

INSPECTION REPORT

LAYCOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

London Borough of Islington

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100411

Headteacher: Ms C Miles

Lead inspector: Mr P Mann

Dates of inspection: 10th-13th November 2003

Inspection number: 259783

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: 388

School address: Laycock Street
Upper Street
London
Postcode: N1 1SW

Telephone number: 0207 226 2927
Fax number: 0207 704 2885

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs E Batchelor

Date of previous inspection: 19th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Laycock Primary School has 398 pupils on roll, aged 3 to 11 and the average class size is 23. It serves an inner city community in Islington, London. Many pupils come from very disadvantaged home backgrounds but a significant number are from more affluent circumstances. An above average number are in receipt of a free school meal. The buildings date from 1903 and are surrounded by interesting and vibrant hard surface play areas. At the time of the inspection, there were 30 children under five in the nursery and reception classes. The attainment of children at the start of school is well below average. The school is host to a specialised unit for the hearing impaired for over 50 pupils with statements of special educational needs. These pupils are fully included in many lessons and activities within the main school. Thirty per cent of the remaining pupils have been identified as having special educational needs of which 20 per cent receive support from outside agencies. Currently two of these pupils have a statement of special educational need.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23219	Phil Mann	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology, Physical education
9468	John Arscott	Lay inspector	
2904	Pauline Martin	Team inspector	English as an additional language, English, Religious education
32218	Andrew Mumford	Team inspector	Children under five, Mathematics, Art, Music
1578	Maureen Sinclair	Team Inspector	Science, Design and technology
23300	Lily Evans	Team Inspector	Special educational needs, Geography, History

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and all staff work hard to provide high levels of care for all pupils. A wide range of interesting and relevant learning experiences is planned for pupils and a satisfactory focus is placed in developing basic skills. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the management of pupil behaviour and quality of teaching overall. As a result, the achievement of pupils, although satisfactory overall, varies between different key stages, classes and groups of pupils. The headteacher's leadership is firm and principled and she holds the respect of staff, parents, pupils and the governing body. Several subjects are led and managed well and school leadership places a satisfactory emphasis on raising standards. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory overall but several issues still need to be addressed. Given the low starting point of many pupils, the standards being achieved and the level of resources available, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below average in English and mathematics across the school and rates of pupils' achievement, although satisfactory overall, are inconsistent.
- Standards are above average for eleven year olds in science and well above average in information and communication technology because all pupils achieve well in these subjects.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is not consistent across the school with the result that pupils' learning slows down in some classes.
- Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is a strength of the school.
- The level of care for all pupils is very good and pupils with a hearing impairment achieve well.
- Strong links have been established with the local community and a very wide range of activities outside school hours are made available to all pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is well below average.
- Planning for the school's long-term development is unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

The achievement of pupils is **satisfactory** overall but varies between different key stages, classes and groups of pupils. It is generally best in the upper junior classes and in subjects such as science, computer work and religious education. All pupils with a hearing impairment are included in the national tests. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good strides in their learning. The high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their literacy skills because of carefully targeted support. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school make satisfactory progress. Very good provision ensures that pupils with a hearing impairment achieve well across the school to attain similar or better than average standards at 11 than other pupils in their year group. The rate of achievement for pupils of average ability is sometimes too slow in English and mathematics.

Overall, the majority of pupils display **good** attitudes towards school. Behaviour is **satisfactory** overall. Pupils' relationships with each other, staff and adults are good, and racial harmony is promoted well. The provision for moral, social and cultural development is **good** and a good range of

activities stimulates the pupils' interest, motivation and the desire to learn. Pupils respect the feelings and beliefs of others and have a good understanding of their own and others' cultural traditions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Teaching is **satisfactory** overall. Much teaching is good or better but in the weakest lessons, the challenging behaviour of some pupils is not always managed well and this limits the progress other pupils make. Marking and assessments are not being used effectively to ensure learning experiences fully match the needs of all pupils. In the best lessons, learning intentions are very clear, resources are used effectively and pupils' achievement is good. Information and communication technology is used extensively to support teaching and learning in several other subjects.

The quality of the curriculum is **good**, with very good links made between subjects. It is enhanced by many visits to a wide variety of places of interest. Visitors bring particular expertise to music and sports activities. Many pupils participate in the many out of school activities provided by the school. Pupils appreciate the very good levels of support and care exhibited by the staff. Good levels of accommodation and resources support learning opportunities and this is especially so for children in the reception and nursery classes. There is strong emphasis on raising the pupils' awareness of their own British heritage and that of other cultures through local history and visits to museums. The school continues to play a major part in the local community and receives considerable funds and resources from other organisations and partnerships.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher's firm and principled leadership has a powerful influence on the school's positive ethos. The leadership team work hard to effect change and are passionately committed to running an equitable and inclusive school. The role of the subject coordinator has been improved since the previous inspection. There is now a good framework in place for monitoring pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. However, the comprehensive collection and use of assessment information to raise standards has yet to be addressed successfully. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has established good relationships with the school and the enthusiasm of individual governors, some of whom are new to the school, is a strength. Planning for the long-term school improvement is, however, underdeveloped. The positive impact of previous school planning is fully recognised but there is no current long-term plan and no clear procedures for measuring the success of school initiatives.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents: On the whole parents are very pleased with what the school is doing for their children. They are confident that their children are making progress and enjoy the wide range of learning experiences provided. They feel that staff are very accessible and easy to talk to. Some parents expressed concerns about disruptive behaviour and its impact on other children in the class and in the playgrounds. The inspection team judge that behaviour in most classes and in the playground is satisfactory, but when the very difficult behaviour of a handful of pupils is not managed effectively, it slows down the learning of the other pupils in the class. Sometimes the playground behaviour becomes boisterous but pupils respond well to high levels of supervision.

Pupils: They like school, feel that they have a good choice of clubs and activities and are trusted to do things on their own. However, some feel that other children do not always behave well but they know who to go to with any concerns or problems.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the rate of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics;
- minimise the impact of challenging behaviour on the learning of pupils;
- improve assessment procedures and use the information effectively to ensure learning experiences fully match the needs of all pupils;
- improve the quality of the school's planning for long-term improvement;
- increase pupil attendance;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure a definitive act of daily collective worship takes place.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils varies across the school but is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for seven and eleven year olds are below average in English and mathematics. Standards are above average for eleven year olds in science and well above average in information and communication technology.
- Pupils with a hearing impairment attain good standards overall and achieve well.
- Rates of pupils' achievement vary across the school from unsatisfactory to good.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.1 (13.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.6 (12.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.3 (15.0)	16.3 (16.3)

