

INSPECTION REPORT

VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bromley

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101602

Headteacher: Mrs S F Head

Lead inspector: Mrs L Brackstone

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 September 2003

Inspection number: 261321

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:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	408
School address:	Beckenham Lane Bromley
Postcode:	BR2 0DA
Telephone number:	020 8460 1121
Fax number:	020 8466 8124
Appropriate authority:	The Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Baker
Date of previous inspection:	16 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Valley Primary School is a Beacon School situated in a residential area of mixed housing close to the centre of Bromley. Fifteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is average. There are 408 pupils on roll with similar numbers of boys and girls accommodated in 14 classes, which are organised into two parallel units per year group. Sixty per cent of pupils are of white UK heritage. Others are of black Caribbean, African, Asian and Chinese heritage. Just over two per cent of pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Thirteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. Nearly two per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, which is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21872	Mrs L Brackstone	Lead inspector	English Art Personal, social and health education The foundation stage Special educational needs English as an additional language
9079	Mrs A Moss	Lay inspector	
20614	Mr D Kimber	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Physical education
32606	Ms V Derwas	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education
32923	Ms J Adams	Team inspector	Science Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a successful school that provides a **good** standard of education. The quality of leadership and management is **very good**. The quality of teaching and the curriculum is **good**. The school provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths are:

- Overall achievement is **good**.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and music are **good** throughout the school.
- The headteacher, in conjunction with her key staff and the governing body, leads and manages the school **very well**.
- The provision for personal development is **very good** and pupils are **very well** cared for.
- Pupils' attitudes are **very positive**.
- The accommodation is of **very high** quality and there is a **good** level of resources.
- There are **very good** links with other educational institutions, and the partnership with parents is of **very high** quality.

The school has no major weaknesses.

Despite there being no major key issues arising from the previous inspection, the school has continued to make **good** improvements. The good standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. Pupils work appropriately in groups when required; the accommodation is used much more effectively and the number of classroom assistants is satisfactory. Attendance rates have improved and pupils are generally punctual. The school has an innovative approach and is very well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	A	A	A
Mathematics	D	B	B	B
Science	B	C	A	A

*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.*

For pupils in the 2003 cohort, achievement is **good**. Children start school with a very wide range of standards, which are, however, generally **as expected** for this age group. Not all children spend a full academic year in the Reception class. As a result, achievement is **satisfactory**, with most children attaining the expected goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development by the end of Reception. Attainment in personal, social and emotional development **exceeds** the expected standard for children of this age, which indicates that achievement is good in this area of learning. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science are **above average**. When compared to attainment at five, **achievement is good** at age seven and 11. This is because pupils maintain these **good standards** despite a significant number

receiving minimal support from outside school. Standards in music are **above** national expectations in Years 2 and 6. Standards in all other subjects are **satisfactory**. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve **as well** as other pupils because of the good support they receive.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is **very good**. Provision for spiritual development is **good**. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. As a result, pupils have **very good** attitudes to school and behave well. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The range of learning opportunities throughout the school is **good**. The quality of teaching is **good** and, as a result, pupils learn well. There is **very good** provision for pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and the gifted and talented are also **well catered** for. Links with other educational establishments are **very good** and enhance the curriculum. The school cares **very well** for its pupils and keeps them safe at all times.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The headteacher, deputy head, key teachers and governors lead and manage the school very well by inspiring, motivating and enabling the staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have **very positive** views of the school. Pupils really like the school and talk enthusiastically about their teachers and the activities they do in class. They find the target-setting programme particularly useful.

MINOR IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Match the good achievement made in English, mathematics and science in all other subjects (by extending the use of literacy and numeracy).
- Extend throughout the school the good practice of high-quality marking and the rigorous expectations of presentation found in most classes.
- Address the minor omissions in the school brochure.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is **good**. It is **satisfactory** in the Foundation Stage because not all children have a full year in the Reception class. In Years 1 and 2 it is **good** because pupils consolidate their learning well and attain above average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Achievement is also **good** in Years 3 to 6 because, despite a small number of pupils receiving minimal support from home with their learning, standards in English, mathematics and science are still above average when they leave the school. This good achievement is a result of high-quality teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve satisfactorily during their short stay in the Foundation Stage because provision is good in all areas of learning.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 because teaching is consistently good and they are provided with an interesting range of activities.
- No differences are noted between the achievements of different groups of pupils. Those pupils who have special educational needs, use English as an additional language, or are gifted and talented also achieve well because they are very quickly identified and receive specialist support.
- There are no differences noted between the achievement of boys and girls.
- Achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. This is because not enough use is made of literacy and numeracy skills to develop subject knowledge in these other areas of the curriculum.
- Ambitious target setting for individual pupils and the school overall has a significant impact on achievement.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.9 (29.6)	27 (27)
Mathematics	28.1 (27.3)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	30.7 (28.6)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Attainment on entry into school is very variable, but is generally as expected for this age group. However, physical and creative skills are below the expected level. Attainment at the end of Reception meets the expected levels in all areas of learning, except personal, social and emotional development, which exceeds expectations by the start of compulsory schooling. This is similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection.

