

INSPECTION REPORT

Smitham Primary School

Coulsdon

LEA area: Croydon

Unique reference number: 101759

Headteacher: Mr D Garrard

Lead inspector: Ms K Taylor

Dates of inspection: 1st - 4th March 2004

Inspection number: 264299

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:	436
School address:	Portnalls Road Coulsdon Surrey
Postcode:	CR5 3DE
Telephone number:	0208 660 4399
Fax number:	0208 763 0974
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L O'Neill

Date of previous inspection: April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Smitham Primary is a large school and has 436 boys and girls on roll aged between 3 and 11 years. The school opened its own nursery for the first time in April 2002. There is a wide spread of attainment among children when they start in the nursery and overall attainment is similar to that usually found. A quarter of pupils at the school are from ethnic minority backgrounds and many ethnic groups are represented. Few pupils, currently three, are at the very early stage of acquiring English. Paeshto, Arabic and French are their first languages. The proportion of pupils on the special needs register is well below the national average, but the proportion that have a Statement of Special Educational Need is average. Fifteen pupils are on the higher stages of the special needs Code of Practice, including five pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupils' needs relate to learning, specific learning difficulties, social and emotional needs, speech and communication difficulties, hearing and visual impairment, autism and physical disability. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is in line with the national average. The social and economic backgrounds of pupils are favourable when compared to those usually found. Staff and pupil mobility is fairly low. The school gained the Investors in People award in 2002, a School Achievement Award in 2003 and the Kitemark for Community Use in 2002 and 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22424	Kathryn Taylor	Lead inspector	Science Special educational needs Music Design and technology
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23036	Jenny Nicholson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage ¹ History Geography Personal, social and health education
4351	Jeanne Strickland	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Religious education
12367	Tony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Art and design

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Smitham Primary School is a good school. It has a very warm, welcoming family ethos that pupils, parents, governors and staff value highly. With its good leadership and management, well-planned curriculum and good teaching, the school enables its pupils to achieve high academic and personal standards and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are good in many subjects and pupils of all capabilities achieve well.
- Pupils develop into mature, dependable and confident young citizens as they move up through the school.
- The school is well led and managed and governors carry out most of their responsibilities well.
- Teaching and learning are good overall
- Marking does not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve, and teachers are not consistent in setting personal learning targets, or in ensuring that tasks planned match all pupils' capabilities.
- The school offers a good curriculum that meets pupils' needs well, but further developments are still needed in reception classes.
- The school works effectively with parents and parents support the school well.
- Resources and the outdoor accommodation are good, but some of the classrooms are too small, which makes practical work more difficult to organise.

The school has improved **well** since the previous inspection. All of the key issues identified in the previous report have been fully addressed. Standards in a number of subjects have improved. The quality of teaching, the curriculum and the provision for gifted and talented pupils and pupils with special educational needs are all better now than they were at the time of the previous inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

When children start in nursery their overall attainments are in line with those usually found. Children make good progress in nursery and good progress in some areas of learning in reception. Most children attain the expected standards by the time they join Year 1. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 so that by the end of Years 2 and 6 they attain good standards in English, mathematics, science, music and religious education. In history and information and communication technology, (ICT), standards are in line with those expected by age seven and exceed those expected by age 11 years. Work in geography, design and technology, art and design and physical education were not inspected in full. Standards of the work seen were at least in line with what is expected. All pupils, including higher attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well during their time at the school. The school's test results at age 11 compare well with those in similar school and schools nationally, as the table below shows.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A*	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	A	A	B	B

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.

Similar schools are those whose pupils have a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted **well**. This helps pupils to develop very good attitudes and behaviour. Attendance levels are satisfactory and punctuality is good. Relationships among boys and girls and pupils from a wide range of backgrounds, are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** in the nursery and this helps children to make a good start to their schooling. Teaching in reception is satisfactory and some of the teaching is good. Elsewhere in the school, the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum is well planned and the school makes very good use of extra curricular activities, its links with the community, visits and visitors to school to support pupils' learning. All staff ensure that pupils are very well cared for and safe at school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and staff with responsibilities lead and manage the school **well**. The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and there is a strong commitment to achieving high standards in all aspects of its work. Senior managers and subject managers evaluate the work of the school well, and know what needs improving. The governors support the work of the school and challenge it well. They carry out their statutory responsibilities well, except in the case of collective worship when a few pupils are withdrawn to attend small support groups in literacy or numeracy.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and speak highly of it. They feel welcome, find most staff very approachable and are happy with the standards that their children achieve. They like the wide range of activities on offer. They feel that homework helps parents to support their children at home, but some would like more information about how the curriculum is taught. Parents appreciate the way that the headteacher and staff take an interest in their families and give time to talk them. Pupils very much enjoy school. They say they enjoy all types of lessons and that learning is often fun. They like the school's reward systems, school dinners, playtimes, clubs and other pupils. Pupils trust their teachers and the support staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop the provision and teaching methods used in the reception classes
- Ensure that teachers in Years 1 to 6 consistently plan tasks that match all pupils' capabilities, including pupils with special educational needs.
- Ensure better marking and more consistent use of individual pupil targets so that all pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to attend collective worship every day.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

All pupils achieve **well** and standards are **good** in most subjects inspected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in their personal development, communication language and literacy and in their mathematical development
- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science, religious education and music exceed national expectations by ages 7 and 11 years.
- Standards in many subjects have improved since the previous inspection.
- Standards in ICT and history exceed national expectations by age 11 years.
- Pupils of all capabilities achieve well during their time at the school.

Commentary

Nursery and reception

1. Children join the school with a fairly wide range of previous experience and prior attainment, but overall attainment is in line with that usually found. A small but significant minority of children have weak speaking skills. Children's achievement is satisfactory in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative and physical development during their time in the Foundation Stage, (nursery and reception). They achieve well in their personal development, communication language and literacy and in their mathematical development. The majority of children are on course to attain the expected standard in most areas of learning by the time they join Year 1.