There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3(26.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.7 (25.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.8 (29.1)	28.6 (28.5)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. It is recognised by inspectors that a very large proportion of the pupils are on the school's special educational needs register and this factor has a strong influence on the overall standards achieved. About a fifth of pupils either enter the school or leave within the school year, a good proportion of whom speak English as an additional language. This factor also adversely influences the overall standards achieved by pupils.
2. The results in the 2003 national tests for eleven year-olds are well below average in English and below average in mathematics. They are average in science. When these results are compared with schools of similar circumstances and based on free schools meals, they are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Several pupils with low attainment in these subjects were admitted into the school during Year 5 and this had an adverse effect on the overall results in 2003. The results of pupils in Year 2 taking the 2003 national tests are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with schools nationally. When compared with schools with similar circumstances using free school meals data, standards are still well below average for writing and mathematics, but below average in reading. Inspection findings generally reflect these results where standards are

judged to be below average in English and mathematics for seven and eleven year olds. The analysis of this data indicates that there are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls at eleven when using national statistics. However, it has been noted by the school and the local education authority that, when the attainment of Afro-Caribbean boys is compared with similar pupils in other local schools, their level of achievement is good. The inspection team could find no evidence to either sustain or contradict this view. The high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their literacy skills because of carefully targeted support. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory and extra small group support is provided for higher attaining pupils.

3. Standards are judged to be above average for eleven year olds in science and well above average in information and communication technology (ICT). All pupils achieve well in these subjects because lessons are taught well, the expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, both subjects are managed effectively and 'hands-on' experience reinforces knowledge and understanding. This represents considerable improvement on the findings of the previous inspection in these subjects.
4. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is good because effective and well-organised provision is ensuring that basic skills are being taught well and there is a good emphasis on learning through play. This is particularly so in these children's communication, early literacy skills, mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below expected levels. By the end of the reception year they are still below average and many do not reach the levels expected. However, they have made significant progress and their achievement is good.
5. The achievement of pupils, although satisfactory overall, varies between different key stages, classes and groups of pupils. The rate of achievement is generally best in the junior classes for pupils in Years 4 to 6. This is because teaching is mostly good or better in these year groups and the difficult behaviour of some of these older pupils is managed well by more experienced staff. Teachers work very hard in other year groups to successfully manage the challenging behaviour of a few pupils in their lessons. However, when teachers are unable to manage this difficult behaviour successfully the learning of the majority of pupils in these lessons is disrupted, and achievement is unsatisfactory overall. This was noted in several lessons during the inspection.
6. From a very low starting point, pupils with a hearing impairment make rapid progress in acquiring language skills. By the end of Year 6, the majority achieve standards comparable to, and above, nationally expected levels in core subjects. Achievement in science is consistently high. Those pupils with more complex needs also achieve very well
7. The use of assessment information by teachers to effectively match work to the needs of all pupils was also identified as a key issue at the previous inspection. Although procedures are now in place for core subjects, marking and assessments are still not being used effectively to ensure learning experiences fully match the needs of all pupils. The analysis of data indicates that some average attaining pupils make little progress in their literacy and numeracy skills as they move from Year 2 to Year 5, while other pupils make at least satisfactory or better progress in these areas of learning.
8. The achievement of pupils in the main school with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Provision is satisfactory and these pupils often achieve well in lessons and small groups with good support. However, learning is at times not focused closely enough on improving reading and writing skills. As a result, the achievement of these pupils is not as good as it could be and the number of pupils with literacy difficulties does not fall significantly by Year 6. When assessment information is used effectively, as seen for pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit, work is carefully targeted and rates of achievement are good. As a result, a good

proportion of these pupils attain average or better standards in mathematics and science at age eleven.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, the majority of pupils have **good** attitudes towards school and the relationships they form are **good**. On the whole, behaviour is **satisfactory**. Moral, social and cultural development are **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**. The school does not meet the statutory requirement of providing a distinct daily act of collective worship within assemblies.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities stimulate the pupils' interest, motivation and the desire to learn.
- Pupils' relationships with each other, staff and adults are good, and racial harmony is promoted well.
- Pupils respect the feelings and beliefs of others and have a good understanding of their own and others' cultural traditions.
- Pupils' overall attendance and punctuality for school is unsatisfactory.
- Opportunities are missed to further develop pupils' spirituality through a daily act of collective worship.

Commentary

9. Most pupils display a keen enthusiasm for school and lessons, and exhibit a very keen interest in a range of activities. The majority of the pupils willingly take part in class discussions. Many pupils are self-confident but a few are limited by the range of their vocabulary. The majority are well motivated, and the overall response to teachers is good. They enjoy both shared learning with partners, as well as working by themselves. The teaching staff try hard to stimulate the desire to learn in pupils. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to specific support and opportunities to work in small groups. Hearing impaired pupils greatly value the opportunity to work and play alongside fellow pupils in the main school.

10. The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is satisfactory overall. The school works very hard to promote good behaviour and self-discipline. In the Foundation Stage this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. A significant number of pupils exhibit challenging behaviour. For the most part, the school handles these pupils successfully, but in some classes where pupil management skills are not so highly developed, these pupils can sometimes disrupt the learning of the other pupils. This was an area of concern expressed by some parents and pupils. Most pupils respond well to the school's code of conduct. The school promotes racial harmony and good relationships well. Instances of bullying, aggressive, sexist and racist behaviour are infrequent, and are dealt with effectively. Very few pupils have been excluded.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.5	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

11. The level of authorised absences is worse than the national average. However, the level of unauthorised absences is very low. The school in general, and the Hearing Impaired Unit in particular, suffer from a very high proportion of absences for medical appointments. When these absences and the extended absences when pupils visit their country of ethnic origin are discounted, the authorised absence level is close to the national average. Teachers manage

daily registration well. A relatively small number of pupils are responsible for the high level of lateness for school and for classes. The school's systems for urging parents to make sure their children attend school regularly and on time are good, but unfortunately not all parents and carers respond positively. There is a clear commitment to improving attendance, and the school makes good use of its links with the education welfare officer.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	127		
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	50		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	27		
Mixed – White and Black African	3		
Mixed – White and Asian	4		
Mixed – any other mixed background	10		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	5		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	16		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	50		
Black or Black British – African	46	1	
Black or Black British – any other Black background	9		
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	21		
No ethnic group recorded	35		

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

12. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Most pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. The values of honesty, fairness and justice are well promoted, and most pupils understand the importance of being truthful. In general, adults at the school provide good role models for pupils. School and classroom rules are developed with the co-operation of pupils. Pupils' social development is enhanced by well-structured residential visits. The nursery and reception class teachers work hard to ensure that the majority of children achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development. Pupils are very aware of the importance of their own cultural traditions, and most of the pupils show a clear appreciation of the cultural diversity of British society. The school places a considerable emphasis on developing pupils' cultural experiences, and works very hard to provide pupils with opportunities to appreciate art, literature and music.
13. The provision for spiritual awareness is sound, overall. The central theme behind morning assemblies is often the exploration of meaning, purpose and values. However, there are missed opportunities to provide a clearly defined daily act of collective worship that is broadly

Christian in nature within its programme of assemblies. This was identified as an issue at the previous inspection and, as a consequence, opportunities continue to be missed for pupils to participate in personal prayer and individual reflection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good** overall. The school places a strong emphasis in providing all pupils with many opportunities to learn through a very wide range of exciting activities, both within and outside lessons. The provision for hearing impaired pupils is **very good**. The care and welfare of pupils is **good** and effective partnerships have been established with parents and the community in general.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** but the assessment of pupils' work is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a wide-ranging subject knowledge and termly planning is good.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.
- The quality of teaching and resources for pupils with a hearing impairment are very good.
- There are weaknesses in the management of some very challenging pupils and the progress of the rest of the class is sometimes adversely affected.
- Teachers' marking and assessment are unsatisfactory.
- Homework is not used effectively to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	9 (18%)	25 (50%)	13 (26%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	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.

- Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory, as they were at the time of the last report. This judgement reflects a balance of strengths and aspects that require development. Pupils benefit from the teachers' good subject knowledge and from a well-planned curriculum, including opportunities for revision and extra support for Year 6 pupils. Generally, teachers use a wide range of resources and teaching strategies to stimulate interest.
- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage. As a result of good teaching many of them are expected to reach the Early Learning Goals in these areas. Planning is shared effectively with colleagues, including those in the Hearing Impaired Unit, to ensure high quality learning experiences for all children.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well taught by specialist staff. Pupils learn more easily in subjects such as science and ICT where 'hands-on' experience reinforces knowledge and understanding. Years 5 and 6 make good progress due to effective teaching. These lessons are well structured and clear learning intentions are carefully explained to the class.
- The quality of teaching observed for pupils with a hearing impairment is consistently of a high standard. The teaching of language skills by teachers and speech and language therapists is

very good because teachers are knowledgeable and prepare thoroughly using detailed records of each pupil. The rich fund of resources employed ensures that pupils enjoy learning and have a very clear understanding. Puppets and models are frequently used to good effect and role-play draws pupils into situations and checks understanding well. Mathematics and science are taught very well and every effort made to ensure pupils learn from personal and practical experience. Well-informed classroom assistants ably assist teachers and pupils.

18. The good lessons throughout the school are characterised by positive relationships between staff and nearly all the pupils. However, even in these classes, there are a few pupils with very challenging behaviour who require expert attention. This is a common occurrence throughout the school, and the poor management of behaviour was a major factor in the small number of unsatisfactory lessons where the learning of the majority suffered. This also happens, although to a far lesser extent, in some satisfactory lessons. Teachers are competent, and sometimes very good, at responding effectively to the inappropriate attitudes of some pupils. However, these necessary interventions result in some disruption to the pace of learning, which would otherwise have been good. Not all staff consistently and rigorously follow a common policy of behaviour management.
19. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting pupils' progress are unsatisfactory overall. Annual tests assess pupils' performance in English and mathematics but there is no systematic approach to the continuous monitoring of progress throughout the year. It is sound in mathematics but not in science or English. On-going assessment procedures have recently been introduced in religious education and ICT but this is not so for other subjects. Consequently pupils do not gain from a persistent, detailed evaluation of their work. There is not an established whole school approach to systematic assessment, linked to learning intentions, which gives a detailed understanding of the achievement of individual pupils. Consequently, teachers find it difficult to plan work that precisely reflects pupils' learning needs and academic progress is hindered. Although teachers mark conscientiously, there are too few examples of pupils being told what they need to do to reach the next attainment level. The school is aware of the need to develop a more structured system for assessment, which was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. All staff have taken part in a comprehensive course on assessment, although there has been insufficient time for the new initiative to affect pupils' achievement. Group targets in English and mathematics are in place, with some pupil involvement. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs and for those in the Foundation Stage are good; they are very good for pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit.
20. Homework is inconsistently set and there is a limited range of tasks, especially for the older pupils. Consequently these pupils are not well prepared for the demands of secondary school and there are missed opportunities for homework to confirm and extend learning. Homework is often poorly presented.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good breadth to the curriculum including a very good range of out of school activities.
- The curriculum for pupils with a hearing impairment is broad with good opportunities for enrichment.
- The curriculum is enhanced by visiting experts and by many visits to a wide range of places of interest.
- Good links are made between subjects.
- A strong emphasis is placed in raising the pupils' awareness of their own British heritage and that of other cultures.

- The accommodation and facilities for the nursery and reception classes and for information and communication technology are very good.

Commentary

21. There is good coverage of the curriculum. Good long term planning documentation ensures all subjects are taught and the needs of all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, are fully catered for. This is monitored well by the English and mathematics co-ordinators and the deputy headteachers. Good use is made of visiting experts in music and physical education to provide expertise in subjects where the teachers feel less confident and have less subject knowledge. Some are regular visitors, whilst others lead a single workshop. Coaching staff from a professional football club provide good role models for pupils. Many pupils are involved in the very good range of out of school activities provided by the school. As well as the weekly clubs, these include residential experiences for Year 5 to Card fields and Year 6 to an adventure centre.
22. Pupils with a hearing impairment have full access to the National Curriculum, adapted appropriately in teachers' plans to ensure it matches pupils' needs. These pupils have closely monitored individual programmes of integration into main classes and groups in order to maximise learning and social opportunities. Pupils from mainstream classes work within the Hearing Impaired Unit classes if it is beneficial to do so. The curriculum is enhanced by regular educational visits and pupils with a hearing impairment participate in after-school clubs of their own choosing. Classrooms are well equipped with radio aids and carpeted, so that pupils are able to make the best of their hearing and participate in lessons.
23. As part of her commitment to broadening the experience of all the pupils, the headteacher organises a coach to be available every Wednesday to be used by all classes as required. As a result of this initiative, a very good range of visits is made to locations as diverse as Golders Hill Park and the National Gallery. The whole school visits the theatre each year, and there also is an annual train trip to Frinton.
24. Teachers make good links between different areas of the curriculum. This gives relevant contexts for work in subjects such as art and information and communication technology. The provision for personal, social and health education is good. A well-structured programme includes formal sex and relationships education in Years 5 and 6.
25. The school places a good emphasis on raising the awareness of the heritage of its pupils and of other cultures. As well as a continuing focus on history in one of the halls, the celebration of Winter Festivals encompasses various religious and secular beliefs and practices. Black Heritage Month highlights the contribution to society of historical and living black people and raises the self-esteem of pupils from ethnic minority communities.
26. The school's accommodation is good. The three halls give flexibility, which is well used. The facilities for the nursery and reception classes and for communication and information technology are very good. This contributes to the good achievement of pupils in these areas.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils at this school are in very safe hands. The care, guidance and concern for safety and welfare provided by the school are **very good**. Pupils' progress is monitored well, and the school listens to the concerns and aspirations of its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links have been established with other support agencies.
- Relationships and levels of trust between pupils and staff are good.
- Teachers have a very clear understanding of the needs of pupils in their care.
- Standards of care for pupils with a hearing impairment are high
- The school values pupils' wishes and listens to their opinions.
- The quality and use of pupils' personal records are good.

