathematics, ICT and science. In religious education, standards are high, being above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well in English, science and religious education throughout the school and satisfactorily in mathematics and ICT. In other subjects, on the basis of evidence sampled, pupils achieve well in the main and standards are at least in line with national expectations. They exceed expectations in art and design and practical work in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well. There are no significant differences in standards based on ethnicity. Pupils learning English often achieve very well as their test results in English are above the school average by Year 6. However, test results indicate that boys do not do as well as girls and this is most noticeable in written work in English. To some extent, this is due to the high proportions of boys with special educational needs. In some aspects of science and in mathematics, there is room for able pupils to achieve more.

Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good, as is their behaviour and personal development. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching and learning are consistently good. There is a rich and varied curriculum which supports learning well and promotes good progress. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well developed so that it meets their needs well. A wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities enhances the statutory curriculum. Links with parents are good. Provision for pupils learning English and those with special educational needs is good. Assessment needs improving. Monitoring and tracking of pupils' academic progress are underdeveloped and advice to pupils on how to improve is limited. Pastoral care of pupils is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is astute and sets a very clear direction for development. She is creating effective teams to help her manage and lead the school. Members of the recently established senior leadership team provide good support to the headteacher. The roles of subject leaders, many of whom are new to these, are at various stages of development. Roles are particularly effective in English and science but leadership of mathematics is unsatisfactory. Governors carry out their responsibilities well and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All statutory requirements are met. Whilst the headteacher monitors and evaluates the work of the school, using information very effectively to influence change, other managers within the school have yet to establish their roles in monitoring and evaluation.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils and parents are happy with the school's provision and overall parents' views of the school are very positive. They are particularly pleased with the information they receive and the

progress their children are making. Pupils praise their teachers and the good atmosphere in the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE ARE:

- Improve quality of provision for mathematics.
- Improve assessment and the use of monitoring and tracking to support raising achievement, particularly of boys and the most able, and to set targets and match work to individual needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Overall standards of attainment are average by the end of the reception year and Year 2, and above average by Year 6. Achievement is good throughout the school. However, test results indicate wide differences between the attainments of boys and girls.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language.
- The good provision in the Foundation Stage means that pupils achieve well and reach expected standards by the end of their reception year.
- There is room for improvement in mathematics, where achievement, though good for pupils currently in Years 1 and 6, is inconsistent in other year groups.
- Standards in English are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, though standards of boys' writing are lower.
- Boys are not doing as well as girls overall, though, to some extent, this is due to the high levels of special educational needs amongst boys.
- Whilst standards in science are above average by Year 6, pupils find it difficult to provide sufficiently detailed and precise explanations of scientific observations and phenomena.

COMMENTARY

1. The attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, often due to fluctuating proportions of pupils with either special educational needs or those learning English. For example, amongst the group of seven-year-olds who took national tests in 2004, about half have English language learning needs and about 42 per cent have special educational needs. In the current Year 6, almost half the boys have special educational needs, and this was also the situation in the group of pupils who took the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003.
2. To some extent, and to a large extent amongst seven and eleven-year-olds currently in the school, differences in standards between boys and girls revealed by test results are explained by the high proportions of boys with special educational needs or English language learning needs in some year groups. However, lack of monitoring and tracking information means that it is not clear to the school the extent to which these needs impact on attainment. Nor do the shortcomings in the school's systems help it to identify sharply enough how much room there is to improve boys' attainment, especially in areas such as written work. Weaknesses in assessment and monitoring and tracking systems, coupled with the lack of whole school provision for gifted and talented pupils, makes it difficult for both the school and the inspection team to judge how well the most able pupils, especially able boys, are performing. Inspection evidence indicates that, despite good achievement overall, some of the issues identified in the work of boys and able pupils are not being sufficiently addressed through marking and assessment. Hence, developing good assessment, monitoring and tracking systems, including effective marking, provide the key to narrowing the gap, where possible, between the attainment of boys and girls and raising standards further.

3. In many respects, standards on entry are in line with national norms, particularly in relation to the readiness of pupils to learn and to participate in learning activities. The nursery makes a good contribution to preparing children for the reception year. Overall, given the high proportion of pupils entering the school with English as an additional language, the attainment on entry is not equitable with national norms. Whilst most have some awareness of English and many have acquired a reasonable level of English language fluency, they still require additional support and help to develop further fluency. Most of the 11 per cent of pupils in the school who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 2. Most in Years 3 to 6 have full access to the National Curriculum and do not require significant language support.

4. Standards are overall average by the end of the reception year and pupils achieve well both in the nursery and in the reception classes. Achievement is particularly strong in the areas of personal and social development and communication, language and literacy. As a result, their attainment is well within national expectations as identified in the early learning goals, with many pupils beginning to exceed these. Achievement in the areas of knowledge and understanding and creative development is good and attainment is broadly in line with national expectations, with the large majority of children attaining the early learning goals for this age group. In physical and mathematical development, achievement is satisfactory. In physical development, the unsatisfactory provision for outdoor play precludes better than satisfactory achievement, though staff make the best possible use of resources and accommodation available to ensure that progress is at least satisfactory. Most pupils attain the national early learning goals; however, attainment and achievement in this area are not as strong as in communication, language and literacy because opportunities for mathematical activities, as part of work in the outdoor area, are not as well developed as those for literacy, and this is reflected in displays and teachers' plans.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (17.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.8 (14.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.1 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Results of national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003 were well above the average of all schools and similar schools in reading and writing and above these averages in mathematics. The 2003 results signify good achievement with especially strong achievement in reading and writing. The as yet unconfirmed results of these tests in 2004 were not as good. They were above the 2003¹ national averages in reading and similar to the 2003 averages in writing and mathematics though the proportion of pupils who attained at least the expected level, Level 2, in writing was high. Given the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language in this year group, these results signal good achievement in the tests. Between 1999 and 2003, there has been a good trend of improvement in the test results, particularly in writing and mathematics. However, boys have not been attaining as high results as the girls, and the

¹ In the absence of national data for 2004, comparisons of the school's 2004 results have been made with the national data for 2003.

difference between the attainment of boys and girls at the school is bigger than the gap nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (28.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.4 (26.4)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.5 (28.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Results of national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2003 were well above national and similar school averages in English but were below these averages in mathematics and well below in science. Based on this performance, achievement in English was good. However, pupils did not achieve well enough in mathematics or science, even given the relatively high proportion of boys with special educational needs. The as yet unconfirmed results of national tests for 11-year-olds in 2004 showed a marked improvement in mathematics and science. In mathematics, the 2004 results compare very favourably with the 2003 national averages and in particular the proportion reaching the higher level, Level 5, was very good. Thus, the 2004 results in mathematics begin the reversal of a downward trend over the past four or five years, though the gap between boys and girls remains. This downward trend has been due to a decline in boys' performance as during the same period, the performance of girls shows an upward trend.
7. The 2004 results in science were above the national averages of 2003 and a great improvement on the 2003 results. This is due to the action the school has taken to improve the provision for science. Overall, the results in science signal good achievement. However, the performance in English in 2004 was not as good as in 2003. The results are broadly similar to the 2003 national averages. Girls performed much better than boys; however, nearly half the boys had special educational needs. In the light of this and the fact that about a quarter of the pupils also had English as an additional language, the results reflect good achievement. In both English and science, the trends over the past four or five years have been of improvement overall. However, in English, girls' results have been improving at a faster rate than those of boys year-on-year and in science, the results of boys and girls have been improving since 2000. In the 2004 tests, the gap between boys and girls in science narrowed significantly.
8. From inspection evidence, standards are above average in English by Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well through Years 1 to 6. Pupils have strong speaking and listening skills, and reading skills are very well developed. Writing standards are satisfactory but boys' writing is weaker than that of girls and presentation skills are not always as good as they could be. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve well. Those with English as an additional language do very well, and by the end of Year 6 in English, outperform others.
9. Attainment in mathematics is average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6, reflecting the results of the most recent national tests in 2004. However, skills in investigational work are not as well developed as numeracy skills and skills in handling and manipulating data. By the time pupils reach Year 6, some also find complex problem-solving difficult, i.e. problems which require them to establish a step-by-step process to arrive at the final answer. Inspection evidence indicates achievement is consistently good in Years 1 and 6

and satisfactory, but with some inconsistencies, in other year groups. Pupils with English as an additional language are currently performing as well as, or better than, their peers, though girls with English as an additional language did marginally less well than other girls at the higher level in the 2004 tests for 11-year-olds.