Years 1 to 6

2. In recent years, overall test results at age 7 and 11 have improved well and at a rate that is at least as good as that found nationally. The tables below, and national comparative data, show that, although test results fell between 2002 and 2003, they remained above, or well above, national figures and those in similar schools. Test results in 2002 were also extremely high. Almost all pupils attain at least the expected Level 2 at age 7, and the expected Level 4 at age 11 in the English, mathematics and science tests. A higher than average proportion of pupils exceed these standards. The targets set by the school for the proportion of pupils to attain the expected levels in English and mathematics at age 11, are usually met. In the current Year 2 and 6 classes, standards in English mathematics and science exceed national expectations, and as such are similar to the test results achieved in previous years. Standards are also high in most other subjects because teaching is good and teachers have high expectations. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to their work and make good progress. In addition, parents provide good support for their children's learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.5(18.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.4(16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8(18.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 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	29.3 (30.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.4 (29.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.7 (30.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The school tracks individual pupils' progress in English and mathematics carefully and staff analyse pupils' results in the end of year statutory and optional tests each year. This helps them to set achievable targets for each cohort of pupils, as well as to explain any variations in standards that occur from one year to the next. It also enables the school to take prompt action to address any weaknesses in pupils' attainment and to provide additional support for those who are at risk of falling behind.
4. Pupils' attainment in ICT has improved well since the previous inspection and is now in line with national expectations at age 7 and exceeds it by age 11 years. Attainment in religious education and music has improved and now exceeds that expected by ages 7 and 11 years.
5. Pupils' good skills in English contribute well to their learning in a number of other subjects and results in increasingly good standards across other subjects. In history, for example, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected at age 7 but then exceeds it by age 11 years. In physical education all pupils attain at least the expected standards in games and dance, and those with particular talents attain high standards. Geography, art and design and design and technology were sampled. The standard of work seen was at least in line with that expected.
6. All inspection evidence shows that the school has a strong commitment to achieving high standards across all subjects and that all pupils achieve well, irrespective of their starting point, gender or their ethnic and social background. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because the school has good systems for promptly identifying pupils and because of the good quality additional support. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need often make very good progress towards their individual targets. There are some excellent examples of pupils with significant learning difficulties achieving highly in one or more area of learning. Higher attaining pupils and those with particular talents do well because the school provides a broad curriculum and a very good number and range of extra curricular activities that develop their skills further. Few pupils joining the school are at the early stages of acquiring English, but those who are, achieve as well as the other pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Provision for pupils' personal development is **good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very happy to come to school, have very positive attitudes to their work and take pride in it.
- They are cooperative and responsive in lessons and behave very well, showing respect for their teachers and one another.
- Pupils know they are valued and that teachers care about them as individuals.
- They participate eagerly in the wide range of activities the school provides for them
- Relationships are very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Commentary

7. Pupils feel happy and secure at school. They look forward to coming and often linger in class at the end of the school day to talk about what they have been doing. They know they are valued and respected, and in return they show respect for their teachers, fellow pupils and visitors to the school. Pupils' behaviour is very good, in lessons, around the school and in their free time. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, enjoy lessons and are eager to learn. They collaborate readily, supporting one another, taking turns and showing an interest in the work and ideas of others. Older pupils are very keen to help the younger ones, for example in paired reading, in the playground, in the dining hall and in other activities. These positive features contribute well to the good progress pupils make in their learning. Pupils' develop a good understanding of their responsibilities as members of the school community and offer thoughtful suggestions for improvements. Staff at the school provide very good role models for pupils. Relationships are very good, between boys and girls, pupils of different ages and those from different social and ethnic backgrounds. Pupils say that incidents of racism or bullying are very rare and when they do occur, these are promptly dealt with. There has been only one exclusion in the last year, as the table below shows.

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	304	0	0
White – any other White background	2	1	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	18	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	12	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	7	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	14	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	5	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

8. Attendance is in line with national average as the table below shows. The vast majority of pupils have good attendance records and arrive punctually. The school's procedures are effective and ensure the early detection of any problems, so that these can be addressed promptly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.0
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.

9. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. There are some very good features and two areas for improvement. The many extra-curricular activities, excursions and residential experiences in which teachers and pupils take part, contribute very well to pupils' personal development. Pupils learn to work very effectively together from the time they join the nursery. The school has a strong moral code. Provision for cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum and includes valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their interest in poetry and music, art and architecture. In class pupils have access to attractive collections of books from which they can make their choices, and the school has good links with the local library. Pupils visit exhibitions and art galleries and are encouraged to develop their interest in history by visits to buildings and historical sites. Pupils learn to play and listen to music from a range of cultures in lessons and in assemblies, and they take part in regular school performances. Visitors, including theatre groups, come to the school regularly. Activities such as World Book and Poetry Days, and Black History Week, make a good contribution and introduce pupils to new experiences and different cultures. However, pupils' understanding of other cultures and other faiths could still be promoted further. Pupils for example are not being introduced to a sufficiently wide range of art, and literature drawn from different cultures. Although the school has an excellent record of excursions and visits, the religious education programme does not include visits to the places of worship of the faiths pupils are studying.
10. The provision for spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection and ensures that by the time pupils leave the school they are very responsible in their attitudes and are very keen to do well. The school promotes pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence very well and pupils develop a sense of themselves. They are given opportunities to reflect on their own lives and values as well as those of others. Well-planned assemblies, based on themes and issues affecting pupils' lives and choices encourage them to be reflective. Instrumental music, singing and the active participation of the pupils present, make these special occasions. The assemblies, like other rich and rewarding experiences the school is providing for its pupils, contribute well to their spiritual growth and awareness.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are **good**. The school cares **very well** for pupils and works **well** with parents.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Teaching is **satisfactory overall** in the Foundation Stage, but **good** in the nursery. In Years 1 to 6 teaching and learning are **good overall**. The quality of assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although there is some good teaching in reception, further developments are needed.
- Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall and the basic skills are taught well, although tasks sometimes need to be better matched to pupils' different capabilities.

- Teachers make good links between subjects, which makes pupils' learning more interesting and relevant.
- Teachers make very good use of homework.
- The specific teaching of pupils with special educational needs is frequently very good. Teaching assistants are well trained and effective.
- Marking of pupils' work does not give pupils enough feedback about how to improve, and the setting of individual pupil targets is inconsistent.

Commentary

11. The teaching and learning seen in lessons ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory, as the table below shows. The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the previous inspection and there is now a higher proportion of good and very good teaching than previously found.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2 %)	14 (25 %)	22 (40 %)	16 (29 %)	2 (4 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)

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

12. Teaching and learning in the nursery is consistently good and is occasionally very good across all the areas of learning. Staff have a good understanding of the way that young children learn and plan a wide range of activities. As a result of recent changes in the National Curriculum requirements for children in reception, the school has been working to develop the Foundation Stage as a cohesive unit with its own curriculum and distinct teaching methods. In reception progress is clearly evident and there is some good teaching, but there are still aspects that need further development. Here, as in the nursery, the staff make good use of outdoors to extend children's learning. They provide a good mix of practical focused activities as well as those that children can select for themselves. However, in relation to the time spent indoors, in some lessons children in reception spend too much time making independent choices, rather than more often being directed to specific tasks with clear learning outcomes that adults support them to achieve. This occurs at least in part because staff spend far too much time with individual children hearing them read and practising writing. Staff in the nursery and reception assess children's progress well and use this information when planning future work.
13. In Years 1 to 6 the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education are taught well and, across other subjects there is some good and very good teaching. Teachers have at least secure subject knowledge and lessons have a clear structure. Particular strengths in teaching are the use of homework and the very good links made between work in different subjects, which makes learning lively, interesting and meaningful.
14. Teachers regularly assess pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT, which contributes well to the good standards, but the use of pupils' individual targets is inconsistent. Teachers know the pupils well and in whole class teaching parts of lessons use specific questioning to assess and engage pupils of different capabilities. However, when setting written exercises they too often give most pupils the same work to do. Marking, although regular in most classes, is too often confined to ticks therefore providing pupils with little information about how to improve. In two lessons seen teaching was unsatisfactory. In one lesson in the Foundation Stage this was because the pace of learning was too slow and children spent too much time watching others, rather than being active themselves. In a science lesson in the upper school pupils were not sufficiently interested or challenged by the teaching.