Commentary

27. The procedures for child protection, safety and welfare are very well established and known to all the staff. These procedures have been successfully tried and tested. The school helps children to learn how to protect themselves and others. The school has implemented very good methods for recognising children at risk, and works very closely with other welfare agencies to resolve these sensitive issues. The procedures for monitoring pupils on the Child Protection register are very good, and staff are fully aware of and kept up to date with the latest procedures.
28. The school promotes the awareness of health and safety effectively. The provision for first aid and supervision at mealtimes is good. The daily practice of health and safety in the school is satisfactory. Risk assessment is undertaken regularly and procedures are well established. The school monitors and reviews safe working procedures regularly and arrangements for dealing with accidents are clearly set out.
29. Overall, the quality of educational and personal support and guidance provided for pupils is good. Policies for the support and guidance of pupils are very effective. The working relationship between pupils and staff is very pleasant, and pupils clearly respect and trust the adults in the school. A significant strength is the level of care and support provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils in need of extra care. The principle of publicly celebrating achievement is well established. The school keeps good, up-to-date personal records of its pupils and monitors these well.
30. Teachers of pupils with a hearing impairment give high priority to educational support and the audiological care of individuals. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible for their hearing aids and when they are broken, the school supplies matching spares. The system for the repair, maintenance and linking with a number of hospital audiology departments is well developed and efficiently run.
31. Staff know their pupils and their family circumstances extremely well. This helps the school to make very well balanced judgements about welfare and guidance that are always in the best interests of the pupils. The school works hard to provide many opportunities for pupils to make their views known, and the school considers these views very carefully and acts accordingly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents and the community, and works hard to maintain and improve these. These links bring a wide range of benefits to the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective links have been established with parents.
- The school effectively responds to parents' suggestions and concerns.
- The overall contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good.

Commentary

32. The school is constantly looking for ways to further develop the good relationship with parents. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Pupils' annual reports show that teachers have good knowledge of each child's learning, and include detailed targets for pupils' improvement. The school involves parents of pupils with a hearing impairment from an early stage. For example, the popular termly coffee mornings have a specific focus designed to inform parents and assist them in their understanding of a pertinent range of issues; such as hearing aids, National Curriculum and helping their children with reading. Parents who are non-English speakers have the services of an interpreter.

33. The school responds well to parents' suggestions and concerns. It tries hard to help and guide parents on the best ways to help their children at home. The overall perception by parents is that this is a good school. Most of the parents know and understand what is being taught at school.
34. Pupils' learning is considerably enhanced as a result of links with the community. The local community makes substantial use of the school for a range of purposes, particularly after school and at weekends. The school regularly brings members of the community into the school to broaden pupils' understanding of the world, and the school works hard to encourage visits from representatives of other cultures and religions. Good use is made of links with commerce and charitable institutions, and the school is fully committed to participation in local community events. Pupils' personal development and sense of citizenship is improved as a result of the strong links with the community.
35. The school has satisfactory links with other schools. The school has adequate transfer arrangements to the many secondary schools that pupils attend. This is too large a number for the school to build significant personal contacts with. The school's contact with some local primary schools has a positive impact, particularly in terms of sporting provision and the development of science.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall with some good features. The headteacher provides firm and principled leadership. Leadership in the school as a whole is **good** and the role of the subject leader has improved since the last inspection. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership has a powerful influence on the school's positive ethos. There is a strong sense of purpose and motivation among the leadership group. There is a passionate commitment to running an equitable and inclusive school.
- The unit for pupils with a hearing impairment is well led and managed.
- There is a good framework in place for monitoring pupils' achievement in English, mathematics, religious education and pupils for whom English is a second language. However, as yet, the outcomes of self-evaluation are not used sufficiently and long-term strategic planning is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

36. The headteacher has the confidence of parents, pupils and staff and provides good leadership overall. She has realised a vision for a lively and interesting school of which pupils are proud. To maintain this, she has developed an influential senior management team. They share a combined commitment to inclusion and work hard to continually improve provision for all pupils. They demonstrate mutual support within the team. Staff in positions of leadership are making an increasingly effective contribution to school improvement but responsibilities are not distributed across the staff group as a whole. There is good subject leadership for English, mathematics and science as well as very good leadership for ICT and religious education. However, not all subjects have a designated coordinator to ensure an effective whole school approach to school improvement. For example, in design and technology this was so at the time of the last inspection, resulting in little improvement in the quality of provision in this subject.
37. The Hearing Impaired Unit is led and managed well by the teacher in charge. The high standards achieved could not be gained without the strong leadership, dedication and teamwork of the unit staff and the main school.

38. During the past year the processes for school self-evaluation have improved. This has been led well by both deputy headteachers and provides a good example of a co-ordinated approach to introducing an effective structure understood by everyone. For example twice yearly meetings are held between the senior management team, and coordinators for pupils with special educational needs and for those whom English is an additional language to review the quality of provision for these pupils. Subject leaders are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the strengths and aspects for improvement in their areas of responsibility. They are guided by soundly constructed action plans. Their work has included the satisfactory monitoring of teachers' plans to ensure that the school's planning processes are followed. There are examples of observation of teaching being undertaken well and good advice provided to improve individual teaching performance. Outcome of such evaluation has led to sound whole school action such as extending the strategies used to teach mental mathematics calculations. The ICT co-ordinator is a very good exponent of the subject and provides expert tutoring for the staff. This has had a very good impact on standards of achievement and quality of provision, both of which are now well above average. This method has been applied to English and mathematics. However, the quality of self-evaluation and improvement is not consistent in other subjects and relies too much on the enthusiasm and skills of individual teachers. Furthermore, there is no clear strategic overview to guide the process of review, evaluation and improvement to ensure sustained development across the curriculum.
39. This year the school has begun to make available to subject leaders the outcomes of data presented externally, for example the comparative information of Laycock School with those nationally. For some subject leaders, such as in English, this information has proved to be invaluable in pinpointing areas for further improvement and investigation. However, this is a new development for most staff and at present too little use is made of such evaluation to identify specific long-term targets for school improvement.
40. The school's strong commitment to staff development is reflected in the wide access staff have to courses. Newly qualified teachers report effective induction procedures. The vast majority of staff in positions of leadership have benefited from training specifically related to their responsibilities. The headteacher has consciously developed leadership capability in the senior management team. Each member has clear and distinct responsibilities that have improved the quality of provision throughout the school. For example, the numerous out of school activities and the mutual benefit of shared expertise between the main school and the Hearing Impaired Unit are good examples of this teamwork. Each member of the team is a good teacher and consequently provides a good role model for other staff and pupils.
41. Financial management systems are satisfactory and run smoothly overall. The school has implemented the recommendations of the last auditor's report and clear procedures are in place. However, there is no fully costed financial plan to support the implementation of the school's action plan. The headteacher determines all expenditure in conjunction with senior staff and subject co-ordinators after consultation with the governors. Staff are confident that reasonable requests will be met.
42. The governing body has good relationships with the school and the enthusiasm of individual governors, some of whom are new to the school, is a strength. Governors are willing to debate new developments with the headteacher. However, they do not always have sufficient information to undertake their role of 'critical friends' to full advantage. The governing body has chosen not to have committees other than meeting as the full governing body. Individual governors hold specific roles such as those for special educational needs and finance governor. Thus, the work of the governing body remains much as it was at the time of the last inspection. With no committees or working groups, there continues to be a lack of time given to developing deeper insights and knowledge to inform strategic planning.

43. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties, with the exception of ensuring that the school meets its statutory responsibility to hold a daily act of collective worship.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,725,835.70
Total expenditure	1,894,286.12
Expenditure per pupil	4,553.57

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	99,391.20
Balance carried forward to the next	49,250.70

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall the quality of provision in the nursery and reception classes is **good**.

Commentary

44. Most children attend the school's nursery class prior to starting in one of the reception classes. They can attend part-time initially, then full-time for the last two terms. They transfer into the reception classes in September or January, depending on their date of birth. As a result the reception classes are very small in the Autumn term. Some children leave for other schools at this point and others join. They have not had the benefit of the good teaching in the nursery, so their attainment is lower.
45. When children start in the nursery their attainment is well below expected levels. By the end of the reception year they are still below average in communication, language and literacy; mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, they have made significant progress and their achievement is good. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. In the areas of personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development children enter with slightly higher levels of attainment. As a result of good teaching many of them are expected to reach the Early Learning Goals in these areas. Children with special educational needs make good progress.
46. There has been good progress since the last inspection. The accommodation is very good, with outdoor areas available for nursery and reception class children. These are used extensively and purposefully. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership and management based on good knowledge of early years education. Planning is shared effectively with colleagues, including those in the Hearing Impaired Unit, to ensure high quality learning experiences for all children. Satisfactory procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning have been implemented.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given a good range of opportunities to learn to make choices.
- The adults provide a secure environment so children develop confidence and independence.
- As a result of the high expectations of the adults, children behave well.

Commentary

47. Great emphasis is placed on personal, social and emotional development so that, by the time children reach the end of the reception year, they are likely to meet the expected level. Children in the nursery separate confidently from their carers, and talk happily to their friends and to strangers in their own languages. They play together and take turns. They increasingly concentrate for extended periods, and this is developed further in the reception classes. When required, they are then able to sit quietly and be fully involved in school activities.
48. The quality of teaching is good. The adults in the nursery and reception classes act as good role models to the children. They intervene when they need to, but also give the children many opportunities to make choices and learn for themselves. Relationships between adults and children are good. As a result, the children develop confidence and independence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress because of good teaching.
- Children's language is developed well by the quality and timing of adults' questions, the support given to the less confident and good planning of sessions.
- Attainment is below the expected level at the end of reception year, particularly in relating sounds to letters and words correctly.

Commentary

49. Although teaching and achievement are good, most children are not expected to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Adults in the nursery and reception classes provide many opportunities for developing children's language. They initiate discussions and ask questions at key moments to encourage language for thinking. Carefully used questioning enables all children to experience success. Good support is given to the less confident which enables them to succeed in communicating. Adults use clear speech and this has a positive impact on the clarity of speech of the children. Instructions are given to encourage listening skills. Children show increasing confidence in speaking.
50. Books and reading are promoted well, and children learn early reading skills such as print carrying meaning, and the appropriate way to turn pages. An interest in and enjoyment of books is further developed in the reception classes, and children know the term 'author'. However, few children recognise any words. Knowledge of letter names and sounds is weak. This restricts children's ability to read independently.
51. Children are given opportunities to write in the nursery, and this continues in the reception classes. They confidently use marks to indicate meaning, and progress to using recognisable letter shapes in their writing. In well-planned activities they are encouraged to finish existing stories or create their own. Resources, such as shaped books to write in, are well-prepared, giving the children a pride in their work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because of good teaching
- Good planning for activities and assessment.
- Good opportunities are taken to develop mathematics outside numeracy sessions.
- Attainment is below expectations at the end of reception year.

Commentary

52. Adults plan effectively, using many contexts to reinforce teaching about number. Children are encouraged to count their cakes whilst cooking and learn number rhymes. As a result, children in the nursery become confident in counting to 5, whilst in reception classes they can go to 10 and beyond, although not always accurately. Good opportunities are taken to use non-standard measures incidentally; such as the reception children's bear pictures. Assessments are well-planned into the activities so adults can give appropriate challenge to all children. However, most pupils are unlikely to reach the expected levels at the end of the reception year, although they have achieved well from a low starting point.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good use of visits and planned learning experiences supports children's development.
- Children are provided with good opportunities to learn computer skills and this leads to very good achievement.

Commentary

53. Children start in the nursery with limited experiences of the world around them. The adults provide good learning experiences for them, so their understanding of the world develops well. All children in the nursery know that leaves fall from trees when they die and that the bulbs they have planted will grow in the spring. However, some children in the reception year do not know what a ladybird is. Visits are used well to broaden children's knowledge, including trips to the local woods and to museums. Children have very good opportunities to develop their computer skills, and their attainment in this area is above the levels expected. They can use a mouse to select and to 'paint' and created, for example, their own London Underground maps with invented stations. The nursery and reception classes participate in whole school events, such as the Winter Festival, which contribute to their cultural development.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outside areas provide very good opportunities that engage children in their learning.
- Well-planned activities and good teaching develop children's physical skills and lead to good achievement.

Commentary

54. The very good facilities are well used, particularly in the nursery, to develop children's confidence and skills. The organisation of adult support means that the outside area is available most of the time, and the very good use of questioning by adults challenges children's thinking. They are encouraged to think of new ways of using the climbing apparatus and this develops confidence. They negotiate space successfully as they run round without colliding. Children's co-ordination develops through the reception classes, and they are able to demonstrate increasing control over their bodies as they make different shapes with them, and move in a variety of ways. They participate in physical activity with great enjoyment.

55. Good opportunities are also planned by adults to develop manipulative skills, such as the tools used in cooking. Many small items are provided in the role-play areas. This experience enables the children to develop their skills well and, by the time they reach the end of the reception year, they are likely to reach the expected levels for their age.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are planned to support children's creative development.
- Music is well taught so children achieve well.
- Good teaching of art leads to good achievement.
- The freedom of opportunity of children to explore is more limited in the reception classes.