10. In science, standards are average by Year 2 and above by Year 6, and achievement is good. Pupils develop a sound grasp of key ideas and facts by Year 2 and, by Year 6, this has developed into a strong, comprehensive understanding of how science works. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of elements of investigative work are developing well, such as making predictions, observing and recoding results accurately and planning experiments. However, they are not so competent in explaining their findings. Often, their use of language is not sufficiently precise to establish the link between cause and effect in their explanations. This holds back the higher attaining pupils, particularly girls with English as an additional language. However, pupils learning English performed well this year (2004) in the tests for 11-year-olds. The performance of pupils still learning English was similar to that of the overall school performance. In fact, the performance of these pupils at the expected level was marginally stronger than that of the rest.
11. In religious education, standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in ICT, where standards are broadly in line with national expectations by Years 2 and 6. In other subjects, on the basis of evidence sampled, pupils achieve well in the main and standards are at least in line with national expectations, and at times exceed these, for example, in art and design and in the practical elements of work in design and technology. Good standards of literacy generally support achievement in subjects across the curriculum, though in history there are not enough opportunities for writing at length and in science, there could be more opportunities for different forms of writing.

PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

12. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well and make good progress towards their learning targets. By the time they leave the school, several pupils with English as an additional language are attaining standards in English and science that are above those expected for their age.
13. Across the school, pupils with English as an additional language attain good standards according to their previous learning and make good progress towards meeting their own learning targets. There were insufficiently clear judgements in the last inspection report for clear comparisons to be made about changes since then. Pupils progress particularly well in their knowledge and use of English and in their ability to fully access the National Curriculum. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve well and, by Year 6, attain similar, and in some instances better, standards than their peers in the national tests and teacher assessments. Analysis of test data for 2003 national test results reveals that there has been some underachievement, particularly relating to the performance of girls in mathematics and of both girls and boys in science. Indications were that insufficient emphasis had been given to the consolidation of new vocabulary and the development of exploration skills of older pupils in science. However, the analysis of the likely results of the 2004 national tests show that this weakness has been successfully addressed and the achievement of Year 6 girls learning English as an additional language in science has been significantly improved.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

14. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in respect of their individual education plan targets and, overall, develop well in English.
15. Evidence from the individual education plans and from talking with pupils and teachers indicates good progress for all pupils with special educational needs in respect to the targets identified in their individual education plans. They achieve well in literacy and numeracy skills in class and in general confidence. Good progress also occurs for those pupils with organisational, co-ordination and behavioural difficulties.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils are generally keen to come to school and arrive punctually.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils display very good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' personal development is very well catered for.
- Behaviour throughout the school is very good.
- Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are equally valued within classes and they thrive as a result.
- There is very good racial harmony in the school.

COMMENTARY

16. The very good behaviour of the pupils and their very positive attitudes to learning are a real strength of the school and help pupils to achieve well in their lessons. Comments from parents indicate that the school ethos enables children to grow as individuals. The very good relationships mean that all pupils enjoy freedom from bullying, racism or harassment. They are generally well supervised. In the playground and dining hall, school councillors – easily identified by a red tee shirt - are readily available to help intervene and support any pupils whose conduct or demeanour requires their attention. Generally, pupils are confident, they are at the centre of all that the school promotes and this raises their self-esteem.
17. Behaviour at break and lunchtime is very good, pupils act very responsibly, and they are pleased to help in doing some jobs, such as preparing the hall for assemblies and clearing dining chairs. The crowded playgrounds are well supervised, but because children know and understand that poor behaviour is not expected nor tolerated, they respond very well. This contributes to a friendly community. There are very good arrangements for lunchtime; packed lunches are eaten in the hall, with hot meals being supplied in the dining hall. When called, pupils going to the dining hall queue sensibly and await a turn. They are frequently offered 'seconds' and their very good discipline means that they wait in an orderly line to be served. Pupils behave sensibly and display a maturity beyond their years, they respond well to instructions and follow the rules. In questionnaires returned to the inspection team, some pupils indicated that others do not always behave well. During inspection week, mostly very good behaviour was seen in

lessons, and it was consistently very good before and after school, and at break and lunchtimes.

18. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of children under five are also very good. Class and school routines are quickly learned and followed. Children readily share resources and co-operate well with adults and one another. Overall, their relationships with one another and staff are very good. Most show sensitivity to others' needs and learn to be kind to one another.
19. There has been one temporary exclusion in the current school year. The small proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties are well supervised and provided with good help and support as preventative measures. The school has integrated pupils who have had problems at other schools very well so that they have responded well to the caring ethos and friendly relationships of this school.
20. Pupils with English as an additional language have very good attitudes to their work. Their personal development and self-esteem are promoted very effectively. The culture and beliefs of the minority ethnic groups in the school are promoted and genuinely valued. The younger pupils particularly are reassured by having an adult in the class who can speak to them in their mother tongue when appropriate. Minority ethnic children in a reception class were delighted to have the story of 'Lima and the Red Hot Chillies' read to them in English and in Punjabi. The importance given to the celebration of different religious festivals increases fuller appreciation of the different cultures represented in the school and helps to show the value given by the school to members of different ethnic groups. The impact of these positive aspects of the school's work is that pupils from minority ethnic groups have very good attitudes to their own culture and also to their schoolwork. Most are respectful, attentive and keen to do their best in all activities.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are full members of every class. Their contributions are valued and their progress a matter of interest to all. As a result, they grow in confidence and self-esteem and enjoy class work and the working partnerships they establish.
22. Pupils' personal development was a strong feature of the last inspection. This strength has been maintained. Pupils' personal development is good and the school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Assemblies provide good opportunities for personal development and encourage pupils to reflect and to think deeply. They respond well to this, for example, in an assembly on the theme of honesty, pupils were asked to think if it was always right to tell the truth. Their responses showed that they knew the importance of telling the truth but also how to be diplomatic and sensitive to the needs of others. In another assembly, pupils from Years 3 and 4 presented a well-informed debate on the arguments for good food labelling. The school council provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to serve their community well. Councillors take their roles as representatives of their peers seriously. They value their place on the school council as they have had to prepare a manifesto and to be voted by their peers on to the council. Religious education plays an important part in fostering a good understanding and respect for the cultures and religious traditions of others. In religious education, older pupils reflect well in consideration of deep questions. The cultural diversity represented in the school is very effectively drawn upon to enrich pupils' awareness of other cultural and religious traditions. This is shown in their art work, in dance and in the celebration of major religious festivals.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

23. Attendance rates are similar to the national average. There are very good systems in place for promoting and maintaining attendance. Parents respond very well to ensuring their children are punctual and inform the school of absences. Very few pupils are late.

EXCLUSIONS

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
148	1	0
4	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
98	0	0
7	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
13	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 overall quality of education is good. There is good curricular provision throughout the school and links with parents are strong. However, arrangements for assessing pupils and to monitor and track progress need development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is good. However, assessment is unsatisfactory overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teachers plan and prepare lessons well and make good use of questioning to support pupils' learning.
- Teaching and learning are good overall in English and science but in mathematics there are some key shortcomings.
- The effective teaching of pupils with English as an additional language and thorough assessment of their progress ensure that they learn well. However, teachers' lesson planning does not identify sufficiently clearly the work planned for pupils still learning English.
- Support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs in classrooms.
- Overall assessment is unsatisfactory.
- There is insufficient analysis of the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language or the different ethnic groups in the national tests and teacher assessments.

COMMENTARY

24. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Most teaching observed during the inspection was good. There was some unsatisfactory teaching, mostly in mathematics, in both key stages, but also some in history. Teaching and learning are good in English, science and religious education and often very good in English. Teaching in the subjects sampled was mostly good. The overall good teaching seen at the time of the last inspection has been sustained and there have been improvements to the teaching of skills, which was a weakness but is now done effectively.
25. Teachers prepare lessons well and make good use of questioning techniques to help probe and further develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. There is good focus on practical activities which help particularly the learning of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Expectations are generally high and behaviour is very well managed. Though there are some difficult pupils, this is rarely obvious.
26. Though a wide range of methods is used, work is not often differentiated sufficiently for individual pupils' needs. Where teaching is very good though, there is very sensitive and clear match of work to individual needs. Resources are carefully prepared and classroom displays are of high quality, thus promoting pupils' learning well.
27. The Literacy Strategy has been used well to support pupils' learning and the teaching of reading is effectively done. Overall, teaching in English is good. However, the Numeracy Strategy has not been adopted to a sufficient extent. Teachers do not use visual teaching strategies enough and do not model tasks. Too often, the focus of learning is on getting an answer and not on the process of problem-solving, i.e. there is insufficient teaching of problem-solving techniques and skills in many lessons. Where mathematics is taught well, activities are interesting and stimulating. Pupils are well challenged and teachers structure the learning of concepts very well so that pupils develop good understanding of how to deal with abstract ideas in a practical way. Some teaching in mathematics shows

insecure knowledge. At times, activities for pupils are not sufficiently well thought through and hence do not achieve the objectives identified.