15. In individual and small group sessions pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of Special Educational Need, often learn very well, especially when lessons are taught by the special needs co-ordinator and visiting teachers. This teaching is very skilled, provides lots of reinforcement of basic skills and challenges pupils to work hard and to build on what they know, so as to tackle weaknesses. Pupils as a result develop self-confidence and a good knowledge of their own learning. Recent improvements have ensured that the targets on pupils' individual education plans are precise, support is better deployed and initial and ongoing assessment is good. The contribution from teaching assistants and special needs assistants is often good.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** overall and is enriched by a **very good** range of extra-curricular activities. Resources are good and the accommodation is **satisfactory**, with some very good features but also some limitations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning is innovative and ensures good links between subjects.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Extra-curricular activities are very good and are enjoyed by large numbers of pupils.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum, although improving, has some weaknesses.
- The curriculum, staffing and resources have improved well since the previous inspection.
- Classrooms in Year 3 to 6 are too small which restricts pupil movement and teaching methods.

Commentary

16. The curriculum in the nursery is good and serves children's needs well. As a result they are getting off to a good start. In reception although there are some strengths, there are weaknesses in delivery and the deployment of staff, which sometimes hinders pupils' progress. The outdoor facilities for children across the nursery and reception are good and children learn well from outdoor activities as a result.
17. In Years 1 to 6 all pupils have access to a good curriculum that largely meets statutory requirements. Since the previous inspection the school has implemented the Literacy and Numeracy strategies and a good number of catch up programmes well. The number of support staff has been improved to reflect these changes. There is now better coverage of religious education and good improvements have been made to the ICT provision, including the opening of a computer suite.
18. The overall curriculum is well thought out and planned, and there are appropriate schemes of work for all subjects and good links between subjects. Visitors, interesting trips, events, and other initiatives enhance the provision. Pupils are well prepared for their transition to secondary education because of the high academic standards and because they develop maturity and a sense of personal responsibility.
19. There have been very good recent improvements to the provision for pupils with special educational needs and provision is now good. The minority of pupils that are in the early stages of acquiring English are provided for satisfactorily. The school arranges specialist support from a visiting teacher who makes an assessment, supports pupils and monitors their progress and liaises with class teachers. The progress of more fluent English speakers, but who may not speak English at home, needs more careful tracking so that any difficulties are identified and addressed

20. The very good number and wide range of extra-curricular activities is one of the strengths of the school. There are numerous teams, matches and sports opportunities for boys and girls. Clubs of all kinds thrive. Residential trips in Years 5 and 6 play an important part in pupils' academic and personal development, as does pupils' participation in public performances such as in plays and concerts. The school building is attractive and very well maintained, free of litter and with good display space, well used. The outdoor areas provide good learning opportunities. The classrooms, however, especially in Year 3 to 6 are cramped. With class sizes of around 30, movement around most rooms is limited, which affect the range of practical activities and causes frustration for teachers and pupils. Corridors are narrow, easily become crowded and are difficult to navigate, which also restricts wheelchair access. These difficulties do not, however, have an adverse effect on behaviour. Pupils overcome the inconvenience with courtesy and good sense, and they clearly enjoy being in the school building and grounds.

Care guidance and support

Staff know the pupils very well and they care for them **very well**. Child protection and health and safety procedures are rigorous. Procedures for guiding and supporting pupils in their personal development are good. The procedures employed by the school to seek, value and act upon the views of older pupils through the school council are good and there are plans to involve younger pupils further in this process.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very well cared for and there are very good procedures to ensure that pupils work in a safe and healthy environment.
- The school has good links with outside agencies and there are very good induction procedures for new pupils.
- Pupils enjoy very good and trusting relationships with staff.

Commentary

21. The school is a very happy place and staff go to great lengths to care for and guide pupils so that they settle into school quickly and are safe. All pupils are looked after very well, including those pupils with special educational needs, and this is a significant strength of the school. Pupils could not wait to tell inspectors how much they liked the staff and their teachers. Very effective child protection procedures are reviewed regularly and understood by all teaching and support staff. There is close co-operation with parents and other responsible agencies to ensure pupils' welfare at all times. Staff make every effort to get to know their pupils well so that pupils have very good and trusting relationships with them. This enables pupils to settle down well and concentrate in their lessons. Induction procedures for children entering the nursery and reception classes, and for pupils joining the school at other times, are very good. All decisions about health and safety are based on well-established risk assessments that ensure that pupils and adults work in a safe and hazard-free environment. Most pupils receive regular feedback about how well they are doing. They are involved in setting and reviewing individual targets, but this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. The school takes great care to acknowledge pupils' achievements, particularly when they have made efforts and tried hard. There is a good system of rewards which are greatly prized by pupils and which encourage them to work well and do their best. Teachers know their pupils well and have good procedures to assess their personal development.
22. There are very good arrangements at lunchtime when pupils enjoy well-cooked, healthy meals and where meals supervisors offer kind and caring support. Year 6 pupils play their part too by sitting with younger pupils which helps to make lunchtime a very pleasant part of the school day.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is **good**. Parents are **very satisfied** with what the school offers and are very supportive of the school. There are **good** links with the community and **very good** links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are confident that the school maintains high standards and are very happy with what the school provides.
- Parents receive good information about their children's progress.
- Most teachers are very approachable, but some parents feel a few teachers become defensive when dealing with parental concerns.
- There are very good links with partner institutions which enhance pupils' learning.
- The school is outward looking and has productive links with the community.

Commentary

23. The school shows a strong commitment to building effective links with parents. Parents have very positive views of the school and are very pleased with the quality of education it provides. The school has done well to maintain the findings of the previous inspection. Parents speak highly of the lengths that many teachers go to in order to involve them in the life of the school. At the parents' meeting and in discussions during the inspection, parents were quick to praise the warmth of their welcome into school. They feel confident that the school keeps them in touch with what it does and how well their children are getting on by newsletters, good annual reports and regular consultation evenings. To aid communication further, the school has developed an informative web site for parents and pupils to access. Families with children with special educational needs feel involved in reviewing the support their children receive and the progress they make. Many parents help the teachers in class and on visits and many parents come into school to listen to children read. There is a very active Parents' Association, which organises a very good programme of social and fundraising events to support the school's work.
24. The school sends out regular information about the topics that pupils will be covering in their lessons. Although many parents find this useful, some would like more detailed information about how the curriculum is taught so that they can support their children's learning at home. The inspection team agrees that this would support parents further as there have been no recent curriculum meetings in school and some parents are unclear about the National Curriculum levels their children are working towards and what is involved in the standard assessment tests. While many parents find teachers very accessible and helpful, a few parents say that a few teachers are not very approachable and become defensive when dealing with parental concerns.
25. The school is outward looking and uses every opportunity to develop links with the local community. These have a direct impact upon pupils' progress through the provision of additional resources and facilities. Teachers make good use of the local area to extend pupils' learning and there are good links with the local church, the library and the emergency services. Theatre groups and other regular visitors come into school to speak in assemblies and to support various aspects of the curriculum, although more use should be made of visits and visitors to support pupils to learn about a range of religions. Many local groups use the school's facilities after hours. The school has developed a very impressive range of links with other schools, which significantly enhance the range of learning opportunities for pupils in sport, science, mathematics and ICT. Teachers benefit, too, as they share and extend their expertise with other professionals. Two local Beacon Schools provide valuable support for developing the Foundation Stage provision. Pupils join in many music festivals and sports competitions with Croydon schools, as well as a wide range of national and local events for art, poetry and

chess. The school works actively with feeder secondary schools to ensure smooth transition and induction arrangements. In addition the school makes an effective contribution to the initial training of teachers, support staff and governors.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and senior staff lead and manage the school **well**. Subject managers lead and manage subjects well. The governance of the school is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides strong leadership, vision and sense of purpose.
- The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher and staff very well and is a very good role model for both staff and pupils.
- The governing body makes a good contribution to the way the school is led and managed.
- Collective worship is held but statutory requirements are not met, because some pupils are withdrawn for additional teaching.
- The induction and training of trainee teachers, newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school is very good.
- Finances are controlled and managed well.