Commentary

56. Children achieve well because they are given many good opportunities to develop their creative skills. They have well-planned role-play areas where they become totally involved in imaginative play. They are challenged into using their imagination in the outdoor area, when they go on a Bear Hunt. They have opportunities to use cutters and rollers to make play-dough cakes to share with others.
57. In the reception classes well-planned music sessions lead to children developing the use of their voices for different effects. They join in enthusiastically with familiar songs, and have a good sense of pitch. They can copy a phrase or pattern accurately, and join in with action songs. The teacher's enthusiasm and modelling of singing encourages all to participate.
58. The standard of children's art is good where it is observational drawing or painting. They are given good opportunities to develop an eye for detail, and are encouraged to use a mixture of different media. However, although there is good direct teaching of art in the reception classes, there is less evidence of freedom for children to explore and make choices.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

English

The overall quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is below the national average for seven and eleven year olds.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall from a wide range of very good to unsatisfactory.
- ICT is used very well to raise standards in literacy.
- The progress of pupils for whom English is a second language is good overall.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The development of language and literacy across the curriculum is good.

Commentary

59. Standards in speaking and listening are below national averages at the end of the infant stage and in line with the national average at the end of the junior stage. The pupils' skills in listening are broadly average in the infants. However, their speaking skills are well below average. In the juniors, these skills continue to be below average, but there are examples of higher attainment where pupils participate in a range of interesting learning contexts. Pupils for whom English is a second language achieve similar standards to their peers.
60. Standards in reading are below average both for seven and eleven year olds. Teachers place a sound emphasis on guided reading throughout the school. However, there is not a consistent approach to teaching, monitoring and evaluating pupils' reading as a whole so that assessment information can be used to improve the rate of progress pupils make.
61. The standard of writing for seven and eleven year olds is below average. Pupils find it difficult to spell and punctuate correctly. There are examples where pupils' work has shown a rapid improvement from one year to the next, 'Because', said the pupil, 'the teacher expected me to do better and showed me what to do'. All too often the work presented throughout the school is accepted with too little challenge from the teacher to improve standards. The examples of written work displayed in the school show satisfactory levels of attention to expected writing conventions. However, the overall standards of handwriting and presentation in pupils' books are unsatisfactory.
62. Pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory overall given the fact that attainment on entry to the school is well below average and there is a high number of pupils with special needs.

Achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall. Better progress is made in the lessons in which opportunities for 'talk partners', role-play and drama increase pupils' rate of achievement; for example, as seen in Year 4 and 5. Pupils with hearing impairment are fully involved and achieve well.

63. Pupils' rate of achievement in reading is uneven across the school but satisfactory overall. Younger pupils benefit from well-planned opportunities to read in a group. They are enthusiastic and work well together. Attainment is improved by well-matched activities where pupils create dialogue using speech bubbles. This in turn is read by the whole class, who take part with gusto. Such strategies link together reading and writing tasks effectively.
64. Pupils' progress in writing is too variable. The subject leader is aware of this and she has introduced a whole school approach to improve pupils' spelling and vocabulary. 'Word walls' are now found in every classroom and provide pupils with a constant reference to help them to commit key words and vocabulary to memory. However, the development of handwriting is not yet linked securely with learning to spell.
65. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is now a consistent approach to implementing the National Literacy Strategy and an appropriate range of writing forms are taught, using good stimuli. A strength is the effective partnership between teachers and teaching assistants. The best teaching shows strengths in the use of lively, well chosen contexts, very good use of ICT, good questioning skills and in particular, assessing pupils' attainment as lessons progress. As a result, lessons move forward at a good pace. Good use is made of the end of lesson period to evaluate pupils' success. However, the quality of teaching varies too widely across the school and as a result reduces the level of attainment and rates of achievement. Common factors of the least successful teaching include: low expectations; work not matched to pupils' individual needs; pupils having too little to do and given insufficient guidance about the standards they should achieve. This lack of structure slows the pace of lessons and pupils become restless. When the teaching also shows insufficient skills in managing pupils' behaviour, the quality of the lesson deteriorates further. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent in quality across the school, ranging from unsatisfactory to good and does not show the benefits of recent training.
66. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for both English and for English as a second language. She has established an effective framework for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and provision for both responsibilities. She has undertaken a useful audit of the present stages of development and constructed a good action plan. She provides a good role model for others. For example, she led the recent Year 5 Victorian writing project 'A Dream Come True' which provided inspirational links with a local writer. Her work is making a significant contribution to the success of the school. She is aware of the variation in standards and rate of progress through scrutiny of the nationally processed school information available to her this year. However, time has not yet allowed for a thorough analysis to identify specific improvements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. A considered approach to reinforcing language and literacy skills across the other subjects of the curriculum is having a positive effect. There are good examples of pupils writing for different purposes. For example, in history, good opportunities are provided for speaking and listening and report writing. There is good emphasis on increasing pupils' use of subject specific vocabulary. Thorough planning for specific support for pupils speaking English as a second language across the curriculum increases their achievement.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching, especially in Years 5 and 6, has had a positive impact on standards and achievement.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management of the subject.
- The poor behaviour of a minority of pupils in some classes, and ineffectual management of them, impacts negatively on others' learning.
- Using and applying mathematical knowledge is weaker than the other aspects of the subject because it is not consistently taught.

Commentary

68. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although their attainment is below national averages at both Year 2 and Year 6. This is because when they enter Year 1 pupils are below expected levels of attainment. By the age of eleven, in number and algebra and in the use of spreadsheets, developed in information and communication technology lessons, they have achieved well and are in line with national averages.
69. The teaching of mathematics overall is satisfactory. There are some good aspects found consistently through the school, such as the use of teaching assistants. They frequently support the less able and enable them to make progress by giving clear explanations and by good questioning. Other aspects are found in some classes but not in all, such as teachers' good knowledge of the subject, good pace and high expectations of pupils. There is good use made in most classes of the plenary session at the end of the lesson to move pupils' learning on. In some classes there is little difference between the work set for different groups of pupils, which results in a lack of challenge for the more able. All work is marked but teachers rarely provide written comments that will help pupils to improve. Very good use is made of interactive whiteboards in the classes that have them.
70. Most pupils have a positive attitude to mathematics. They answer questions enthusiastically and want to participate in lessons. They are confident and willing to offer suggestions because they feel secure and persevere at tasks set. However, in a number of classes the behaviour of a minority of pupils is poor. In some cases it is not effectively managed by the teacher. As a result, much time is wasted and other pupils are unable to learn. This is predominantly found in the middle year groups. Behaviour in Years 5 and 6 is always at least satisfactory, and all pupils make faster progress.
71. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management of the subject. She has correctly identified the main issues that need to be addressed and has produced an action plan. However, there are no specific targets relating to pupils of higher attainment. She has monitored the quality of teaching in all year groups, and reviewed teachers' planning to ensure progression. Pupils' test results are analysed to identify areas where they make less progress and this information is given to teachers to inform their planning. This has had a significantly positive impact on pupils' achievement where teaching is good, but not in all classes. As a result, the provision for assessment is good but it is not always used effectively.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Overall, there is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects. For instance, good links are made with ICT work where pupils develop their understanding of spreadsheets and geometry.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils attain standards that are above the national average and there is good achievement throughout the school.
- Teaching is good with a focus on practical, investigative work, which interests the pupils.
- Science is well led and managed.
- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- There is a lack of a rigorous approach to the assessment of teaching and learning.
- Homework, marking and pupils' presentation of work are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