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at the age of eleven is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

2. The results of the 2002 national assessment tests for pupils in Year 2 showed that pupils achieved well above the national average in writing, above average levels in reading and average levels in mathematics. When compared to those in similar schools the results showed a similar pattern. The preliminary results from the 2003 national assessment tests indicate that standards have remained high in reading and writing. However, they appeared to have improved in mathematics. This is because the school has focused on ensuring that more pupils gain the appropriate skills to attain the higher level in the national tests. The trend for results in Year 2 remains positive.
3. The results of the 2002 national assessments for pupils in Year 6 show that standards in English and science were well above average. Standards in mathematics were above average. In comparison to those in similar schools results were well above average. The preliminary results of 2003 indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science remain high. The trend in the school results remains in line with the national trend.
4. Standards in music are above average at the ages of seven and 11. This is because the quality of teaching is very good and enables pupils to achieve very well.
5. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used well in English, mathematics and science but are not developed sufficiently well in other subjects across the curriculum. This limits the achievement made in all other subjects, where standards are judged to be satisfactory.
6. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. They are suitably challenged with individual education plans clearly indicating appropriate expectations. Consequently, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils who use English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Those pupils who are gifted and talented are provided with challenging activities within their specialist areas and are encouraged to participate in national challenges. This helps them to achieve successfully, both in and out of school.
7. The following tables compare attainment now with that at the time of the last inspection and comment on the reasons for change.

Attainment in the Foundation Stage

	Attainment in the 1998 Inspection	Current judgements for Inspection in 2003	Children's achievement in relation to prior attainment	Comments
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Good	Good	Achievement is good.	Children are provided with interesting opportunities to develop as individuals.
Communication Language and Literacy	Good	Satisfactory	Achievement is satisfactory.	A significant number of children have weak speaking skills, but they are taught well. However, some only have two terms in the Foundation Stage.
Mathematical Development	Good	Satisfactory	Achievement is satisfactory.	The recommended curriculum is clearer now and this explains the slight difference between inspections.
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	Good	Satisfactory	Achievement is satisfactory.	The recommended curriculum is more detailed now. Good teaching develops skills consistently.
Creative Development	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Achievement is good because the children start school with attainment that is below the expected levels in these two areas of learning.	The children make good progress from a low entry point because the quality of teaching is very good.
Physical Development	Good	Satisfactory		

Attainment at the age of seven

	Attainment in the 1998 Inspection	Current judgements for Inspection in 2003	Pupils' achievement in relation to prior attainment	Comments
Reading	Good	Good	Achievement is good.	Pupils make good progress because they are taught well.
Writing	Good	Good	Achievement is good.	Pupils make good progress because the teaching is good.
Mathematics	Good	Good	Achievement is good.	The more capable pupils are attaining the higher levels because teachers identified this as an area to develop.
Science	Satisfactory	Good	Achievement is good.	Teaching in science is good and pupils are systematically taught scientific skills.
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Achievement is satisfactory because the requirements are now much higher than at the time of the last inspection.	Pupils make satisfactory progress because resources are good and teachers develop skills systematically.
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Achievement is satisfactory.	Pupils make satisfactory progress but do not use their literacy skills enough to develop their knowledge of this subject.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school, including those of the youngest pupils, are **very good** because the provision for social and moral education is of a **very high** quality. Pupils feel valued and their opinions are respected. Behaviour is **good** overall, with some very good behaviour noted. However, there were a few examples of inappropriate behaviour observed which, in the opinion of the inspection team, are to be expected at the very beginning of a new term. These examples of inappropriate behaviour were well handled by the staff. Attendance rates are **satisfactory** and the vast majority of pupils arrive on time. There were three fixed-term exclusions during the past year and the inspection team found that the exclusion process was used as a necessary strategy for the sake of the whole school community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested in all aspects of school life and keen to share their views with visitors.
- When given responsibility they show confidence and enthusiasm.
- They enjoy learning and have very positive relationships with each other. These very good relationships are promoted by very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Pupils report no concerns about bullying or racism.
- Attitudes to school are very good. Behaviour is good overall, and sometimes very good.