Commentary

26. The good leadership and management of the school has been maintained since the previous inspection. The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is very loyal to his staff and pupils and in turn receives a high level of respect and commitment from staff, governors and parents. He and the staff are committed to achieving high standards in all aspects of the school. Since the previous inspection the leadership has ensured good improvements, including strengthening the quality of teaching, which has resulted in improved standards in a number of subjects. The headteacher also ensures that there is a very good school ethos, where pupils feel safe and secure, are eager to learn and achieve well.
27. The school development plan is a very good, practical working tool and staff and governors are fully involved in setting priorities. Senior managers and governors attend an annual conference to review the development plan, agree new targets and receive joint training. The effective leadership of the headteacher, the good "team spirit" amongst staff and the focus on raising standards has resulted in the school being awarded "Investors in People" status in 2002.
28. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher very well and makes a very positive contribution to the school as a senior manager, the co-ordinator for special educational needs, assessment and English. Since September 2003, she has been non-class based, which has allowed her to monitor and support teaching and learning well and make good improvements to special needs provision, including providing good quality additional training for teaching and support staff.
29. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is ensuring that developments and teamwork in this key area are progressing well. Co-ordinators also manage and lead their subjects well. They have good opportunities to monitor teaching and pupils' work. However, a few co-ordinators are not fully aware of the age appropriate expected levels that pupils should achieve in the foundation subjects. Portfolios of work have been developed in a number of subjects, but there are often records of work with no judgements about the standards achieved. This inhibits their use as a tool to raise standards or to check the impact of improvements.
30. The governance of the school is good. Governors are experienced, knowledgeable and committed to the school and provide good support. They strive to extend and improve their own performance and that of the school and regularly come in to school to monitor what the

school provides. Governors ensure that they set challenging but realistic targets for the headteacher, which are linked to the school development plan. Performance management for teachers and learning support assistants is firmly embedded. Arrangements are currently being extended to incorporate the special needs support assistants. A weakness is that the governing body is not ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to take part in collective worship, unless they are withdrawn by their parents.

31. Teachers new to the school are given very good support and induction, especially by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, which ensures that they quickly become familiar with the routines and expectations of the school and their teaching is effective.
32. The finances available to the school are used well and spending decisions focus on improving standards. Financial arrangements in the school are clear and are kept in good order by the school's administrative staff and the finance committee of the governing body. There is due regard for the principles of obtaining best value when making spending decisions, and the money carried forward is within the recommended limits. The school makes good use of special grants and has been successful in its bids for additional grants for specific purposes. When consideration is given to pupils' good standards and achievements, the good quality of education, leadership and management, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,102,822
Total expenditure	1,119,857
Expenditure per pupil	2,607

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	74,578
Balance carried forward to the next	57,543

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **satisfactory** overall. Nursery provision is **good**, while that in reception is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for outdoor learning is very good in both the nursery and reception.
- In reception, adults do not often enough join children in their chosen play indoors and it is not always clear what children might learn from independent activities.

Commentary

33. Most children enter the nursery in the September prior to their fourth birthday. They attend part-time, and transfer, full-time, to the reception classes one year later. Attainment on entry to the school is similar to that usually found. A few children are at the early stages of learning English when they join the school. Children achieve satisfactorily overall during their time in the Foundation Stage. By the end of the reception year, most are likely to reach the nationally set early learning goals² in each area of learning, except in their personal, social and emotional development where attainment exceeds expectations.
34. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The main strengths lie in the nursery where teaching is consistently good or better, and in the provision for outdoor learning in both reception and nursery where children benefit from a wealth of challenging and exciting equipment. Nursery staff have a good understanding of the active way that young children learn. They join children in their self-chosen play, encouraging talk and extending ideas. Outdoors, in both the nursery and reception, teachers provide practical focused activities as well as those that children can select for themselves. Staff roles are clear so that one adult is available to join children's independent play and to develop their ideas, except during one afternoon when shortcoming in provision means that reception classes do not have the support of teaching assistants.
35. In general, teachers are well organised and teamwork amongst all staff is good. Planning, an identified priority for development is satisfactory overall, although it is not yet consistent across the key stage in linking children's learning to identified national goals. Some plans are still too based on what children should do rather than what they are intended to learn. Afternoon sessions usefully give reception children full access to both classrooms as well as the outside, although opportunities are lost for staff to share teaching and learning across the unit and avoid repetitive tasks. Routine focused and appropriate observations of how children are getting on are effective and these help staff plan the next steps in learning.
36. The main shortcoming in the teaching occurs in the reception classes where too often teachers and teaching assistants are involved in focused activities with small groups so that there is little support for the other children. The purpose of independent activities is not always clear or challenging enough, so that sometimes children's interest wanes and they occasionally become restless or boisterous. Teaching in reception is not as good as it was judged to be at the time of the previous inspection. However, staff are working with a new curriculum and methodology and are working to develop their practice, in order to meet the school's aim of establishing the Foundation Stage as a discrete key stage. Progress in

² These are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

establishing purposeful outdoor learning has been good. In addition a good start has been made to ensuring a smooth transition from reception to Year 1.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good.
- Staff provide a very calm and welcoming environment for children.
- Children behave well overall.

Commentary

37. Good teaching ensures that children achieve well in this area. Personal, social and emotional development is good in most aspects. Staff have established very good trusting relationships so that children approach them with confidence. Nursery and reception children are well settled and secure in the calm and welcoming environments and are eager to come to school each day. Some parents report that their children are upset at weekends when there is no school! Staff manage behaviour in a positive way and make sure that children learning English understand. Staff are patient but firm and consequently children behave sensibly overall, moving happily about the classrooms and gardens. Behaviour only falters when they are not engaged purposefully enough. With gentle reminders they are beginning to share, take turns and to remember their manners. They almost always work and play harmoniously, sometimes together and sometimes alongside each other. Exciting collaborative activities using a parachute, encourage children to work as a whole class, to keep the ball bouncing or in the middle, for example. Three and four year olds enjoy the wide variety of practical activities and most select their tasks with confidence. They are aware of routines such as where to put wet paintings. They listen to stories about other countries and learn about celebrations and festivals from other cultures, such as the Chinese New Year. Self-service milk times and self-registration further encourage the children's independence.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of writing activities.
- The good teaching of sounds and letters is helping reception children with reading and writing.
- Nursery staff encourage talk well but in Reception there are not enough planned or spontaneous conversations with children.