28. Teachers need to pay more attention to marking and presentation. Though work is regularly marked, there is little written feedback on how pupils can improve. Little use is made of National Curriculum levels to provide exemplar work or to share with pupils the levels at which they are currently working and hence what they need to do to improve. In many subjects, pupils' work is not assessed according to National Curriculum levels and systems being used are at an early stage of development. Teachers do not pay enough attention to the presentation of pupils' work which at times is poor. Overall, there has been insufficient improvement in assessment since the last inspection, where it was identified as a key issue.
29. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good overall and, in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development, it is very good. Teachers provide well-structured activities for learning and adults use questioning with skill to help develop children's knowledge and understanding. However, mathematical activities in the outdoor area are not reflected strongly in displays or teachers' plans.
30. The teaching and learning of pupils with English as an additional language is good, with several very good features. The work of the specialist teacher and her assistants is very well organised. Teaching assistants are well prepared to undertake their responsibilities. All support assistants use detailed and helpful teaching folders which provide a good level of information and instruction about the pupils in their groups. These folders contain useful lists of pupils needing support, their learning targets and assessment records. There is good liaison between specialist staff and class teachers over the focus of pupils' learning targets. The support teacher and her assistants relate very well to pupils in their groups and support and encourage them very well. The home language is very well used to support understanding of English. There was a particularly effective intervention in a Year 1 literacy lesson in which pupils were thinking of some words that sound the same but have different spellings. An assistant attempted to explain the difference between *been* and *bean* to a pupil in English but reverted to Punjabi when the pupil was obviously having difficulty. Some relative weaknesses in provision are that the work planned for pupils with English as an additional language is not shown in sufficient detail in teachers' weekly or daily lesson planning. The effect of this is that the link between their learning target and other work is not made sufficiently clear.
31. Assessment procedures for pupils learning English are good. Regular and detailed assessments are made of pupils at the end of each session by the teaching assistants, who record pupils' successes and areas of continuing difficulty. A shortcoming in this area is that, until very recently, there has not been sufficient use of the data from national tests to show important trends in the achievement of all pupils with English as an additional language and to provide information to show the relative attainment of the different ethnic groups in the school.
32. Teaching assistants work well to support pupils with special educational needs within the classroom. This support is characterised by attention to individual targets and good planning which links classroom work closely to pupils' levels of attainment. They do this in close conjunction with the class teacher and co-ordinator. Classroom teachers take an active role in identifying targets for pupils with special educational needs.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (%)	11 (20%)	29 (52%)	13 (23%)	3 (5%)	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.

THE CURRICULUM

The overall quality of the curriculum is good, as is enhancement through enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- A varied and broad curriculum provides good breadth and balance.
- Curricular provision in the Foundation Stage is good and provides well-structured and organised activities for children.
- Good enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement.
- The curriculum for pupils with English as an additional language provides them with good access to learning and is enriched very well by imaginative enhancements.
- The skilled support that pupils with special educational needs receive in class allows all to receive the same broad and balanced curriculum as their peers.
- There is no programme for gifted and talented pupils. The support for these pupils is not as rich as it might be.

COMMENTARY

33. The school provides a well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum which meets pupils' needs to a large extent, and this was the case at the time of the last inspection. There is good provision for personal and social education, though this has yet to be formalised in a scheme of work. Curricular planning is reasonably well developed, though it needs to be sharpened up a little in adapting national guidance to match more closely the needs of pupils. In effect, this shortcoming reflects the weaknesses in assessment. However, overall, pupils' written work in most subjects demonstrates a wide range of coverage and a good volume of work. Work is well planned for mixed age classes so that pupils do not repeat work done earlier. Drama and French enhance the statutory curriculum well.
34. Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and is well planned around the nationally recommended areas of learning. It ensures that there is very good balance between practical activities and more formal teaching and learning approaches. As a result, children are very well prepared for entry into Year 1 and starting work on the National Curriculum.
35. In Years 1 to 6, the school has been focusing well on developing investigative skills for pupils and this has been particularly successful in science. Good focus on reading developments this year has helped pupils in improving their reading skills.
36. Setting has been used in the last year to support the achievement of pupils in mathematics and this has paid off in that the unconfirmed 2004 mathematics results for

Year 6 pupils are much better than they were last year, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 5.

37. There are a number of weaknesses in accommodation, though overall it is satisfactory. Resources are on the whole good, though the library is small and not enough use is made of it to teach research and information seeking skills. There is no computer suite, though the school makes generally good use of the laptops and the computers in the classroom to promote information and communication technology skills. Staffing is satisfactory. The most significant weakness in accommodation is the lack of an easily accessible and secure area for children in reception classes. Though staff work hard to try to ensure that this does not impact on pupils' learning, it does cause them additional work and limits the level of progress that children under five can make in their physical development. The school is working towards implementing plans for a new building project to address the weaknesses in the nursery and reception classes.
38. The curriculum provided for pupils with English as an additional language is good. The introduction of the new learning and assessment programme recommended by the LEA from the beginning of the current year has been effective. Assessment data are used well to plan for curricular experiences which are closely matched to each pupil's English language learning needs and their learning targets are devised in appropriately small steps. The curriculum is enhanced very effectively by well-planned enrichment activities. Opportunities for culturally diverse experiences such as the Dhol club, Bhangra classes, Vaisakhi and Chinese New Year celebrations all give a breadth to the overall provision.
39. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the small group and one-to-one work with support assistants, which contributes well to the progress in their literacy skills, in particular. They are proud of the good progress they make. As most of the work is carried out within class, all pupils have access to the full curriculum and develop their skills through work that is usually well adapted, taught and recorded by teaching assistants and teachers.
40. The school has a policy but no scheme or provision for gifted and talented pupils. This means that the highest attaining pupils do not have the same focused attention within classroom tasks as those with special educational needs. Thus, opportunities are missed to challenge these pupils.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The school provides a very good standard of personal care and looks after its pupils very well. They enjoy a high level of support and personal guidance. There has been good improvement in the pastoral care for pupils since the last inspection. The school takes good steps to seek and act upon their views. However, monitoring and tracking of academic progress are not well developed.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Staff have a very good awareness of pupils' welfare and health and safety needs.
- Personal development is very well monitored.
- Monitoring and tracking of academic progress as pupils move through the school are underdeveloped.
- Pupils' views are welcomed and acted upon.

- The effective care and welfare procedures for pupils with English as an additional language encourage the promotion of their personal development well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged sensitively and receive good counselling if they experience difficulties.

COMMENTARY

41. The school is a healthy environment for learning and has very good procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. Parents expressed a belief that the school looks after their children's personal needs very well, and in this, they are correct. The school's commitment to pupils' wellbeing is shown by the Healthy Schools' Initiative that has been adopted. The quality of school lunches is excellent and the catering staff pay very good attention to the needs of pupils. There is an appropriate number of first aiders in the school and minor accidents are dealt with in a calm and sensitive way. Good records are kept of such accidents. The site and equipment are regularly checked and tested, the daily standard of maintenance is high. Child protection arrangements are well understood and senior staff involved have received recent specialist training.
42. Most class teachers keep good records of pupils' progress and make satisfactory use of this information in supporting pupils' learning. Whilst the school has a significant amount of data from assessing pupils' attainment, it does not use this information sufficiently to track individual pupils' progress, to set targets or to identify what support pupils or groups of pupils need to reach those targets. This is an important area for development. The pupils who were interviewed during the inspection said that they were given good support and help from teachers and nearly all parents expressed the same positive views. However, whilst there is good general support to pupils, it is not as finely targeted as it could be. Marking is regular but very inconsistent in the extent to which written comments provide pointers for development.
43. The school has good systems in place to offer support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs. There is good liaison with a range of support services, for example, a transition project of behaviour support for some pupils moving to secondary education. A very high number of pupils who completed the questionnaire stated they had an adult to go to if they were worried at school. With such very strong relationships throughout the school, pupils would feel very confident they could get very good support. The very active and well-supported school council, consisting of elected Year 6 pupils, puts forward ideas and suggestions to which the school responds very well. This allows pupils to express their views well. The questionnaire fully supported the view that teachers would listen to ideas and that teachers were fair. Parents were very pleased with the very effective induction process. In such an environment, pupils' development is very strong. The personal support through monitoring is very good and pupils who join the school quickly adapt. Outside achievements are recognised and celebrated, too. Although there has been good development to allow parents to be more fully aware of academic progress, the monitoring and tracking of pupils does not yet allow individual pupils to be easily identified so as to provide individual targets to promote academic progress. The school has itself identified this need.
44. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well. They are managed very sensitively and their needs are met well in small groups or at an individual level. All staff have a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs and they develop a trusting relationship with pupils where issues can be dealt with effectively when necessary. Most

pupils learning English are supported within their own class settings. This helps them to get access to their lessons and improves self-esteem. Procedures for introducing pupils new to the school are very effective. The support teacher makes a visit to the pupils' home and the pupil and their family are invited to attend meetings at school to introduce child and parent to school expectations and routines. The support teacher's wider Area responsibilities ensure that pupils have access to other support agencies when the need arises. For example, the Family Liaison Officer was being used during the time of the inspection to help the introduction of a family from Slovakia into the school.