Authorised absence	
School data	5.32
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.01
National data	0.5

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

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	248	2	0
White – any other White background	19	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	12	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	13	1	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	5	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	32	0	0

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

Commentary

8. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Provision for spiritual development is good. The development of pupils' self-esteem is central to the school's very good ethos and is evident in the teaching. All pupils are included and each individual is valued. Pupils' self-esteem is raised through their performing in assemblies and through good use of praise by the staff in lessons. As a result, pupils show interest in their work. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of wonder. In a Year 5 computer lesson, exclamations of surprise and delight were heard as different patterns appeared on the screen and the pupils realised that they could control these patterns. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were focused and responded very well to good teaching when planning the plot and characters for their own narrative writing.
9. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. They generally behave very well in lessons and around the school. There are good structures for behaviour management and pupils are aware of how their behaviour affects others. Older pupils are encouraged to help younger ones and they gain an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves through supporting charities. Teachers also encourage pupils to discuss moral issues such as conservation.
10. Collective worship meets statutory requirements, and opportunities are planned in religious education for pupils to learn about, and have respect for, the celebrations and beliefs of other faiths. Pupils are encouraged to be proud of their own religious beliefs and feel confident in expressing their views.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Significant strengths include the consistently good quality of teaching throughout the school, the **very good** provision for pupils with special educational needs and the **good** provision for those who use English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented. The **very high-quality** links with a wide range of educational institutions and the school's links with parents also contribute very positively to the quality of education provided.

Teaching and learning

11. The overall quality of teaching is **good** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6. This enables all pupils to confidently gain new skills and consolidate their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well in class and are provided with good learning opportunities in specialist groups and through individual focused sessions. Assessment procedures are very well established throughout the school and this ensures that pupils develop their knowledge consistently and with a good understanding of what they are achieving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The assessment procedures are used very effectively to inform the very high-quality classroom planning which is evident.
- All teachers have very high expectations of work and, because their command of subjects taught is good, they ensure that the pupils are suitably challenged.
- Behaviour management is very good in all classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses (*continued*)

- Teachers provide their pupils with very clear pointers for improvement and they are clear about what they must do to improve in their learning.
- Teachers use praise well to motivate their pupils and this results in high levels of productivity in each classroom.
- A good range of effective teaching methods and interesting resources is used well. This ensures that good use is made of time in lessons.
- Teaching assistants are used well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and those who are gifted and talented are supported well.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for work in subjects other than English and mathematics to support the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Occasionally untidy presentation is accepted.

Commentary

12. At the time of the inspection three teachers were new to the school and several staff had changed age ranges. However, all teaching staff felt very well supported because consistent and effective classroom systems were in place.
13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and meets the needs of the children well. Some elements of very good practice were observed during the inspection when teachers taught their new classes within a team approach and were able to support each other in settling the children into school routines. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is also good and staff work closely within the parallel groups to ensure that pupils' learning is consistent.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (14%)	22 (51%)	15 (35%)	0	0	0

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

The assessment procedures are used very effectively to inform the very high-quality classroom planning which is evident in all classrooms.

14. All lesson plans take account of prior learning. The focus for the session not only links closely with the appropriate areas within the National Curriculum but also outlines the specific skills that are to be learnt. Criteria for judging the achievement within these lessons are clearly identified and help both the teachers and pupils to understand how well they are doing.

All teachers have very high expectations of work and, because their command of subjects taught is good, they ensure that the pupils are suitably challenged.

15. All teachers have good subject knowledge and fully understand what they are teaching. This enables them to make very good use of questioning techniques to ensure that pupils fully understand what they are learning. They are fully challenged in all lessons and, as a consequence, are very willing to learn.

Behaviour management is very good in all classes.

16. Teachers have a very wide range of strategies to cope with behaviour that are implemented consistently. Pupils are clear about teacher expectations and this has a positive impact on learning because challenging pupils do not disrupt lessons.

Teachers provide their pupils with very clear pointers for improvement and they are clear about what they must do to improve in their learning.

17. Teachers in the Foundation Stage use the Reception assessment profile to identify what skills the children need to learn. Targets for individual pupils are agreed with them in Years 1 to 6 and then reviewed on a regular basis. Pupils speak with confidence about their targets and fully understand that they are used to help them progress in their learning.

Teachers use praise well to motivate their pupils and this results in high levels of productivity in each classroom.

18. Pupils talk of feeling highly valued by their teachers and are involved in their learning. All staff treat pupils with great respect and ensure that each one is valued and encouraged appropriately.

A good range of effective teaching methods and interesting resources is used well. This ensures that good use is made of time in lessons.

19. Pupils frequently work in pairs and groups and this successfully develops their collaborative skills. Resources are of good quality and this motivates the pupils in their learning. Particularly good use is made of overhead projectors and computer programs to help pupils to understand what they are learning.

Teaching assistants are used well in lessons.

20. Teaching assistants are well qualified and their expertise is used well by the teachers, who brief them well before lessons. They often work closely with individuals to help them to understand what the teacher wants them to do and this helps them to learn effectively.

Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and those who are gifted and talented are supported well.

21. Children with special educational needs, including those who are gifted and talented, are quickly identified in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress because the special educational needs co-ordinator liaises closely with teachers and their assistants. Individual education plans have clear targets that meet the needs of the pupils very well. Classroom support is balanced well with specialist group teaching.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support.