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning is good overall in this area. Children achieve well so that most children in reception are on track to at least reach the standard expected by the time they join Year 1. The good range of writing opportunities that teachers provide means children learn well. With sympathetic encouragement three year olds begin to make marks as when writing postcards and some make reasonable attempts to write their name. Because of intensive direct teaching of sounds and letters, reception children tackle new words with confidence. They practice writing in their play, being particularly productive in the office, for example. Many children write some short common words and those with the potential to attain highly can already write short sentences or phrases. Sometimes, however, practising letter formation in an adult led activity takes too much time, especially for those who are already competent. Reception children also make good use of their knowledge of sounds and letters in reading, to attempt new words. Many know a range of basic words and higher attaining children read a simple text correctly

and with understanding. Children across the key stage enjoy books, commercial and homemade ones, and handle them with care.

39. Most four and five year olds talk with confidence and many three year olds talk before the class group, albeit some shyly. Nursery staff are adept at encouraging children's talk, about holidays, aeroplanes or birthdays, for example, in children's chosen activities as well as in adult led tasks. They positively encourage relevant comments in story sessions and sometimes usefully repeat children's responses to model clear speech. Opportunities are lost in reception, however, to talk with children engaged in independent play in an extended way. There are few planned or spontaneous conversations. Four and five year olds do not always listen carefully to instructions, but across the key stage children listen attentively to well-read stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers place a good emphasis on practical mathematics.
- Teachers make good use of games to promote children's mathematical learning.

Commentary

40. Teaching and learning are good in this area, and because teachers place an appropriately high emphasis on practical learning children achieve well. Most four and five year olds are securely on course to reach the national goals by the end of reception. Staff effectively build mathematics into other activities, as when making paper aeroplanes in nursery for, example, and counting the steps to where they land. They make good use of games such as skittles to reinforce counting and early computation skills and children learn well as a result. Similar good quality focused teaching also helps three year olds to learn well. Teachers make effective use of class routines such as registration to develop number skills. In other practical activities, children learn to build towers that are taller than themselves, and match large dominoes with the same number of spots. They make pictures from geometric shapes. Children are sometimes so well motivated by the mathematics activities that they continue their learning in independent play, with further self organised skittles games, for example, and much spontaneous number writing practice. Incidental mathematics as part of children's play is evident, especially in the nursery, for example, when joining children at the play dough and talking about candles and birthday cakes. It is also evident outdoors in reception but is not promoted well enough as part of indoor activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching does not always match the needs of reception children and their progress suffers as a result.

Commentary

41. Children achieve satisfactorily and most are likely to reach the national goals by the time they join Year 1. Three year olds learn with interest about seasonal changes by direct observations. Four and five year olds plant pansies and enjoy looking at small animals brought by a zoo visitor. They taste different spreads on toast and learn to express preferences. In ICT they learn to use the mouse with confidence to move images about the screen, as when moving blocks to build a tower, or drawing a picture. Teachers provide a suitable range of materials so that children can make things such as houses. Children build with a wide range of construction

equipment. Teaching and learning is good in the nursery but satisfactory in reception where it sometimes lacks focus and challenge and it is not always clear what new learning will take place. Teachers in reception appropriately integrate religious education across the curriculum as well as during class assembly and Circle Times³. They include stories from different faiths such as Judaism and invite children to appreciate 'special things'.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** and improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for outdoor physical activity is very good, but the pace of some lessons indoors is too slow.

Commentary

42. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area and most are likely to reach the national goals by the time they reach Year 1. Very good outside provision has been developed in both the nursery and reception which is effectively encouraging children to be energetic and exploit their physical skills. Children enjoy the very good range of equipment. They climb and slide, and use the wheeled toys such as tricycles and chariots with confidence. They experiment with the steppers and balance carefully along a low level track. Three year olds enjoy parachute activities, working energetically together to bounce a ball up high, for example. Most children use their hands effectively, as when clicking small plastic elephants together, pressing and rolling play dough and managing straws at milk time. Children benefit from direct instruction of skills such as how to use scissors effectively or how to assemble new equipment. In whole class sessions, four and five year olds practice ball skills and, when activities are challenging and build well on what has gone before, they improve. However, when the lesson pace is too slow and they are not active enough, they lose interest, become fidgety and do not make sufficient progress. Overall, teaching in this area is satisfactory.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a wide range of art activities.
- Staff do not join in children's imaginative and role-play often enough.

Commentary

43. Four and five year olds are likely to reach the set goals by the time they join Year 1. They achieve well in the artistic aspects because of the wide range of activities on offer including printing, collage, painting, and drawing. Three year olds enjoy applying colour boldly, and four and five year olds paint realistic pictures, of their families, for example. Children in both the nursery and reception readily engage in imaginative play, for example, when they are on the train, "going somewhere to fight", or cooking in the giant's kitchen. They make up stories, about horses, for example, complete with "neigh, neigh". Staff rarely join them, however, to develop talk and extend ideas which is a weakness in teaching. Three year olds are well motivated by enthusiastic staff to join in the words and actions. They and reception children enjoy moving to music. Teaching and learning in this aspect is satisfactory overall but with further developments needed.

³ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain good standards and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and one excellent lesson was seen.
- The climate for learning is very positive and classroom relationships are excellent.
- Marking is not always regular or informative, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Homework is used very well to stimulate independent research and observation.
- Good links are made with other subjects to reinforce and extend pupils' English skills.
- Lack of space in classrooms limits opportunities for drama and role-play.

Commentary

44. Test results in Years 2 and 6 have improved and are high, in comparison with national standards and also with results attained in similar schools. Pupils' currently in Year 2 and 6 attain similarly good standards. Almost all pupils attain at least the expected Levels 2 and 4 by age 7 and 11, and a high proportion of pupils' attainment exceed this. All pupils achieve well in English. There are no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, or of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
45. The quality of speaking and listening is good across all year groups. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and assemblies, to their teachers and to one another. They are ready and confident to answer questions and to contribute in lessons. When talking to visitors in the school they are courteous and willing and confident to engage in conversation, as was the case when pupils in Year 5 pupils showed a lively and mature curiosity when asking about the nature of school inspections. Other examples of good speech were seen in Year 1 when the whole class read aloud the first six lines of Wordsworth's *Daffodils* with obvious pleasure, and in Year 6 when a class were preparing to debate the pros and cons of the new by-pass to be built in their area.
46. Reading standards are good. The school has effective strategies for encouraging and monitoring reading and pupils' records show steady progress in the quality and range of their reading. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have a wide range of attainment, but overall their word recognition, contextual understanding and awareness of spelling patterns often exceed national expectations. Regular reading at home is expected and monitored.
47. Lessons and work observed during the inspection show that teachers' make effective use of the Literacy Strategy and make appropriate adaptations. Schemes of work include a good range of writing tasks to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study, although in a few instances there is rather too much emphasis on language exercises and worksheets at the expense of sustained and creative writing. Good work seen in the lower school included diary writing in Year 2, where good handwriting, understanding of sentence structure and pleasure in the task was evident in most of the books seen. In Years 3 to 6 , examples of vivid poetry writing, and imaginative narrative writing were seen. In Year 6 some skilful use of the language of argument and persuasion, were seen. Thoughtful written work was based on preliminary reading and discussion, the lessons making important links between reading, writing, speaking and listening. This interaction is one of the very good features of English teaching and learning.
48. An excellent example of teaching was seen in a lesson in Year 3 which followed pupils' visit to