45. Pupils with special educational needs have good plans which link well to the additional needs identified. However, there is no effective school procedure for monitoring the progress that they make. Whilst individual teaching assistants and most classroom teachers have developed good skills in planning and monitoring pupils' progress, practice varies, and there is a need to ensure that all class teachers plan for these pupils and record their progress in detail.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The school has established a good partnership with parents and keeps them well involved. Links with the community are good. There are satisfactory links with other schools.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Information about the life and work of the school is regularly sent to parents.
- Parents are very happy with the quality of education provided by the school and the attention paid to the pastoral care of pupils.
- There are good links with the community.
- Very good links are made with parents of pupils with English as an additional language and the school is very popular with parents from minority ethnic communities in Gravesend.

COMMENTARY

46. There is a good level of information about the school provided for parents. Regular newsletters give good information; and notice-boards in the school playground are regularly updated. The governors have also started sending a newsletter. The school brochure and governors' annual report explain very well all aspects of the school. There are termly opportunities for parents to discuss their children's attainment and progress with teachers; there is a good level of attendance at these meetings. Because the school has an 'open door' policy, and staff are freely available in the yard before and after school, there are good opportunities provided for parents to express any concerns. Such concerns are dealt with well. The school is seeking to improve the information provided in annual reports by providing the level at which their child is working in most subjects for older pupils. This would be welcomed. Parents of young children are visited in their homes before their children join the school, they thus feel welcomed. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and well briefed about their children's needs. Parents are helpful in supporting their children at home with reading and other homework.
47. The school develops a very effective partnership with the parents of pupils with English as an additional language and makes very good links with the local minority ethnic

community. Parents and their families are supported and informed very well when their children first begin school. The school handles this process very sensitively. Overall provision for pupils learning English is based very much around the context of the pupil being part of a single and extended family. The support teacher attends all parent consultation meetings and encourages parents to attend. Translators and newsletters in other minority ethnic languages are provided when appropriate. The support teacher has recently established a bilingual library where parents can visit the school and borrow books in dual languages. Links with the community are very good. The support teacher works hard to ensure that the school is well represented in the cultural activities which are being promoted in the community. For example, the school supported the borough's 'Big Day Out' celebrations and took part in the poster competition for the Black History Month initiative. Strong links have been established in particular with the local Sikh community.

48. The active Parent-Teacher Association has provided generous funds to the school and has established a good programme of social and fund-raising events, supported by the school and the local community. An International Day attracted large numbers of minority ethnic parents, as well as white parents. Such events are instrumental in encouraging good community relations.
49. The school has a welcome role in the local community and provides facilities for community education classes in English language for some members of local minority ethnic groups.
50. A satisfactory link has been established with a number of secondary schools, whose staff generally visit pupils before transfer, and pupils have an opportunity to visit the secondary school of their choice before transfer, to make the transition easier. There is a very strong partnership between the school and the local special school resource base which maximises the school's access to high quality resources, advice and training of all kinds.
51. The good partnership with parents contained in the last report has been well maintained.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides good leadership. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. Other staff in management positions provide satisfactory leadership overall and the management of the school is satisfactory.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher provides a very clear direction for development and has set up good structures to support improvement.
- Governors provide good support to the school and fulfil their roles well.
- The support teacher for pupils with English as an additional language leads and manages the provision very well.
- The provision for pupils learning English has a high priority in the school, adding much to the school's very strong ethos and sense of purpose. However, the work of the ethnic minority achievement team does not have a sufficiently high profile in the school improvement plan.
- The roles of co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluation have yet to be fully developed.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage and for special educational needs is well led and managed.

COMMENTARY

52. The headteacher provides very clear and well-informed leadership. She has a very clear idea of what needs to be done to improve and has set up a wide range of initiatives to address shortcomings. The school development plan reflects this very clear vision and outlines how improvements are to be secured. Certainly, there has been a good start through the improvements to the environment by display and in the 2004 results of tests taken by current Year 6 pupils, although these results are not yet confirmed. Issues in science have been particularly well addressed through the improved focus on investigative and problem-solving approaches. However, more needs to be done to address the weaknesses in assessment and in mathematics.
53. Governors are very well informed about the school and its work. They carry out their responsibilities well and have a good committee structure to help them carry these out effectively. The governing body plays a good role in providing challenge to the school management and in monitoring the work of the school. They have good oversight of finances and ensure that these are directed towards educational priorities. Governors are proud of the multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-faith nature of the school.
54. The deputy headteacher and the key stage co-ordinators provide good support to the headteacher. They, with the headteacher, form the recently constituted senior team, and are beginning to work effectively together. Individual roles and responsibilities within the team are currently evolving well but have yet to be fully established in practice.
55. Subject leaders provide clear leadership, on the whole, of their areas. However, many are new to the post and monitoring and evaluation of work within subject areas are just evolving. There has been good work in science with the science co-ordinator making good use of monitoring evidence to set an agenda for improvement which has contributed well to the improved provision and standards. Co-ordination is also good in English and for the Foundation Stage but it is unsatisfactory in mathematics as there is no co-ordinator and hence for much of this year, there has been no day-to-day oversight of the subject. The school leadership has promoted some improvement in mathematics, and particularly good improvement in the performance of pupils currently in Year 6 in national tests, but much remains to be done in this area to sustain current developments and raise standards. A co-ordinator for mathematics has been identified for September 2004. Overall, the planned development of subject leadership roles has yet to be fully realised.
56. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language are very good. Although being in the school only two days a week, the support teacher manages this important aspect of the school's work very effectively and has a major impact on its work and outreach to the community. Work with the pupils themselves adds significantly to the school's strong ethos and the way that opportunities are provided for all pupils. The support teacher has a clear view of the needs of pupils learning English and the responsibilities to the community. Her work in other establishments means that she has a good view of other local initiatives and the work of the support staff provided through the LEA is well integrated with that provided through the school. Support assistants are well managed and well prepared for their responsibilities. Several are working for further professional qualifications. The team supporting pupils with English as an additional language is well co-ordinated and managed. Areas of development, which

are recognised by the school, are to consolidate all class teachers' appreciation of the needs of pupils learning English issues and ensure that the agreed approach is consistently adopted and clearly shown in their lesson planning. Also, the impact of this important work across the school is not given sufficient prominence in the school improvement plan because initiatives are not brought together in a clear and separate statement.

57. The provision for special educational needs is well led and managed. The co-ordinator assists all staff in developing targets and programmes for this group of pupils. There is an effective link from the governing body to the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) and governors receive appropriately detailed information. Training has been good for all involved and the co-ordinator ensures that problems that are on the horizon, such as the increase in autistic spectrum disorders, are well prepared for within the staff training programme. Teaching assistants in particular value the guidance and support they receive from the SENCO. Progress is not monitored rigorously enough and more work can now be carried out in accurately identifying the progress made against targets in individual plans and within subjects.
58. The SENCO has the brief to develop work for gifted and talented pupils. There is an appropriate policy in place and enough management time to support this work. A delay over funding has meant that work has not been carried out and, as a result, higher attaining pupils are not always challenged adequately.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	975,959	Balance from previous year	42,725
Total expenditure	985,165	Balance carried forward to the next year	33,519
Expenditure per pupil	2638		

59. The school's finances are well managed and funding is generally well directed at educational priorities. Good attention is given to the principles of best value. Funds for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are appropriately allocated. Given the broadly average spending per pupil and the overall good achievement, the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The school currently has 39 children in the nursery who attend morning or afternoon sessions. There are 44 children in two reception classes. A significant number of children come from homes where the home language is not English and learn English as an additional language. A minority of these children are beginners in English, and most have sufficient command of the English language to communicate reasonably effectively for their needs at the Foundation Stage level. They are well supported by bi-lingual support staff who use the home language very effectively to support English language development. Across all areas, there is good development of new and wider English vocabulary and sentence structure. Provision of activities which broaden the social and cultural experiences of minority ethnic children, particularly those who do not speak English as a mother tongue, enables them to adapt to the different cultural and social norms between home and school and overall to engage effectively with the curriculum provided. Children start school well prepared to learn. The nursery provides a good grounding and good initial development of skills for all pupils, including further development of English skills for those learning English. All children, including those with special educational needs and those learning English, make good progress and the majority reach at least the expected standards in all areas of learning by the time they join Year 1. This signals good achievement, given the high proportion who have English as an additional language.