22. The support provided for pupils for whom English is an additional language enables them to learn well. Teaching assistants help pupils to explain their tasks and understand what they are learning.

Not enough opportunities are provided for work in subjects other than English and mathematics to support the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

23. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teachers use a good range of activities to extend these skills in literacy and numeracy sessions, but these are not developed further in other subjects and, consequently, this results in missed opportunities.

Occasionally untidy presentation is accepted.

24. Most teachers mark work thoroughly, providing good pointers for improvement and praising where appropriate. However, there are a small number of occasions when untidily presented work is accepted without any comments being made by the teacher.

The curriculum

The curriculum meets all the statutory requirements. Overall the curriculum provision is **good**. It has appropriate breadth and offers the pupils a good range of learning opportunities. A wide variety of school visits and visitors, and a very good range of extra-curricular activities further enhance these. The quality of the accommodation offered is **very good** and the imaginative use of space serves to add much to the learning environment. The quality and range of resources available are also **very good**.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Very good curriculum planning with clearly identified assessment opportunities.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision of very good accommodation and resources.
- Very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Good access to the curriculum.
- Cross-curricular links are underdeveloped in some areas.

Commentary

25. The curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements. The Foundation Stage uses the recommended areas of learning for the children in Reception. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are good, with some very good elements. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used effectively to teach English and mathematics.
26. The school has produced an effective curriculum map, which is well supported by detailed medium-term plans. These are based on a well-known nationally recognised scheme. Planning is detailed and of high quality. It includes clearly identified assessment opportunities, which facilitate good continuity and progression for individual pupils in the school. Where appropriate, planning is supplemented by a range of commercial schemes.
27. Pupils generally used an appropriate range of methods to record their work. However, there were one or two instances where an overuse of worksheets resulted in pupils having only limited opportunities to record independently. A scrutiny of work also showed that standards of presentation are sometimes inconsistent.
28. It is clear that the school recognises the value of making good cross-curricular links. In literacy, music, dance, drama and art these links have been established very successfully, providing pupils with some rich and vibrant curriculum experiences. However, opportunities to extend the skills learnt in the core subjects into other curricular areas are, as yet, underdeveloped. As a result, the breadth of experience in some of the foundation subjects is rather more limited than it need be. For example, there is little opportunity for pupils to undertake extended writing in history.
29. The school provides a wide variety of carefully planned visits and visiting speakers. These serve to enrich the curriculum and provide a valuable learning context for pupils. The provision for extra-curricular activities is also very good.
30. Pupils with special educational needs are very well provided for because the support they are given is consistently good and their progress is very carefully monitored. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, have equal access to the opportunities it provides. The headteacher was pleased to be able to show us the new lift that

has just been installed, enabling disabled access to the upper floors where Years 5 and 6 are accommodated.

31. The accommodation provided is very good and the imaginative use of space greatly enhances pupils' learning environment. The very attractive library is a resource of which the school is justly proud. The outside learning environment is well kept and provides the school with a valuable and well-used resource. The quality and range of resources are also very good.

Care, guidance and support

32. The care, guidance and support for pupils are **very good** and support their learning very well. Health and safety procedures are **very good**. Pupils feel secure and well cared for in school, and there are very good induction and transfer arrangements. Staff know the pupils very well and arrangements for assessing attainment and progress are very good. The school uses this information **very well** to provide well-targeted support, advice and guidance for its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel secure and well cared for in school. They have good and trusting relationships with the staff.
- There are very good induction and transfer arrangements.
- The school seeks pupils' views by getting them to complete annual evaluation forms, but there is no school council as yet.
- The school provides opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
- There are very effective procedures for the protection of pupils in line with locally agreed child protection arrangements.

Commentary

33. Pupils are very well cared for by the staff. All pupils are valued and the school's very good ethos promotes very good racial harmony. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and all staff make a significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for all pupils, both in and out of lessons. Appropriate staff have received up-to-date training for the procedures for child protection.
34. The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. The school consistently uses agreed methods to assess pupils' progress. The system works well, and the school uses the information gathered to provide well-targeted support, advice and guidance for its pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents, the local community and other schools is **very good**. This has a very positive impact on the achievement of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in very high regard.
- There are very good links with the community, especially through the beacon status of the school, which makes a very good contribution to learning.
- There are very good links with the local football club and Bromley Youth Orchestra.
- Links with other schools are strong, which aids induction and transfer processes.

Main strengths and weaknesses (*continued*)

- There is very good information given to parents, for example newsletters, curriculum and topic information, welcome packs and reports. However, there are a few omissions in the school brochure.