73. In the national tests in 2002 pupils at the end of Year 6 obtained levels that were above the national average and well above when compared with similar schools and their results at the end of Year 2. Standards fell slightly in 2003 and attainment was average. The standard of the work of the current Year 6, as seen in lessons and in a scrutiny of their past and present work, is better. Although it is early in the academic year, it is likely that results will be above average, due to good subject leadership from a new co-ordinator and high quality teaching. These pupils achieve well in comparison to their science results at the end of the infants. There is an upward trend in results obtained by Year 6 classes. The attainment of the current Year 2 pupils is satisfactory, which is better than it was in 2002 and 2003 when few pupils achieved the higher Level 3. The work seen during the inspection indicated that standards of work are improving, especially in the area of investigation. However, many pupils have poor literacy skills that limit their ability to access information and explain ideas and links. Nevertheless, these pupils achieve well when account is taken of their below average understanding of the world around them on entry into Year 1. There is no noticeable difference between the achievement of boys or girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress, due to the continual emphasis on practical activity to develop understanding.
74. Teaching and learning is good, both in lessons and over time. Science teaching is characterised by:
- teachers' good subject knowledge and stress on pupils learning the correct vocabulary;
 - well planned lessons that include practical experiences to motivate and extend understanding;
 - lessons that have a focus on specific learning objectives which are shared with the pupils;
 - effective use of resources, including videos and visits, that engages the pupils' interest;
 - a successful emphasis on scientific enquiry and opportunities for pupils to plan investigations;
 - examples of the good use of ICT to support learning.
75. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. However, potentially good lessons were only satisfactory because some teachers had to spend too much time dealing with the very challenging behaviour of a few pupils. The use of assessment to target work to the needs of the higher attaining pupils is underdeveloped. Teachers tick work and make comments that praise, but they do not consistently refer to what pupils must do in order to improve and check that this has happened. Work is often poorly presented and there is not a widespread use of homework to reinforce and extend knowledge.
76. The subject is well led and managed. A new and committed co-ordinator has a good vision of how to promote high quality science and the administrative skills to implement his ideas. Good use has been made of external sources to raise achievement. For example, links with a local Beacon school have increased staff awareness of aspects of the science curriculum,

including a focus on scientific enquiry. Resource shortages have been rectified and the school now has a good range of equipment and artefacts to support the teaching of life processes. Areas that require development have been identified and action taken. The monitoring of teaching and learning currently lacks rigour and this is an area for development.

77. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Results at the end of Year 6 are now much better and pupils' investigative skills and understanding are above average. Seventy five per cent of teaching is now good and effective planning is in place. ICT is used well to support the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision is **very good** and standards are **well above average** for eleven year olds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well across the school.
- Teaching is good overall and resources are used effectively to support learning.
- The curriculum is very well planned and assessment is being used to inform future lessons.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

78. All pupils achieve well across the school in a wide range of ICT skills. Most of the oldest junior pupils can create simple control procedures to construct and explore common geometric shapes on screen. The highest attaining pupils are able to draw more complex shapes automatically, providing them with a good understanding of basic programming techniques. Many of the oldest infant pupils can log onto the network independently, click on the tool bars and navigate around the screen effectively with the mouse. They use the mouse well to drag shapes across the screen and merge them with a piece of simple text that they have already typed as a title or heading. These good standards are extended further in Year 4. These pupils continue to achieve well when they generate animated presentations using pictures and moving objects. The highest attaining pupils in this year group work independently and with confidence to animate stories they have studied in class such as Theseus and the Minotaur in a humorous and imaginative way.
79. The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers make good use of the computer suite to teach a wide range of ICT related skills to all pupils in Year 1 to 6. The full time technician provides very good levels of support for teachers during lessons by making sure all the workstations are ready, undertaking ongoing repairs and supporting pupils in their learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Considerable time and effort has been invested in the subject since the previous inspection when it was identified as a key issue. National training programmes have been used well since then to provide good levels of staff training with the result that the level of staff expertise is now good. This was clearly demonstrated in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 4. In this lesson the teacher confidently demonstrated some complex procedures for the creation of an animated screen display. This captured the attention of all the pupils, provided clear exemplification of what was expected and inspired them all to set to work quickly on their own attempts at a difficult activity. A recent initiative is the purchase and installation of a small number of interactive whiteboards. These are being used well by teachers to support lessons in other subjects.
80. The curriculum is very well planned and there is a very clearly defined structure to what is to be taught across the school. All aspects of the subject are covered, except for the use of sensors and monitoring equipment, which has been identified by the coordinator as an area for further development. Teachers are now making good links between learning intentions and assessment and using this information to inform their future planning. The newly published assessment scheme is providing a useful record of pupils' achievements.

81. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject coordinator has worked very hard to ensure that pupils achieve well and standards attained reflect this hard work. A very good portfolio of pupils' work is stored on the network in electronic format and monitoring of teaching and learning is good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. Displays around the school confirm that teachers use ICT to effectively support teaching and learning in other subjects. For example, a teacher in Year 6 uses the interactive whiteboard confidently to teach new mathematical skills to the whole class or introduce new concepts at the start of lessons. Creative skills are developed well through the use of graphics programmes, mathematics is supported well with the use of data handling packages and good opportunities are provided for pupils to write using simple word processors.

HUMANITIES

Evidence for humanities is drawn from four lessons of history and one of geography, scrutiny and discussions. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on geography. The regular planned opportunities for educational visits enhance pupils' experiences well and help to promote good attitudes to geography and history.

History

The provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and achievement by the end of Year 6.
- Curriculum enhanced by planned programme of educational visits and focus on local area.
- Cross-curricular work in art and design, literacy and information and communication technology is good.
- The quality of written work is often weak and work badly presented.