The accommodation is unsatisfactory but all adults in the nursery and reception classes make the very best of the indoor and outdoor accommodation available to them. The nursery is situated away from the main school in damp, cramped accommodation. The reception classes are situated in the main school building and, whilst the classrooms provide a bright and stimulating learning environment for children, the outdoor accommodation is restricted to a small tarmac playground with a limited range of recently purchased outdoor equipment. Due to the dedication and commitment of the staff, the unsatisfactory accommodation does not have a negative impact on children's achievement. The school's plans for a new building project are aimed at addressing the issues of accommodation. There is a recently appointed Foundation Stage leader who is having a positive impact on provision by ensuring that adults in the nursery feel more involved with the whole school and by developing procedures whereby the nursery and reception classes work closely together to ensure that children receive consistently good provision. Teaching assistants work very well with teachers and provide strong support to them and to the children. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place. Adults undertake comprehensive observations but these do not always inform curriculum planning for individual children's needs or abilities, especially in mathematics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is very good.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good.
- Children develop very good attitudes to learning.

COMMENTARY

60. The development of children's personal and social skills is given high priority and underpins all the work in the nursery and reception classes. As a result, achievement is very good. Almost all children reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1 and demonstrate good personal, social and emotional development. They develop very good attitudes to learning and demonstrate high levels of concentration and co-operation with one another and with adults. Children quickly settle into the caring and safe environment of the nursery and follow basic routines and respond well to high expectations of behaviour and attitudes. The excellent working relationships between all members of staff and parents are very effective in showing children how to relate to each other in a friendly and caring manner. Care is taken to assess children's different experiences before they come to school and all adults work hard to establish a sense of belonging based on personal care and making children feel comfortable and liked. Very good teaching, which emphasises kindness to each other, and planned activities that require co-operation, result in very good social development. Children frequently support and celebrate each other's learning and achievements. Adults place great emphasis on the development of children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. As a result, children respond well to new challenges such as happily sharing equipment and negotiating with each other in the outdoor play areas and tidying away equipment at the end of the session. The well-structured system of induction, including home visits, does much to ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is very good and activities are very well planned so that children make very good progress in lessons.
- Staff understand the importance of engaging children in meaningful discussion and provide good role models of language.
- Teaching assistants provide teachers and children with strong support.
- Achievement is very good overall, especially given the high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language.

COMMENTARY

61. All children, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make very good progress towards attaining the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. Achievement is very good overall, especially given the above average proportions of pupils learning English as an additional language. Attainment is in line with national expectations of this stage but is edging towards being above, especially in speaking and listening. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through meaningful discussions that are often based on the topic or theme being followed by the class. For example, in the nursery, adults engage children in discussions about the "Out and About" theme being followed this term, which has included a trip to the London Aquarium. Children listen very attentively and most children are confident to participate in conversations and offer their ideas, opinions

and suggestions in response to adults' questions. In the reception classes, children speak confidently to adults, and to each other, about things they have learned through their 'Mini-beast' topic. They write their names and simple words and sentences in neat, legible script. Children enjoy sharing books and most children can read simple sentences and familiar words confidently and accurately by the end of the reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teachers use a good range of incidental mathematical songs and games.
- Mathematical activities for the outdoor area are not reflected strongly in displays or teachers' plans.

COMMENTARY

62. Children make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily. Most are on course to reach the early learning goals for mathematics by the end of the reception year because of the satisfactory teaching they receive and the good range of incidental mathematical activities in which they participate, such as regular counting games and songs that all teachers use as part of their daily classroom routines and repertoire. When participating in counting games and songs, children display a sound understanding of number and undertake simple addition and subtraction calculations quickly and accurately. For example, children in the nursery accurately count the number of children present when the register is taken, and remember to include themselves. Children in reception accurately count the number of children who would like a 'spare milk', count the number of cartons of milk available, and mentally calculate the difference between the two amounts, for example, when there were nine children who wanted a drink of milk but only seven cartons available, several children readily commented that there were, 'Two children left over' or, 'Two milks short'. Mathematical activities do not feature as strongly in classroom displays. Teachers' planning for the outdoor area does not always include activities to support mathematical development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is good and children make good progress.
- Teachers plan a good range of activities to support children's learning.
- Visits are used well to broaden children's experiences and achievement.

COMMENTARY

63. Teachers effectively plan and deliver a wide range of experiences that help develop and extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them. As a result, achievement is good overall. Well-planned activities allow children to learn from play and to gain experiences that promote good learning. This term, mini-beast hunts within the school environment, and a trip to the London Aquarium have been well planned. This has

resulted in children's experiences being broadened and their knowledge and understanding of the world has deepened. Children in nursery and reception have daily access to computers. Children in reception confidently use small programmable toys to support their understanding of computers, robots and 'control technology'. Activities in nursery and reception are linked closely to topic themes and help to give children a "real-life" connection to learning that supports and deepens their understanding of the world. Most children achieve the expected standards by the time they join Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Well-planned and structured physical education lessons effectively support children's achievements in this area of learning.
- The outdoor accommodation for children in the reception year is unsatisfactory and limits opportunities for physical activity on a daily basis.
- Staff in the nursery and reception classes make the best use of the limited outdoor resources they have to ensure that children make adequate progress.

COMMENTARY

64. The quality of teaching and learning is good and almost all children reach standards appropriate to their age by the time they leave the reception year. Children in the nursery have daily access to the outdoor garden area where they have opportunities to run, jump, climb, balance and ride wheeled toys. Children in the reception year take part in weekly timetabled physical education lessons in the school hall and have regular access to a tarmac playground that has a small range of outdoor resources. The unsatisfactory quality of the outdoor accommodation for children in the reception year restricts their opportunities to develop physical skills in the open air. However, overall achievement is satisfactory. In lessons in the school hall, children in the reception year demonstrate physical abilities in line with the expected levels. They balance, climb and move on the floor in a variety of ways with confidence and skill. The very good relationships established between the children and the class teacher and support staff result in reception children having fun as well as learning to use a range of apparatus and move in different ways and directions. These very good relationships are a common feature in all classes and encourage children to "have a go" during physical activities. As a result of good opportunities daily to use small tools and instruments, including paint brushes, pencils, scissors, crayons and even hammers and nails, children make good progress in developing fine motor skills. The management of children is very good, ensuring the safe use of apparatus and tools.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Creative activities have a high profile in teachers' planning and in classroom displays.

- Creative activities are effectively linked to the topics or themes being followed in the nursery or reception classes.

COMMENTARY

65. Children are provided with a colourful and stimulating learning environment in which creativity and expressiveness are promoted and valued. Adults are adept at getting responses from children in relation to what they see, hear, feel and imagine. As a result, children achieve well and most reach the standard expected for their age by the end of their time in reception. Creative development is successfully fostered through a wide range of experiences such as mixing paints, choosing colours for a purpose, and making constructions, collages and paintings. Children enjoy activities that require sticking, gluing and joining materials together. All adults in these classes have good subject knowledge and work effectively with children on creative activities encouraging children to engage with their creative activities in a meaningful way. For example, in the nursery as part of the “Out and About” topic, adults mixed sand with paint and encouraged children to describe the texture, which they did by using words such as, “crunchy” and “rough”, before giving them the opportunity to explore what it was like to paint with “sandy paint” and supporting them to produce colourful pictures and patterns of the seaside. Children in reception have produced a wide range of colourful pictures, collages, masks and hats, including ‘Sunflowers’ in the style of Van Gogh, which are all linked to their main topic of “Growing”. Adults have a good repertoire of songs and rhymes for daily routines, counting and supporting learning in the topic. The children know the songs and rhymes very well and join in tunefully and enthusiastically. Children in the nursery have good opportunities for creative role-play and adults support this very well by going “into character” and joining in conversations and play situations in a sensitive and helpful manner.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' achievement in reading, speaking and listening skills is good across the school. However, the standards of boys' written work are weaker than those of girls.
- Teaching is good and often very good at both key stages.
- Support provided by teaching assistants is of a high quality and contributes to good and often very good progress by pupils with language and literacy difficulties.
- Assessment practice varies and, as yet, there is no coherent method of recording and analysing progress through the school.
- The co-ordinator has provided good leadership, particularly in the development of reading and use of data to identify key areas for development.
- The stock and usage of the main school library need improving.
- Pupils' use of literacy skills in other subjects is good, though there is some scope for further development of written work in science and history.