the National Gallery on the previous day. Pupils were invited to record their impressions of the day in any form they chose, diary, verse or report, and after writing, to share these with the class. Intense concentration on writing was followed by lively talk and interaction as pupils spoke about chosen pictures, showed their postcards and demonstrated impressive recall of the names and work of a number of artists. Finally, a group of pupils made a tableau to show a dramatic scene in a painting of a Greek myth. Another very good feature of this lesson was the obvious enjoyment shared by the teacher and pupils. This was also evident in other good lessons and is a strength in teaching. A further strength in teaching is the contribution made by the teaching assistants, who know pupils well and were seen working effectively both with individual pupils and in whole class sessions. Provision made for catch up classes in withdrawal groups is well planned. Very good work was seen for example in a small group with Year 5 pupils who then returned to play a full part in the main lesson. Teachers and assistants are careful to ensure the inclusion of pupils of all attainment levels and this is evident in whole class activities. In preparing tasks for pupils, however, teachers do not always pay enough attention to individual needs. For example, there are few additional strategies to support the language development of pupils whose first language is not English .

49. Teachers set homework regularly and link tasks carefully with classwork. There were some good examples of pupils being required to do some research and to talk over their work outside the classroom and at home. A weakness is the marking of written work, whether done at home or in class. Too much marking, particularly in Years 3 to 6 is brief and it does not give pupils a clear enough idea of their strengths and weaknesses and how they can improve and meet their future learning targets. There were few examples of marking which invited response and established a dialogue with pupils.
50. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The coordinator has very good knowledge of the subject. She supports and guides staff very well. She ensures that work in English is continually reviewed and amended, so as to bring about further improvements. Record keeping and assessment policies are implemented well. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Better teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 have led to higher standards. New facilities for ICT are being used to support English work, though there is still scope for further use in some classes.

Literacy across the curriculum

51. The school makes very good provision for the development of reading and writing skills, and for the encouragement of good speaking and listening in all subjects of the curriculum. Work on the Literacy Strategy and teachers' good awareness of the importance of cross-curricular links has made teachers alert to identifying such opportunities. Good examples were seen in many lessons and in pupils' past work across subjects. In a science lesson in Year 1, pupils were taught and expected to use the correct vocabulary for the work they were doing on plants and planting. In a music lesson, pupils at the same stage had good opportunities to read the words of a new song, their reading skills contributing to their learning and their enjoyment. Work in religious education introduces pupils to a range of new vocabulary and this was well demonstrated in a good lesson on Sikhism in Year 4. In a very good history lesson, the linking of work on Tudor buildings with pupils' previous work in science and geography led to animated discussion with the use of good vocabulary.

MATHEMATICS

The provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 exceed national expectations and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to the subject are very good.

- Marking of pupils' work is not consistent and does not always inform pupils of how they can improve.
- Individual pupil targets are not consistently set.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

52. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 exceed the national average and as such have been maintained since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, gifted pupils and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well because of the good teaching and good support by learning support assistants. No differences were observed in the achievement of boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
53. Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection when there were some unsatisfactory elements in Years 3 to 6. None of lessons observed were less than satisfactory. In Years 4 to 6 pupils are regularly set according to their prior attainments. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning, which is reflected in national test results at age 11, where a good percentage of pupils attain the higher Level 5. Teachers usually extend pupils learning well by encouraging them to clarify and share their thinking and methods of calculation through very good questioning. Work is well matched to pupils' individual needs. In the lower attaining set groups pupils are given good and sometimes very good support by the teachers and learning support assistants, which ensures that these pupils also achieve well. In a good lesson in Year 2, for example, the teaching assistant continually reinforced the class teacher's clear exposition by reinforcing what was being said through well targeted questioning of the lower attaining pupils. This very good support, and continual dialogue, with the pupils meant that they achieved equally as well as the other pupils. In Year 2, pupils are also set by ability once a week. This contributes to the good proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3.
54. Throughout the school, learning support assistants are well deployed to teach or support groups of pupils, either in class or by withdrawing them. The support staff have a clear understanding of their role and support pupils well. In Years 1 to 6, teachers make very good use of regular homework, which supports and reinforces their learning in class lessons. The majority of teachers manage their pupils very well. This, and the generally appropriately matched work, results in very good attitudes by pupils who want to learn and who work well together.
55. Marking needs improving. The best examples include comments and targets to move pupils' learning forward, but in many classes teachers' marking is mainly ticks to acknowledge that the work is correct or has been seen. This does not help pupils to know why they made mistakes or how to improve. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of their individual targets and talk positively about their work and how it can be improved. However, this is not the case in other classes, where pupils are not always aware of their targets.
56. The co-ordinator has supported new teachers well and has been able to monitor teaching and learning so as to improve standards. He analyses test results carefully to identify strengths and areas for development. A mathematics club is held each week for higher attaining and gifted pupils. A mathematics games lending library is available for pupils and parents to encourage and extend pupils' learning at home. Both these initiatives contribute to the good achievement of pupils by Year 2 and Year 6. The link governor for mathematics is knowledgeable about the subject, makes regular visits to the school and supports the co-ordinator well. She ensures that the governing body is kept well informed about the mathematics provision.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Mathematics is used well to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. For example, in history pupils use time lines, and in geography they read co-ordinates on maps of Coulsdon.

As part of their science work they research the distance between the sun and different planets from the sun, and regularly compile charts and tables to record their findings from scientific investigations. Pupils paint symmetrical pictures and in religious education pupils produce graphs to show the books of the Bible.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly but marking could be improved.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- There is a good scheme of work and the subject is well resourced, but the accommodation in Years 3 to 6 restricts teaching and learning.
- There have been good improvements since the previous inspection.

Commentary

58. Evidence from lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with pupils, shows that by age 7 and 11 standards are above those usually found. This reflects pupils' results in national tests. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 gain a good knowledge of scientific principles through whole-class, individual and small-group investigations. This is built on and extended in Years 3 to 6 and pupils have good, scientific skills, which are reflected in their knowledge and explanations. This was seen in Year 4, for example, when pupils confidently explained and discussed how the length of an elastic band affects the pitch of sound it can produce. Similarly, in Year 6, pupils spoke confidently about what they remembered from a topic on light covered in Year 3. They then went on to use this information to make predictions, test these out through investigations and then draw, relevant and well-informed conclusions.
59. Boys and girls of all prior attainments achieve well during their time at the school. Higher attaining pupils are frequently challenged by the teaching and because open-ended tasks are frequently set for them. Pupils with special educational needs and the small minority who learn English as an additional language achieve well because they are usually well supported in lessons.
60. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' good subject knowledge helps them to pose challenging questions that encourage pupils to think, to ask and answer questions. Teachers ensure that pupils acquire the correct scientific vocabulary and provide good opportunities for discussions, which means that pupils learn well from each other and from particularly capable pupils. They make good links between science work and pupils' learning in other subjects, especially design and technology and ICT, which makes learning very relevant. Pupils are taught and learn well the skills of devising, planning and carrying out experiments, which is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Relative weaknesses in teaching are the sometimes unnecessary use of worksheets and marking. Pupils do have opportunities to record their findings in their own words, and they learn to compile graphs, tables and charts. However, on occasions pupils are unnecessarily given worksheets. This poses some younger pupils with problems about how to read the worksheets and complete them, and with older pupils, these fail to capture their interests. Marking of pupils' work, although regular in most classes, does not provide pupils with enough feedback about how well they are doing or how they might improve in the future.
61. The coordinator ensures that work in science is regularly reviewed so that standards remain high, and the scheme of work is continually amended so that pupils' interest is maintained and strengthened. Resources are good and include a pond and wildlife area as well as visits off-

site to support learning. However, the indoor accommodation in Year 3 to 6 poses considerable obstacles for practical work, which staff have to work very hard to overcome, since classrooms are too small, restricting pupils' movement.