Commentary

35. Parents warmly praise what the school achieves. They value its caring attitudes and are very satisfied that their children make good progress. They are provided with very relevant information about the school and about the pupils' standards and progress. The school values and acts on parents' views when appropriate, and the partnership with parents contributes to pupils' learning at school and at home. Parents feel that the school does what it can to deal effectively with any concerns or complaints.
36. The school has very productive links with the community. People from the community regularly visit the school and use its facilities from time to time. Regular outside visits contribute well to pupils' learning. There are very effective mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to secondary schools, and the very good links with the pre-school playgroup enable the very youngest children to feel happy and secure when they join the Reception class. Family learning courses are held and are very popular with the parents. There are strong partnerships with other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **very well led and managed** by the headteacher, deputy head, governing body and key staff. A number of areas in the leadership and management of the school are excellent and have a very strong impact on the achievement of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have a very good understanding of the school. They are involved in shaping the future direction of the school and rigorously question the senior management team.
- The headteacher, deputy and key teachers inspire, lead and motivate the staff and pupils in an outstanding manner.
- The school is highly critical and reflective of its practice. Strategic planning is very good.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and shows an excellent commitment to the full involvement of all pupils in school life.
- New staff are inducted well and the school is fully committed to the professional development of all individuals, including those training to be teachers.
- Financial management is very effective, with decisions on expenditure clearly relating to priorities for improvement that benefit the achievement of the pupils.

Commentary

Financial information for the year April 2001 to March 2002

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	968,434
Total expenditure	917,103
Expenditure per pupil	2,248

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-3,305
Balance carried forward to the next	48,026

37. The headteacher and her deputy headteacher share a very clear vision and use their professional expertise very effectively to promote achievement. All other key staff provide very good support and use their expertise effectively. The enthusiastic and dedicated staff work very well together as a team and support the headteacher and her deputy very well. They carry out their challenging responsibilities with vigour and very competently motivate their colleagues. Staff are totally committed to continuing professional development and share very high aspirations for the school.
38. Everything the school does is geared to ensuring that pupils achieve well and are all fully included in the life of the school. The very detailed strategic management plan is rigorously analysed and evaluated regularly to ensure that the school's goals are being met. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and learning are very good and are very effectively carried out by the headteacher, her deputy and key staff. The outstanding systems in place for the appraisal and performance management of teachers and staff are extremely supportive. New staff, including those new to teaching, are introduced very well to the school and receive excellent support.
39. Governors have a very good knowledge of day-to-day life in school and their professional expertise is used very well to form their vision for the school. They have a wide involvement in community matters and are keen to include local individuals in their plans to benefit the school. The governing body fulfils the vast majority of its statutory duties as defined by the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act. Additionally, policies are in place to meet the latest requirements, such as the Disability Act of 2002. However, there are a small number of minor omissions in the annual report to parents.
40. Financial planning is very closely linked to the educational priorities that are identified on the school development plan to ensure '*best value*' and have been agreed by both staff and governors. Very good use is made of all available resources. All funds, including specific grants, are carefully matched to the priorities that have been identified in the school development plan. Monies for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are used very well to support their various learning difficulties.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. There has been an improvement in the quality of provision for the youngest children since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved from mostly satisfactory to good teaching overall, with some very good examples observed. The curriculum was judged to be satisfactory at the last inspection but is now of good quality and firmly rooted in the Foundation Stage curriculum², a step in education before Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Children start school when they are four and a half, either in the September or January before their fifth birthday. There is a very good induction process that ensures that both the children and their parents are confident when they start school. Parents are welcomed into school and receive very good-quality information. Links between home and school are encouraged; the children take reading folders home and are encouraged to read with their parents.
42. The management of the Foundation Stage is good and is based on the principles of effective early years practice. The Reception classes are well staffed with suitably qualified personnel who work very closely with each other. Both the indoor and outdoor learning areas are well equipped and this has a positive impact on the children's achievement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in this area of learning.
- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- The curriculum is well planned to ensure that the children are given an appropriate balance between teacher-directed lessons and opportunities to choose activities for themselves.

Commentary

43. Children start school with a very wide range of social skills. Staff provide very good role models and this helps all children to achieve well. They behave patiently and calmly and consistently praise the good behaviour and achievements of the children. Staff ensure that all the children feel secure and this enables them to develop their independence, concentration and ability to work harmoniously with each other. Many children showed in various activities that they are aware of others and can relate well to those in their group. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 all children play together well and are able to look after their personal needs with confidence.