COMMENTARY

66. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of English at both key stages. This is borne out by the very good test results gained in 2003 by seven and 11-year-olds. Similar standards were attained by seven-year-olds in the 2004 national tests, though fewer gained the higher level in writing. None the less, seven-year-olds did very well in 2004, given the high proportion with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Year 6 pupils did not attain as well in 2004 as in 2003, where their results were well above average. The 2004 results for Year 6 pupils were close to the 2003 national averages, unlike the well above average results of 2003, mainly because boys' performance, especially in writing, was weaker. However, given that nearly half the boys were on the special needs register and half were identified as having English as an additional language, their overall performance signals good achievement. Girls' 2004 results remained high. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above average by Years 2 and 6. This reflects the test results for Year 2 pupils but is a better picture of attainment for Year 6 pupils because they have strong skills in speaking and listening, and these were not included in tests. In addition, further progress seems to have been made in reading and writing since the pupils took tests two months earlier. By Years 2 and 6, standards in reading are above average and those in writing are average. Boys' written work is of a lower standard than that of girls, though, to some extent, this reflects the greater prevalence of special educational needs and English language learning needs amongst boys.
67. Although some pupils take a while to develop fluent and accurate English when speaking, they achieve well in developing their oral and aural skills. By Year 2, pupils discuss work well in a large group or in pairs. They speak clearly and accurately to visitors and answer questions using vocabulary related to the subject in question. They also show good listening skills when stories are told or other pupils' work is presented. Older pupils

develop speaking skills that allow them to make the most of guided reading lessons, in which teachers are able to work with a group knowing that other pupils have the confidence, vocabulary and listening skills to work together effectively. Thus, in a good Year 4 reading lesson, unsupervised groups were able to take turns at reading, questioned difficult words and discussed what was to come next in the story. In other lessons, including religious education, history and poetry, older pupils showed mature skills in volunteering information, questioning teachers and, significantly, justifying their views with evidence. Pupils with English as an additional language develop their range and breadth of English vocabulary and reach good standards of speaking and listening by the end of Year 6.

68. Books and reading corners in classrooms have improved significantly since the start of the current year and all pupils show a high level of interest in books, which results in good, and often very good, achievement, in reading. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils are reading short paperbacks with good intonation and a range of strategies to help when unknown words occur. They have favourite authors and use the blurbs of books to decide whether they will enjoy the book in question. Pupils with special educational needs often use books with limited vocabulary and demonstrate a more limited range of phonic skills. However, they too enjoy books and are confident in their use of both fiction and non-fiction. Reading develops well through Years 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils are reading the works of J K Rowling and Tolkien with assurance. They use libraries outside school and most have developed interest in a wide range of authors. Pupils with learning difficulties read adapted texts, but do so with interest and fluency. In some cases, pupils who initially struggled with reading now read complex texts, having made very good progress in their understanding of English. Those learning English make good progress in developing their English reading skills by widening their vocabulary and, in particular, develop their comprehension skills well. Older pupils learning English make particularly good progress in comprehending hidden meaning in texts, i.e. their skills in deduction.
69. In writing, boys' work, particularly that of older boys, is somewhat erratic and at times short in length. Presentation of some pupils, mainly boys, is poor. One reason for this inconsistent picture in writing is that teachers vary in the effective use of marking. It is often detailed and helpful, encouraging pupils to improve presentation and reinforce spelling skills. However, some teachers do not provide clear enough guidance for pupils on how to improve their writing. Writing by Year 2 shows good vocabulary and sentence structures that are beyond expectations for that age for many pupils. Spellings are becoming increasingly accurate as the result of good dictionary skills. Pupils show a willingness to complete tasks and, generally, produce handwriting that is tidy and, where appropriate, joined.
70. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to produce stories that contain vivid vocabulary and higher attaining pupils sustain three or four pages of independent narrative. Although the standard of boys' writing is weaker than that of girls by the end of Year 6, they have nonetheless made progress. Inspection evidence also indicated that the good progress in writing shown by younger pupils is now in evidence in Years 3 and 4, but has not had time to be reflected in the national tests at the age of 11.
71. The teaching seen during the inspection was of a good standard overall, with a number of very good lessons in both key stages. It is characterised by careful planning, good group activities for the range of attainment and good pace on the part of the teacher. Teaching

assistants provide skilled support for all pupils and use questions and explanations well to challenge pupils. Thus, in a very good Year 2 lesson on information books, the class teacher introduced the subject with two assistants conducting parallel discussions with pupils who were experiencing difficulties. The work was well carried out and no distractions occurred for any pupils. Teamwork of a similarly high standard took place during group activities with assistants who demonstrated teaching skills of a high order. In a very good Year 6 lesson, the teacher used a wide variety of poets to encourage pupils to develop work of their own portraying moods. The standard of work produced by all pupils was well above that of primary school pupils, largely as a result of the knowledge and enthusiasm of the teacher.

72. Although all teachers assess the work carried out by their class, the amount of detail varies, as does the degree to which they adapt work as a result. Assessment practice varies from teacher to teacher and there is no consistency. In addition, there is no monitoring of pupils' work across the school and this makes it difficult to assess pupils' levels accurately and predict where they will succeed or find English difficult. Addressing these issues of assessment should help the school to establish more sharply the extent to which special educational needs and the needs of pupils, particularly boys, learning English are responsible for the wide gap in attainment between boys and girls, especially in written work, and hence address the difference from an informed position.
73. The co-ordinator is new to the school, but has already made significant improvements. Staff have been able to spend a considerable sum on new books and on improving the reading areas within their classrooms. This has added to the status of reading within the school. Plans are in place to provide greater stimuli for boys to read through the purchase of appropriate texts and software. Although there is a school library, most teachers rely upon their class stock of books to provide for pupils. This means that the main library has not developed effectively as a centre for research and reading. There are no structured arrangements for using the library as a resource and this prevents many pupils from developing reference skills that will be valuable in future life.
74. Provision and standards have improved since the last inspection. The current inspection identifies three main areas in which improvement has taken place since the previous report. In 1999, the achievement of all pupils was only 'sound'; it is now good. Then, pupils' response to English was 'good'. It is now invariably very good. There were also strong indications that teaching is of a higher quality with a better percentage of very good lessons being taught across the school.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

75. Standards of literacy are good across the school and enable pupils to work independently to access the curriculum in different subjects. Pupils read and write well when using language across the curriculum. Literacy skills are assisted and developed well in most subjects. Subject-specific vocabulary is well taught and well used by pupils, though more work needs to be done in science to help older pupils provide precise enough explanations of their scientific findings. Work in religious education, design and technology and personal, social and health education (PSHE) shows strong indications that there is a good level of expectation for reading and writing. Many subjects provide good opportunities to further develop speaking and listening skills. There is a good volume of written work in science with pupils presenting their findings in tables and, especially in Years 3 to 6, writing reports independently. However, there is scope to

widen the variety of writing in this area. Most subjects provide good opportunities for extended writing. Only in history are such opportunities limited.

FRENCH

The school teaches French in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching is good and focuses well on listening and responding skills. Pupils also have opportunities for developing their reading and writing skills. Two lessons were observed, one complete and one partially. Pupils focus well on their learning and enjoy learning French. Most are confident about speaking the language and making good progress in developing simple vocabulary and speaking simple sentences such as: 'Je suis anglais'. They are achieving well overall.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are improving and are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement is good in Year 1 and in Year 6, but is less consistent in other year groups.
- The setting arrangements introduced this year have contributed positively to improved standards in Year 6.
- The day-to-day leadership and management of mathematics has been unsatisfactory.
- Though overall teaching is satisfactory and good and very good teaching were observed, teaching and learning are not consistently good enough to ensure pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable in all classes.
- Not enough use is made of computers in mathematics lessons.
- There are not enough planned opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects.