62. There have been good improvements to provision since the last inspection, particularly to the teaching of scientific investigations and making relevant links with other subjects to enhance pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are above those expected.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- There has been good improvement in the ICT curriculum since the previous inspection.

Commentary

63. By the end of Year 2 standards are in line with national expectations and pupils' achieve satisfactorily. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievement accelerates because pupils have developed greater independence in using equipment, and can benefit from many opportunities to learn from each other as well as to use ICT as part of their work in other subjects. As a result by the end Year 6, standards exceed those expected, which represents good improvement since the previous inspection. The good leadership and management of the subject and an increase in the number of computers have also contributed well to improving standards and improving the quality of teaching. Computers are now used much more frequently than ever before.
64. The quality of teaching and learning was good in Years 3 to 6. Although not enough direct teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 to make an overall judgement, in the few lessons observed, teaching was good. Staff training has resulted in confident teaching and effective learning. Teaching interests pupils, and as a result, they are motivated, work hard and behave well. This was the case in Year 6 when pupils used the Internet to research information, photographs and pictures so as to design a presentation to encourage the safe use of electricity. They used the elements of a publishing program well to import photographs and pictures and to change the size, colour and style of font used. In one lesson where teaching was satisfactory rather than good, the teacher omitted to share the objectives of the lesson with pupils so that they knew what is to be learned and why, or recap the objectives at the end of the lesson. Learning support assistants and the ICT technician also support pupils well in their learning. As a result of the overall good teaching, good support and the improved quality of resources, standards are rising.
65. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator, supported well by teachers and governors, has ensured that the key issues of the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. She has surveyed pupils' access to computers at home and in the summer term runs a club for those who do not have regular access to computers after school. This contributes to good standards by the age of 11 years.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum and many examples were seen of computers being used to support class lessons across a range of subjects. This improves pupils' skills in using ICT, and supports their learning across other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Work in history and religious education is reported in full. Work in geography was sampled.

Geography

67. Judgements are based on the two lessons observed, both in Years 3 to 6, looking at samples of work across the school and talking to pupils. On the basis of this evidence standards in Year 2 meet national expectations. Pupils have a basic understanding of different types of housing in the local area and about aspects of family life in Mexico. They begin to make comparisons between life in Coulsdon and Mexico. Standards in Year 6 exceed expectations in aspects observed representing good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils prepare balanced arguments about changes to the locality being brought about by the Coulsdon bypass that is under construction. They have a clear understanding of its impact on the environment and for such people as residents, lorry drivers and transport café personnel. Pupils' interest is harnessed effectively by this clearly very pertinent study. They achieve well because of lively informative teaching.
68. The geography curriculum is well established and includes regular visits to the locality and beyond to enhance work in class. The school grounds are used effectively, for example, for orienteering. Leadership and management are secure although teaching and learning are not yet monitored in class.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use learning in other subjects very well to enhance learning in history.
- Teachers enliven historical understanding through stimulating visits and exciting theme days.
- Teachers effectively encourage pupils to continue history learning at home.

Commentary

69. Standards in history at the end of Year 2 meet national expectations. Pupils are gaining a suitable understanding of chronology by, for example, sequencing ways of lighting homes in the past up to the present day. Some pupils relate the different lights to events in the past such as how oil lamps lit homes in Jesus' time. From the two lessons seen in Key Stage 2, from looking at samples of work and from talking to pupils, there is every indication that standards exceed national expectations by the time pupils leave the school, representing good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils, for example, have a detailed knowledge and understanding of aspects of World War II. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school. The standard of work at Key Stage 2 is better than at Key Stage 1 because pupils' good research skills contribute well to their learning at this stage.
70. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Sometimes, as in a lesson in Year 5 it is very good and pupils are then particularly well motivated by lively and enthusiastic teaching. One of the principle strengths of the teaching overall is the way teachers consistently encourage pupils to make connections with learning in other subjects. Pupils' good literacy skills, for example, clearly enhance learning in history. Their good writing skills are put to effective use in their historical work and class discussions provide good opportunities for improving their speaking and listening skills, and for extending their vocabulary. Pupils also make good use of their ICT skills, including using the Internet for research and devising Power Point presentations about aspects of World War II.

71. The school's extensive programme of visits and visitors enriches pupils' historical experience, excites curiosity and reinforces learning in class. For example, pupils in Year 1 were full of eager anticipation about their forthcoming visit to the Museum of Childhood to extend learning about toys and games of the past, and teddy bears in particular. Theme days further enliven class work as pupils and staff act in role for the day, dressing as Victorians, for example, and experiencing lessons in the style of the time. Teachers effectively and routinely encourage pupils to extend learning in history lessons at home, by asking parents and grandparents about their childhood toys, for example. Older pupils in particular are stimulated very well by the rich experience of the past on offer so that they formulate such thoughtful questions as, "How come the Tudors didn't have swimming pools if the Romans did?" All these things contribute well to the progress pupils make.
72. Leadership and management in history are effective and improvement since the previous inspection is good. Standards and achievement have improved.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain good standards and achieve well.
- Good and very good teaching was observed.
- Pupils show a keen interest in their work and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils rarely visit places of worship or meet representatives from different faith communities.

Commentary

73. There has been good improvement in the teaching and learning of religious education since the previous inspection, which found progress and attainment unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Attainment is now good in both key stages and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Pupils' enjoyment of the subject was evident in the lessons observed. A range of school activities and celebrations support the teaching of religious education, and with it, make an important contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils throughout Year 1 to 6 learn well about beliefs and practices in Christianity as well as five other world faiths.
74. Teaching and learning are good, with well-planned lessons making effective use of available resources and stimulating pupils' interest and curiosity. The lack of teacher confidence mentioned in the previous report has been addressed. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject and plan their lessons very well. Teaching is lively and imaginative which motivates pupils very well and they sustain very good levels of concentration as a result. Pupils learn well from religions and about religions. Pupils' own religious beliefs and backgrounds are used well, as seen, for example, when a pupil in Year 6 was asked to bring in a prayer mat and to talk to the class about faith.
75. The subject is well led and managed by an experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who supports teachers with well organised resources and also makes use of what is available from the borough. The lack of visits to places of worship and opportunities to meet representatives from different faith communities is, however, a weakness.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music and physical education were inspected in full and work in art and design and design and technology was sampled. No teaching was seen in art and design or design and technology so judgements are based on samples of work and displays of pupils' past work.