² This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or 'stepping stones', from which both progress and standards can be measured.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers show a good understanding of this age group and teach basic literacy skills systematically.
- Assessment procedures are used well to help the children to achieve satisfactorily.
- A high level of support is given to children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

Commentary

44. Staff focus strongly on these skills. This enables the children to attain the expected level by the end of Reception. Teachers work hard at developing communication skills in all sessions. Very good use is made of large story books that are shared with the children. The teachers make very effective use of questioning skills to help the children to understand the basic skills of reading. They are encouraged to look at the pictures and follow the text as their teacher reads it out aloud.
45. Very good use is made of the teaching assistant, who assesses the quality of learning for individual children and monitors the achievement being made. All staff have very high expectations of behaviour during these story sessions but also give lots of praise to those who are 'super-sitters'.
46. Not all children can recognise and write their name when they start school, but staff encourage and praise them and this helps them to achieve appropriately. Good use is made of a very wide range of resources to develop their writing skills, such as tracing letters in sand and painting their names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are enthusiastic about their learning and particularly enjoy singing number songs.
- Teaching is good and this enables the children to achieve satisfactorily in the time available to them in the Reception class.

Commentary

47. Standards on entry into school are as expected for this age group. A significant number of children have attended pre-school before they enter the Reception class and they start school with a good knowledge of shapes. These individuals name common shapes such as circles, squares and triangles from the description alone and this is good. However, a small number of children have very little recognition of mathematical terms. All children enjoy number songs and enthusiastically sing them. They count orally to ten with good support from the teaching assistant where appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, with stimulating activities chosen to motivate the children.
- Children are enthusiastic and keen to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Commentary

48. Many children enter the Reception class with a satisfactory level of general knowledge. The attractive learning environment, and the support and care of all the adults in their class, enable them to build successfully on this. They learn how to control computer programs and are able to open programs readily. The children also know how to print by clicking on an icon in consultation with an adult.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children start school with standards below those expected for this age group.
- Teaching is good and often very good and this has a very positive impact on achievement.
- Children achieve well and attain the expected levels by the start of Year 1.
- Accommodation and resources are very good.

Commentary

49. In class children are developing their ability to hold pencils and crayons correctly. They are starting to handle a range of small objects with confidence and have good opportunities to use larger outdoor play items. In studio sessions it is evident that children's spatial awareness and co-ordination skills are weak. However, the teachers join in with the children and demonstrate how to carry out different activities and this enables them to achieve well in these sessions.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's skills are below the expected standard when they start school.
- Teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- Children achieve well and attain the expected level by the start of Year 1.

Commentary

50. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through role-play, art and music. They quickly start to join in with nursery rhymes and enjoy singing them to both quick and slow music. They enjoy playing alongside their friends in the class shop and office, effectively using the good range of resources provided by the staff. The children are given opportunities to paint when they experiment with different colours and work creatively on

collages. They gradually learn to move to music, and more capable children are encouraged to tap out repeated rhythms using percussion instruments. Teachers ensure that all children are fully involved in whole-class sessions and encourage less confident individuals to join in the activities by fully supporting them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good standards are achieved at end of Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching is consistently good, particularly the very good use of assessment procedures and the very high-quality planning.
- Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and the gifted and talented make good progress because they are supported well.
- Subject leadership is very good and staff are actively encouraged to experiment with new ideas and methods.
- Resources are good and the library accommodation is of very high quality.

Commentary

51. Staff plan a wealth of activities to ensure that the pupils develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers make good use of questioning to help the pupils gain confidence using the spoken word. Listening skills are developed well through systematic approaches to gaining pupils' attention. Pupils are also encouraged to discuss with their partners issues raised in the lessons and this helps them to use subject-related vocabulary.
52. Pupils achieve well in their reading because the teachers promote skills well. Teachers have a good command of the subject and skilfully choose shared texts. This helps the pupils to focus on the lesson and encourages them to be fully involved in the lessons. In Year 2 they recognise story sequences and use a range of strategies to work out unknown words. In Year 6 the pupils confidently discuss the differing styles of a range of authors and clearly explain their preferences.
53. Attainment in writing is above average. Year 2 pupils know that all sentences need capital letters and full stops, and a good number of pupils achieve the higher than expected level because they write at great length using paragraphs and interesting language. In Year 6 they discover the use of dialogue to make texts interesting and they understand how writers build up tension in their writing through the use of specific words. Pupils start to develop cursive writing in Year 2, but, although teachers' marking is supportive, the presentation of work accepted is not always neat enough.
54. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and those who are gifted and talented are quickly identified and targets to help them achieve are put into place. These are reviewed and discussed with the staff involved on a regular basis.
55. The good teaching enables pupils to achieve well. Teachers encourage pupils through the use of a good range of teaching resources. The very good library accommodation makes a very significant contribution to the good achievement made by all pupils.

56. The school has benefited from a highly effective subject manager who has introduced very detailed assessment procedures and has worked in conjunction with the deputy headteacher to monitor the achievement of different groups of pupils. The underachievement of boys was identified and so the school introduced books that stimulated their interest.
57. Standards in English have been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has also remained strong and pupils remain interested in and enthusiastic about the subject. This has a positive impact on their achievement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very well and has been appropriately adapted to support effective learning. The session which focuses on reading has been removed from the literacy session and now all classes have a reading session first thing in the morning. During this time, specialist groups are withdrawn to practise specific skills. Pupils take books home regularly and are given adequate time to read to adults in school. However, not enough use is made of subjects such as geography, history and religious education to develop writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good in Years 2 and 6.
- The effective leadership and the team approach to management.
- The thorough planning of lessons and units of work.
- Teachers' strategies for engaging the interest of all pupils.
- The thorough assessment policy and practice.
- The good marking systems are not used consistently by all staff, thus pupils' knowledge of their own progress and the implementation of the target-setting policy are sporadic.