COMMENTARY

76. In the 2003 national tests for Year 6, results were below average. The performance of boys was significantly lower than that of girls. This year, the school has focused on raising standards in mathematics and unconfirmed results for 2004 show a significant improvement for Year 6 pupils. The setting arrangements introduced this year have contributed positively to the improved standards. Girls continue to outperform boys but the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language was similar to that of their mono-lingual peers. From inspection evidence, teaching is satisfactory overall, but in many lessons, teachers use a narrow range of strategies. They seldom use visual teaching strategies and often do not model tasks well enough to ensure that pupils understand the work. The narrow range does not ensure that all pupils can understand and succeed.
77. In the 2003 tests for Year 2 pupils, an above average proportion of pupils reached or exceeded the expected level. The, as yet unconfirmed, 2004 results show that a similar proportion reached the expected standard but a significantly smaller number exceeded the expectation. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls and the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language was marginally higher than the school average. However, most pupils achieved well in the tests, given the high level of special educational needs and English language learning needs.

78. The work seen during the inspection confirms the standards indicated by the 2004 test results. By Year 2, most pupils reach the expected standard but few exceed it. Pupils recognise simple fractions, they understand that they are part of a whole and they can divide a shape into halves and quarters. Only a few have gone further than this and are able to recognise two fractions that are equivalent, for example, two quarters and a half. However, pupils in Year 1 are achieving well as they enter the school with average mathematical understanding and by the end of Year 1, standards are above those expected for their age. For example, many can successfully subtract numbers up to 20 and can use addition and subtraction symbols to record their calculations. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily so that earlier work is consolidated. By Year 6, most pupils have developed sound problem-solving skills and good numeracy skills. They apply the skills they have learned to solve simple problems that require them to create a table, collect data and interrogate a timetable. They are less secure in planning a step by step approach to more complex problems. This is because teaching is often focused on the outcome rather than teaching the process of problem solving. Able pupils have mastered problem-solving well by the end of Year 6. Most pupils have secure skills in geometry, including measurement. Pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups, well supported by teachers and teaching assistants, achieve as well as their peers.
79. Insufficient use is made of computers in mathematics and this is an important area for improvement. Literacy is well used in mathematics and pupils use and understand the correct technical language.
80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is best in the younger age range, although there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in both the lower and upper part of the school. Good teaching is well planned with good use of questioning and challenge for pupils. In a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher's very good knowledge of mathematics enabled him to structure pupils' learning about tally charts well, i.e. how to produce them and use them. He had been thoughtful about the different needs of pupils of differing abilities and planned well to enable all to be appropriately stretched. In the most effective lessons, the work is interesting and stimulating, as in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher used a real cake to explain fractions and pupils were then able to divide 'paper cakes' and then other shapes into halves and quarters. Where teaching is very good, the teacher models the task before the pupils undertake it and then provides work at different levels so that pupils of all levels of attainment are challenged. This was shown well in a Year 1 class where the teacher modelled a game based on subtracting numbers and then provided different versions of the game to groups of differing attainment. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the teacher's knowledge of mathematics is not secure and generally the school is not making sufficiently good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to support the teaching of mathematics. Additionally, many teachers are not making sufficient use of their pupil assessment records to plan work. For example, they do not match work to the range of attainment in the group and, most noticeably, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.
81. There have been difficulties with day-to-day leadership and management because there is no mathematics co-ordinator. Hence, there has been no opportunity for development and improvement of provision in the way that science and literacy co-ordinators have, through on-going support and feedback to class teachers, established good provision across the school. Though there has been good strategic input from the school leadership, such as promotion of setting by ability to help raise standards, the day-to-day

leadership and management must be judged unsatisfactory. There are no systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils from the reception year to Year 6, although a wide range of test data is available. Neither is this information used sufficiently to set individual targets for pupils so that they have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. There has been very little monitoring of teaching and learning and, as a consequence, standards are inconsistent across the school. The new school development plan identifies appropriate strategies for improvement and a new subject leader has been allocated for September.

82. At the last inspection, pupils made good progress in mathematics and standards were above average by Year 6. These have not been consistently maintained in Years 3 to 6, and there was a trend of decline in the tests for 11-year-olds until the most recent tests of 2004, which begin to reverse that trend. Though the school has made exceptional progress this year with improving the performance of pupils in Year 6, this has yet to be replicated on a consistent basis across all year groups. Therefore, secure improvement since the last inspection is yet to be established.

MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

83. Where pupils are given opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in other subjects, they have responded well and show that they can apply their skills in new situations. For example, when they are drawing line graphs in science, using tally charts in history and other data handling in geography. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average because good attention is given to the development of pupils' investigative skills and there are good opportunities for practical work.
- Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas well across all year groups and overall achievement is good.
- Whilst pupils make good progress in developing their skills in many aspects of investigative work, they are not achieving as well in explaining findings.
- Marking and assessment are underdeveloped.
- Co-ordination of science is good.

COMMENTARY

84. Standards in science are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6. Achievement is good throughout the school, particularly in relation to knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and ideas across the school. Good focus on investigative skills has resulted in pupils' developing well their skills in most areas of science investigation work. For example, younger pupils know what a fair test is and how to make predictions. Most make sound suggestions when doing experiments as to what they need to find out and how they can answer the questions they have identified. Their observation skills are developing well and they make accurate note of their observations. Older pupils are developing good skills in planning experiments and recording their results accurately.

They plot graphs to represent and analyse their findings. However, pupils do not often provide detailed or precise enough written explanations of what they observe when carrying out an experiment. Marking does not pick up sufficiently well that pupils could improve their explanations, and this holds back the progress particularly of able pupils and pupils who have English as an additional language. On the whole though, pupils learning English achieve well and their standards of work are similar to those of others.

85. Test results for Year 6 pupils were well below average in 2003. However, this dip in performance has been successfully addressed and the unconfirmed results for 2004 are much better so that they reflect the attainment indicated by the inspection evidence.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Pupils enjoy their science work and are willing to think hard about it. There is very good management of pupils and, hence, practical activities are effectively carried out. Teachers ask pupils good questions to help them think through ideas and formulate clear concepts. However, written work is not always completed fully and presentation is sometimes poor, shortcomings which teachers need to challenge more consistently when marking work. Whilst there are regular assessments of pupils' progress, work is not assessed in terms of National Curriculum levels.
87. Co-ordination of science is good and the co-ordinator has undertaken detailed evaluation and analysis of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring of teaching has also been well used to inform planning. Hence, the areas identified by the present inspection for improvement are already identified in the school development plan. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. There has been a steady improvement in tests results for 11-year-olds and the good features noted from the last inspection, such as good teaching and very good attitudes of pupils, have been maintained.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good.
- The subject is well led and managed by a newly appointed co-ordinator.
- Technical problems with hardware sometimes limit pupils' achievements.
- There are currently no arrangements for assessment in ICT, though skills' checklists are being developed.

COMMENTARY

88. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily in ICT and standards are in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils have covered all the key elements of the ICT curriculum and they have developed sound skills across both key stages. For example, pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of how to instruct a programmable toy to make a right-angled turn or to draw a square. They write well presented stories and blurb using word processors and present information on bar charts using appropriate data handling packages. By Year 6, pupils have sound skills in using a

range of programs. They use data-handling programs knowledgeably to represent data or to find out answers to questions. Most are comfortable with using the Internet to search for information. Pupils show a keen interest in ICT and some say it is their favourite lesson.

89. The newly appointed co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has undertaken a review of the subject and is taking effective steps to raise the profile of ICT across the school to ensure that there is a clear progression of pupils' skills from year to year. To this end, she is developing and introducing a comprehensive skills checklist for each pupil in each year group.
90. In lessons seen, teaching and learning were at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Good lessons were characterised by clear planning, with explicit objectives, teachers' good subject knowledge, lively delivery and plenty of "hands on" activities for pupils. In these lessons, relationships between adults and pupils were very good and pupils had a very positive attitude towards their learning. The satisfactory lessons were characterised by slower pace and less variety and challenge in activities planned for pupils. Teachers are confident when using computers and other ICT devices, such as programmable toys, for example, 'Roamer' and 'Pixie'.
91. Due to lack of suitable space, the school does not have a computer suite but has a bank of laptop computers and a wireless network across the school. Each class also has at least one standard personal computer for pupils' use. The wireless network and laptop computers are occasionally affected by technical problems and this limits the time that pupils spend on computers and, thereby, their achievements in ICT. For example, technical problems with the network, earlier this term, resulted in ICT work by Year 6 being lost, as pupils were unable to print or save their work. The new co-ordinator is fully aware of these issues and is currently undertaking research into identifying the best way forward for the school. Overall, progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

92. Satisfactory use is made of computers in classrooms to support learning in different subjects. For example, in Year 2, pupils used the Internet to research information on whales using glossaries and references. In religious education and design and technology, pupils regularly use the Internet to research different topics and most classes use digital cameras confidently to record their work.