Commentary

83. Standards in history are good by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well because of their keen interest in the subject. The local area is used well as a focus for learning. Last year, pupils researched and wrote about Victorian times in Islington. Their very good work has been compiled and published as an attractive and informative booklet.
84. Teaching by the end of Year 6 is good, an improvement since last time. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. In Years 4 and 5 the quality of teaching seen was good with an example of very good teaching.
85. Common features of strong teaching are good preparation and the use of good quality resources, so that pupils have a keen interest in the subject. For example, they have opportunities to dress up and to do chores in the way the Victorians would. Both boys and girls participate in Tudor dance and are knowledgeable about the Tudor knot garden and the uses of herbs that grew there. High quality portrait collages of Tudors and plaster plaques completed by Year 5 pupils are two examples of the work exhibited.
86. The monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator has improved since the last inspection. Weekly visits made to places of interest are valuable opportunities for all pupils, including hearing impaired and those with special educational needs, to grasp a better understanding of the topics studied. School resources such as pictures and artefacts, together with those borrowed, are of good quality and quantity. They provide informative displays and assist pupils

in their understanding of the topics studied by providing good opportunities for pupils to handle them and learn about their function. Coverage is closely monitored for each class group, but checking the quality of pupils' written work and teaching are areas for developing the role further. Assessment and evaluation of learning is inconsistent, done well by some teachers but not others.

Geography

In the lesson observed in geography the quality of teaching and learning was **good** because information and communication technology was used effectively to teach mapping skills. Resources are plentiful and well used and relationships conducive to good learning. Pupils with hearing impairment and those with special educational needs have good support and opportunities for working co-operatively. Progress in skills for geography is better in some classes than others as teachers choose what they do and how they will link with other subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is in line with expectations set within the Islington Agreed Syllabus.
- Achievement is good.
- Good progress has been made since the last inspection.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

87. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, it was possible to make judgements about the quality of provision from the work displayed through the school, samples of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussion with staff and pupils.
88. Attainment is in line with expectations set within the Islington Agreed Syllabus. Pupils show understanding of the diversity of religion and the issues it brings. They acquire increasing knowledge of the distinctive features of religious traditions. They use religious language satisfactorily in what they have studied. However, lack of skill in spelling and handwriting reduces pupils' attainment overall.
89. Achievement is good. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to make sense of what they are learning and to relate it to the experiences of themselves and others. Good quality resources are used well to extend pupils' learning, for example, using whiteboards for digital presentations.
90. The quality of provision is good. Lessons provide worthwhile contexts for learning. Teaching provides opportunities for exploring personal views of religious issues and for pupils to reflect on their own and others' beliefs. In response to one lesson a Year 4 pupil wrote, *'I believe in Jesus, our God, love and strength, dreams. I believe in friendships and ambitions. I believe in thankfulness. I believe in the importance of manners and praise. I believe in encouragement and loving families'*.
91. Leadership and management are very good. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The recently appointed co-ordinator has made good progress in establishing a strong foundation for continued improvement. She has led staff training for the revised locally agreed syllabus. She has a good view of the strengths and areas for improvement as a result of her evaluation of planning, lesson observation and photographic evidence. She has made a good start in filling gaps in resources to provide more inspiration for teachers and pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching leads to good achievement and attitudes.
- Visiting musicians are well used to enhance the curriculum.
- Pupils sing enthusiastically and have good standards of performance.
- Very good resources and accommodation are well used.
- The school has no specialist teacher for music and no co-ordinator.
- In Years 3 to 6 there is a reliance on external expertise, so singing predominates.

Commentary

92. Not all aspects were seen during the inspection but in those seen provision was satisfactory. Standards are in line with national expectations. In Year 6 the standards are above expectations when performing using percussion instruments. Complex rhythms are recalled and sustained with accuracy. Pupils in all classes sing with enthusiasm and with developing tone and control. Achievement is good throughout the school.
93. Four lessons were seen during the inspection. Good structure, pace and enthusiastic teaching were characteristics of these effective lessons. All teachers have high expectations. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall and many gain much enjoyment from these lessons. However, a minority of pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory in some lessons. Even when this is appropriately dealt with, it wastes time and slows the pace of lessons.
94. Because the school has no specialist music teacher, visiting musicians contribute well to delivering the music curriculum. There is good teaching on a regular basis from one musician, who leads the whole school in singing as well as conducting music workshops with classes. In addition, other experts, such as members of the London Symphony Orchestra, visit for specific occasions. They add a valuable dimension to the subject. Some class teachers are confident about teaching music, but others are not. As a result, in some classes singing takes a disproportionate amount of the time available.
95. The school has very good accommodation for music. Most of it is taught in the music room, which is very well equipped with a range of percussion instruments, which supports pupils' learning. The lack of a co-ordinator impacts on the quality of the music curriculum in that, although it is taught in every class, there is insufficient monitoring of the weight given to different aspects. Teachers' confidence in teaching music is varied, and there is no one to provide leadership and support.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

96. No lessons were seen in art. Pupils' work indicates that standards are good, and they achieve well. Good use is made of visits, such as to the National Gallery, as a stimulus for work. Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum such as history, religious education and information and communication technology. Skills are developed in a structured way throughout the school and the range of artwork is varied with some good examples of sculptural work on display.

Physical education

Provision is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good range of sports opportunities for all pupils.
- Provision for swimming is good and pupils achieve well.
- Good links have been established with other sporting organisations.
- There is now a complete scheme of work to identify the progression of skills.
- Some lessons are too long.

Commentary

97. The subject manager has endeavoured to ensure that a good range of sports opportunities is provided for all pupils throughout the year. The nature of the school site limits the range of games activities that can be provided but good use is made of the playground and hall space to ensure games, gymnastics and dance can be taught as part of a planned framework for learning opportunities.
98. Provision for swimming is good and pupils achieve well. A local pool is within short walking distance and all year groups from Year 3 to 6 attend in termly blocks of weekly lessons. The quality of instruction at the pool is at least satisfactory and pupils respond well to the instructors' support and guidance at the poolside during lessons. Class teachers provide extra support for learners and more advanced swimmers under the guidance of these instructors. As a result of this good provision, most pupils are able to swim the recommended 25 metres by the age of 11 and standards are above average.
99. The coordinator has worked hard to establish good links with other sporting organisations and a local professional football club. As a result, several sports are satisfactorily taught to all junior pupils, including those with disabilities and hearing impairment, throughout the school year by external coaches. Class teachers and support staff work alongside these coaches to ensure all pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills in basketball, football and cricket. There is good provision for pupils to take part in other physical activities out of school hours such as in the dance, running and touch rugby clubs.
100. Currently there is no complete scheme of work to support teachers' planning and ensure a clear progression of skills and abilities within the subject. The overall time allocation conforms with current national guidance but sometimes hall lessons are too long for the activities planned and this results in some pupils losing interest

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The focus placed on personal and social development is having a positive effect on the behaviour of pupils throughout the school.
- The school council provides good opportunities for the development of citizenship skills.

Commentary

101. The school has implemented a good strategy for personal, social, and health education. This includes appropriate sections on sex education and drugs education. As a result, the school meets statutory requirements in this respect. The school council is providing good opportunities for all pupils to develop a greater understanding of citizenship and have a say in the development of the school. The inclusion of pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit in many lessons for mainstream pupils prepares all pupils for life in an inclusive society.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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