Commentary

59. The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language, and gifted and talented pupils, are very well catered for. Both capable teaching assistants and effective differentiation in lessons provide for pupils who need support. All teachers plan and organise the lessons well and use weekly evaluation sheets to assess pupils' progress through the well-planned topics. Teachers effectively use mathematical language; the pace of lessons is generally good and praise motivates pupils in their learning.
60. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding of the approaches to learning that lead to the higher standards being attained. The strategies introduced to raise the attainment of more capable pupils in Year 2 have had an impact on pupils of all ability levels. Specialist groups are given challenging tasks that engage the pupils' interest and stimulate a desire to learn. Gifted and talented pupils also successfully enter national competitions, the results of which are celebrated in special award assemblies. Pupils develop good thinking skills as well as increasing their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts.
61. Assessment procedures enable pupils' attainment to be recorded and individual performance to be tracked. Teachers are then able to access these results to use in future planning. Target-setting sheets are shared with pupils and parents, and incentives for good work are

used to motivate the pupils. However, in discussion with inspectors not all pupils were clear about their numeracy targets. Most pupils present their work carefully, but not all teachers comment on weak standards of presentation and spelling mistakes.

62. The subject is very well led and managed. A numeracy team formed from staff across the school works together to produce and manage a good range of materials and resources. Standards have been well maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching remains strong and has been enhanced by the careful planning of lessons, which ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and those who are gifted and talented, achieve well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

There are missed opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum in subjects such as design and technology and geography.

SCIENCE

Overall provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject leadership is very good.
- Attainment is good in Year 2 and very good in Year 6.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- Detailed planning is well matched to the needs of the pupils. They know exactly what their learning objectives are and are given clear feedback on how successful they have been.
- Standards of presentation are inconsistent.
- Links with information and communication technology are underdeveloped.
- Opportunities for pupils to work independently are limited.

Commentary

63. At the time of the last inspection standards were deemed to be good. Overall, standards have been maintained in Year 2 and have improved in Year 6. A significant number of pupils, especially in Years 3 to 6, are achieving above the expected level. There are no differences noted between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented achieve well in relation to prior attainment.
64. Pupils make good progress throughout the school because of the good teaching, which has been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use it effectively to explain scientific principles in a way that pupils can understand. Particular attention is paid to developing pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary and to ensuring that they understand the processes needed to carry out an effective investigation. However, opportunities for pupils to investigate an area of their own choice, and thereby apply these skills when working independently, are rather more limited. This was identified as an area for development at the last inspection.
65. A scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils show that there is a sharp focus on helping them to understand what they do well and also what they need to do in order to improve. By Years 5 and 6 pupils are able to make sensible predictions, understand that conclusions need to be supported by evidence and have a clear idea about how to carry out a fair test. By the end of Year 2 pupils show that they are able to describe the properties of different materials

and draw a simple circuit. Pupils also show they can write a detailed diary to record the changes observed as caterpillars changed into butterflies.

66. Pupils are encouraged to record results in a variety of appropriate ways, including Venn diagrams, posters, graphs and tables. However, the use of information and communication technology in science is underdeveloped. There is also some inconsistency in standards of presentation.
67. The management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has worked hard to promote the subject in interesting ways and so pupils' attitudes towards science are very positive. They talked most enthusiastically about what they had learned during a science day and were keen to explain how much they had enjoyed it.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The three lessons observed were with Years 3 to 6. Comments are based on these lessons, on discussions with staff and with pupils, and on an examination of pupils' previous work.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching, including good management of pupils, in the computer suite.
- Teaching methods enable the active participation of all pupils, even when they are working in pairs.
- Good assessment provides clear feedback to pupils on how they are progressing.
- Researching information from the Internet is not always sufficiently focused by pupils.

Commentary

68. Standards observed during the inspection are average in Years 2 and 6. At the time of the last inspection standards were average in Year 2, and some aspects of pupils' work were above average in Year 6. However, national expectations are now much higher than at the time of the last inspection. Thus, the current standards have been maintained since then because pupils make more use of the Internet for research, have sent electronic mail, and develop skills using spreadsheets. All pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs, those whose first language is not English, and the gifted and talented.
69. Resources to support information and communication technology have improved significantly and have had a positive impact on the pupils' learning. However, some older pupils in Years 5 and 6, when using Internet sources, download chunks of information and fail to select or highlight the most relevant features of a topic.
70. The subject is well managed, with colleagues working well together to support pupils' progress. Information and communication technology is an appropriate focus in school development plans.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Currently there is satisfactory use overall of information and communication technology in other subjects. The school recognises the need to develop this area. Word processing and Internet research skills are used in several subjects such as history, English, science, and religious education. Pupils' learning is also extended by the use of painting programs in art. Years 1 and 2 present work involving bar graphs. However, insufficient use is made of

computer skills in subjects such as mathematics and science. Pupils do not have enough access to resources such as the digital camera.