HUMANITIES

GEOGRAPHY

93. There was insufficient evidence for judgements to be made on overall provision in geography or on the quality of teaching and learning. Indications from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work are that a sound range of topics is covered. In Years 1 and 2, pupils draw maps to show where Barnaby Bear went on holiday and others undertake a traffic and car parking survey of roads near the school. Pupils in Year 6 consider ways to improve their local environment and devise an interesting questionnaire to discover other people's opinions. Others use specific terminology, such as scree slopes, ridge, summit and weathering, as they look at different mountain environments. Pupils' study of mountains is illustrated by a large and very effective mural depicting

environments around Snowdonia. Teaching in the single lesson observed during the inspection was good, and led to effective learning. The class teacher used her good subject knowledge and knowledge of the pupils to plan interesting and challenging mapping activities in preparation for their forthcoming visit to the seaside. Pupils were shown clearly what to do and some useful extension activities were planned for higher attaining pupils.

HISTORY

94. There was insufficient evidence for judgements to be made on overall provision in history or on the quality of teaching and learning. Indications from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work are that a sound range of topics is covered. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of the life and times of Florence Nightingale and some of the events concerning the Great Fire of London. Their appreciation of chronology is developed as they consider how toys have changed down the ages. In Year 6, pupils have a sound appreciation of how Britain has changed since 1948 and compare life today with aspects of life in Victorian Britain, such as changes in schooling. Two lessons were observed, one was good but the other was unsatisfactory. Where teaching observed was good, good subject knowledge supported the good development of pupils' appreciation of how to evaluate and use different evidence sources to extract historical information. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, there were shortcomings in lesson planning, the pace was too slow and pupils were not sufficiently interested or enthused by the work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 now exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
- By the time pupils leave the school, they have had many opportunities to think about, and discuss, many of the most serious questions in life.
- There are very good links between religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) and both make a good contribution to pupils' moral and social skills.
- There are many rich and stimulating opportunities to fully engage with faiths other than Christianity.

COMMENTARY

95. The school's planning for the subject matches the requirements of Kent's Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 talk in an informed way about Christianity, re-telling stories well, and those of other faiths, such as Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. Older pupils demonstrate a growing awareness of the traditions and rituals with Islam, for example, the importance of special journeys such as the Hajj. Pupils across the school enjoy hearing about the celebration of festivals and realise, as they move through the school, that different faiths have the same moral tenets, but different forms of worship. Achievement is good overall at both key stages.

96. Teaching is good and often very good indeed. Teachers provide many opportunities for discussion, as a whole class and in the form of small groups and pairs. Teachers provide good role models in showing respect for others and are very willing to be questioned about their views. They challenge pupils' views well at all ages. In a good Year 6 lesson, the teacher stimulated questions such as 'Why do we say God is a man?' and 'Did God create himself?' as a result of a detailed study of Sikhism. In all aspects, pupils showed a breadth of understanding and a maturity of expression that indicated that the religious education syllabus within the school contributed well to the development of young adults with a reflective and sensitive approach to different faiths and faith in general.
97. The subject is well resourced and there are strong links with local places of worship, particularly the church and gurdwara. There is a good stock of books relating to religious education in classes and in the library. In addition, the local community is a very rich resource for the school, especially in its detailed study of Sikhism. Thus, all Year 2 pupils visited the gurdwara during the inspection. They were well received and the information given, together with opportunities to hear the sung text and partake in the blessed food, contributed to a very memorable afternoon. During and after the visit, pupils showed very good knowledge of Sikhism and, more importantly, a strong interest and respect for its beliefs and ceremonies.
98. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership in this subject and has contributed much to the progress pupils make. She has developed a good scheme of work using a wide variety of sources. She places a strong emphasis upon high standards and has a sensible action plan to move the subject further forward. Her work, together with the good teaching throughout the school, ensures that religious education makes a very strong contribution to the spiritual, moral and social education of all pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

99. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision or overall judgements on achievement and teaching and learning as only a small number of lessons were seen in art and design.
100. Two lessons were observed in the Year 3 and 4 classes. In these lessons, pupils achieved well. They could talk confidently about the sculptures of the artist Gaudi and linked this to how architects and artists improve the environment, for example, in the nearby regional shopping centre. Artwork displayed in classrooms and around the school was of a good standard and shows that pupils are achieving well in art. They are learning to work with a range of materials and good links are made with design and technology so that pupils are taught to research, plan and evaluate their work, saying how they could improve it. There are vibrant examples of collage work using brightly-coloured fabrics on display. Cultural awareness is well developed in art and design and pupils have produced some excellent textile work based on Indian fabrics and used Chinese writing and symbols to produce pictures to celebrate Chinese New Year. Sketching and shading techniques are well developed and by Year 6, pupils use pastels well to produce good observational drawings.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision or overall judgements on achievement and teaching and learning as only one lesson was sampled.
102. Work displayed in classrooms, and evidence in pupils' books, indicate that pupils' achievements in design and technology are generally good and that overall standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in making are particularly good. Pupils are learning to work with a range of materials and they are taught to research, plan and evaluate their work, saying how they could improve it. For example, in Year 1, pupils have found out about different types of vehicles and designed and made their own. They have used joining techniques well and show good use of colour in decorating these vehicles, hence, making a good link with art and design work. They evaluate their own and others' work, saying what they liked and how it could be improved. Similar processes have been used in Year 2 to make puppets and junk models in Years 3 and 4 classes. By Year 6, pupils have made toys of a high standard that make good use of cams in the design. These toys are well presented, work effectively and reflect each pupil's own personality and imagination. Pupils also have opportunities to investigate and evaluate different foodstuffs. For example, in the good lesson observed in Years 3/4, pupils evaluated a range of different sandwiches against a set of agreed criteria. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes were very positive and they all thoughtfully and sensibly used their senses to assess and grade the look, smell, taste and texture of the different sandwiches on offer.
103. The curriculum is based well on national guidelines. Work is planned to ensure that pupils have sound opportunities to develop their skills in designing, planning, making and evaluating a range of different products and objects.

MUSIC

104. A limited range of lessons, assemblies and music clubs was observed during the inspection. From this limited evidence base, the school's provision for music appears to be at least satisfactory and pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils sing tunefully in assemblies and the school band, of recorder players and a drummer, effectively accompanies the teacher, who plays the piano. The recorder group meet at lunchtimes and the standards attained by this group, of largely Year 4 pupils, are high. The school makes the most of visitors from the local community and welcomes a group of young local Sikh drummers and dancers into the school each week. This group, "Cultural Beats", runs a lunchtime dohl drum club and leads workshop lessons for Year 6 on bhangra dancing. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during these sessions are very good. They listen attentively, follow instructions readily, fully participate in all actions and activities and treat the workshop leaders with respect, whilst effectively learning about other religions, cultures and beliefs, and having fun. The school's music provision makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision as only a small number of lessons were seen.
106. School records show pupils go swimming regularly and by the time they reach Year 6, the majority can swim the 25 metres required by the National Curriculum in physical education.

107. In physical education, two lessons were observed, one in Year 2 and one in a Years 3/4 class. Learning was restricted as lessons took place indoors and, although the outdoor space has limitations, it is suitable for class lessons. In Year 2, pupils showed good control when dribbling a ball with their feet. In both lessons, pupils were encouraged to observe, evaluate and comment on each other's work, which they did well. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are making sound progress in learning jumping techniques in athletics, although their landings lack resilience and need some further work. They can measure and record their attempts and say how they could improve. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular physical education and sporting activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- All class teachers provide pupils with opportunities to examine issues of personal and social development.
- The school's enrichment and extra-curricular activities promote social and personal development well.

COMMENTARY

108. There is good provision for personal, social and health education. Though there is no scheme of work, all teachers include a programme of PSHE in their teaching. A new co-ordinator has been appointed from September 2004.

109. The programme of work has all the appropriate elements. Sex education is taught from Year 3 and parents of Year 6 pupils have the opportunity of seeing a video upon puberty, a part of the programme in which the school nurse has a role. Overall, pupils' personal and social development is very good as a result of the good teaching and the very good ethos which enables personal and social development to be promoted very effectively through whole school activities such as assemblies. They develop a good awareness of health issues.

110. During the inspection, four PSHE lessons were observed, two were good, and another was very good. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers listened to pupils' views and gave important messages in terms of social and moral values. One was how to deal with conflict, the other of being kind. Pupils responded very well in these situations and articulated views and concerns well.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

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

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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