Art and design

76. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching, learning, standards and achievement in art and design. Teachers' planning, photographs and displays around the school show that pupils' use a range of media in a variety of contexts. For example, pupils in Year 5 use a range of materials to produce collages based on the story of 'The Iron Man', while in Year 4 pupils use a variety of media to produce pictures in the style of Van Gogh. Good use is made of the work of well-known western artists to stimulate pupils' interests as, for example, when pupils in Year 3 study the work of Averchamp and produce paintings based on this. Information and communication technology is used well to support the subject for research purposes and through the use of art and drawing programs. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has ensured that the subject has a high profile in the school. She samples and monitors pupils' work and support teachers so as to improve the provision. Good use is made of visits, such as those to the National Gallery, to develop pupils' interest and enjoyment of the subject. The co-ordinator and the deputy headteacher run successful and very well attended art clubs, which are open to all pupils in Years 1 to 6. Although pupils have the opportunities to use sketchbooks, the use of these is inconsistent across classes and they are not always used to encourage pupils to experiment with techniques and ideas

Design and technology

77. The work displayed, and that from photographic evidence indicates that standards are probably in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The schools own scheme of work ensures that National Curriculum requirements are met, and that work in design and technology is well linked to pupils' learning in other subjects. There are particularly good links with pupils' work in science. This was evident, for example, in Year 1 where pupils as part of their science work investigated which fabrics provide the best insulation, and then designed and made covers for hot water bottles as part of their design and technology work. Similarly, in Year 5 pupils' work in design and technology incorporates a number of other subjects. Pupils studied plays, then wrote their own and then went on to design and make puppets, and to build a stage that incorporated a pulley and a light source. Design and technology topics in Year 5 and 6 incorporate the use of ICT into their products well. Appropriate attention is given to developing the skills of designing, planning, making and evaluating finished products.

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and attain good standards in music.
- All pupils have good opportunities to learn to play recorders and many pupils learn to play other instruments.
- There is some very good teaching and learning, and a good scheme of work effectively supports non-specialist teachers.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and music provision contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

78. There have been good improvements to standards and provision since the previous inspection as a result of the good leadership and management of the subject. Pupils in Year 2, for example, are beginning to read a rhythmic pattern. By the end of Year 6 pupils are confident to experiment with different instruments in order to produce their own music. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and a good number of pupils go on to learn to play other instruments, often attaining very high standards, as a result of the good quality

instrumental teaching. Pupils throughout the school sing well, enthusiastically and in tune. They can describe, compare and judge a range of music, from different cultures, using suitable musical terms and vocabulary.

79. Teaching and learning are good. That seen in two lessons in Years 1 and 5 was very good. Teaching in these lessons was imaginative and lively and ensured that all pupils behaved very well, were fully involved and worked well individually or together singing, responding to music or making music. Teachers then made very good use of pupils' assessments of their own and others' work, which resulted in pupils amending and improving their performance and compositions. A good scheme of work supports non-specialist teachers well and enables them to teach accurately and competently. The music studio and a good range of resources also enhance provision. All teachers make good, relevant links between music and pupils' work in other subjects. This was evident, for example, in a science lesson in Year 4, when the teacher used pupils' knowledge of musical instruments to explore how different sounds are produced. Teachers make very good use of homework to extend pupils' interest by setting pupils simple, enjoyable tasks that can be completed at home. Pupils develop an appreciation of music drawn from a range of cultures. They enjoy many opportunities to celebrate their achievements through performing in assemblies, taking part in school productions and festivals and events with other schools.
80. The coordinator leads and manages the subject well. She provides good support, guidance and encouragement for staff as well as leading on whole school events and managing the choir and orchestra.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Gifted and talented pupils are given good opportunities to develop their talents
- Pupils behave very well in lessons, are well motivated and enjoy the subject.
- The good leadership and management of the subject and school's good sporting links with the local secondary school have helped to improve the provision.

Commentary

81. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards or achievement in athletics and gymnastics as no lessons were seen. Standards seen in games and dance are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and 6 and pupil achievement is satisfactory. In swimming, records show that the majority of pupils can swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school. Pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, is at least satisfactory. Gifted and talented pupils achieve well and attain good standards because of the contribution of competitive sport and extra-curricular activities, which develops their sporting prowess.
82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and the teaching seen in two lessons in Year 1, was very good. Teachers generally manage pupils very well, which results in very good behaviour and attitudes in lessons as well as a safe environment. What distinguished good teaching from satisfactory was the use of assessment to match work to pupils' prior attainment. In one of the lessons in Year 1, for example, on ball skills, the class teacher ensured that work was well matched to all pupils' prior attainment by giving lower attaining pupils larger balls to bounce, roll and catch and higher attaining pupils smaller ones. This resulted in all pupils being challenged and making progress to match their capabilities. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 5, however, pupils throwing quoits onto a post had the same height of posts and the same size quoits. This meant that only the most accurate throwers were able to complete the task successfully and some pupils made unsatisfactory progress. In most

lessons seen pupils were not given enough opportunities to watch and constructively evaluate each other's performance so as to improve the quality of their own work.

83. Teachers say that the school's good links with the local secondary school has supported them well, to improve their own skills and the provision for dance, girls' football, badminton, rugby and lacrosse. The national initiative to ensure that pupils receive at least two hours a week of physical activity is being met. Very good extra curricular provision includes athletics, cross-country running, dance, mixed football, girls' football, boys' football, keep fit, netball and tennis. Activities and clubs are very well attended and this results in a number of pupils who take part, achieving high standards. The school successfully competes against other Croydon schools in a range of sporting activities.
84. The enthusiastic coordinator leads and manages the subject well. The large field, the spacious outdoor hard area and the enclosed netball/football pitch provide good facilities for outdoor activities. Standards and the quality of teaching have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons has improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. The school places an appropriately high priority on pupils' personal development and as a result provides comprehensive programmes, including those relating to sex and relationships education and drugs, alcohol and tobacco abuse. Teachers treat pupils with the utmost respect and provide very good role models for them. They address issues through class discussions and other subjects. Pupils learn basic rules for health and safety, including that relating to Internet use and follow agreed guidelines for behaviour. They build well on orderly patterns of behaviour established in the Foundation Stage, for example, sharing and taking turns. Through sensitive and probing discussions pupils are becoming aware of the needs and feelings of others, such as the Jarrow Marchers in the 1930s. Outside agencies such as the police and fire services also effectively complement the work in this area.
86. Since the previous inspection pupils have more regular opportunities to discuss pertinent issues. In addition the school council, established since that time, makes an effective contribution to school life. Councillors are committed and clearly active. They work hard and with success to bring about improvements such as introducing water bottles so that lessons are no longer interrupted by visits to drinking fountains, and by arranging for a wider variety of salads to be served at lunchtimes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 observe Council meetings from time to time but plans are underway to include them more fully.
87. Pupils are clearly proud to belong to their school community and take on responsibilities willingly. For example, older pupils are both very competent and pleased to look after younger ones at lunchtime in the dining hall and in the garden. They enjoy showing visitors around the school. Pupils across the school are friendly and polite and behave in an increasingly mature way as they move up the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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