HUMANITIES

It was only possible to observe one lesson each of geography and history. Four lessons were observed in religious education. Comments are based on these lessons, on an examination of pupils' previous work and on discussions with pupils, teachers and subject managers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good subject management supports good teaching and good use of resources.
- Pupils have positive attitudes, and participate well in class activities.
- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is less recorded work in religious education.

Commentary

72. Standards of attainment at Years 2 and 6 are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language at home is not English, achieve satisfactorily. This broadly maintains the standards noted in the last inspection, which were satisfactory in classes through the school, but good in Year 6.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils respond well to role-play, visits, and practical activities. The subject is co-ordinated well and the recently appointed subject manager is already working well with other colleagues in humanities. Pupils record less work in religious education than in history and geography and this indicates that their literacy skills are not being used to develop this subject fully.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management in both subjects are good.
- Pupils respond well to the practical approaches, including visits, fieldwork and drama.
- There is good promotion of pupils' personal development.
- Opportunities for extended writing are not fully exploited.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in independent enquiry.

Commentary

74. Standards attained are average in both Years 2 and 6. This maintains the standards noted in the last inspection. All pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs.

75. Teaching is good. Resources are used well, including the school grounds, to engage pupils and to help them learn. Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is boosted in the way the pupils collaborate and in some of the topics they study, such as environmental concerns and global inequalities. There is now a stronger progression through the school in skills such as mapping than was noted in the last inspection. However, in some classes some of the marking of work does not always provide feedback to pupils on how they could improve.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS ART

Provision in art is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The resources for art are good.
- The accommodation is used well.
- There are good links with other subjects.

Commentary

76. Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. At the time of the last inspection they were good. The differences can be explained by the timing of the inspection, which was in the first full week after the long summer break. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In some of the lessons seen the teachers used a good range of methods to make sure that everyone was involved in the activities. Links with drama are particularly effective, helping to develop art skills by captivating the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The use of the extensive outdoor area for sketching experiences has a notable impact on pupil achievement.

MUSIC

Although only two music lessons were seen during the inspection, the standard observed would support the view that **provision for music is very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning.
- Very good teaching.
- High level of pupil motivation and enjoyment.
- High attainment.

Commentary

77. Planning is very detailed and in the lessons observed teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge and used resources very well. Pupils are all fully involved and keen to learn. They behave very well and achieve well. Provision is enhanced by the choir and by giving pupils the opportunity to learn to play a range of different instruments, either by joining a recorder club or by taking up the option of tuition by a peripatetic music teacher. All pupils who opt to learn an instrument are given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills by performing in a musical evening to which parents are invited.
78. The subject is very well led and resources for music are very good. Very close links are promoted between music, art, dance and drama. Standards have improved in music since the last inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about this subject.
- Opportunities for independent work by older pupils are limited.
- Subject management is good.

Commentary

79. An examination of pupils' work shows that standards of attainment in Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Also pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. In discussion, pupils have a clear idea of features of the designing, making, and evaluating processes, and recall some of their previous work with a real sense of satisfaction. Evaluations are now a standard part of the process, thus rectifying the omission of a skill noted in the last inspection report.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator and teachers are committed to developing the subject.
- There is detailed planning and a scaled introduction of new schemes of work.
- Outside expertise has an impact on pupils' achievement.
- There is no development of assessment and monitoring, although plans are in place.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are as expected in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about physical education.

Commentary

80. At the time of the last report standards were judged to be good. This does not mean that standards have declined, but it does reflect the fact that the inspection took place during the first week of a new school year. Lesson planning and the use of behaviour management skills are strengths in the teaching. Dance is carefully linked to a drama scheme, which is being implemented in conjunction with the co-ordinators for music, art, and design and technology.

81. The use of outside expertise and extra-curricular activities have a positive impact on the achievement of pupils. Resources for the subject are good, with excellent outdoor areas for sport and other activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is planned well within the curriculum.
- Good use is made of class times where pupils sit together in a circle and discuss their views and feelings.

Commentary

82. The arrangements for personal, social and health education, including the misuse of drugs, are good. Effective use is made of a commercial scheme of work, and teachers consistently follow it. The programme of work is taught partly through other subjects such as science and physical education. However, there is also time set aside each week to deal with other issues such as friendship and feelings.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
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	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

