

INSPECTION REPORT

BARRINGTON PRIMARY

Bexleyheath

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101449

Headteacher: Mrs J Keelan

Lead inspector: Peter Sudworth

Dates of inspection: October 18th-20th, 2004

Inspection number: 266372

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4-11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 196 |
| School address: | Barrington Road, Bexleyheath Kent |
| Postcode: | DA7 4UN |
| Telephone number: | 020 8304 0242 |
| Fax number: | 020 8304 4565 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr S Richardson |
| Date of previous inspection: | 1.2.1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This one-form average sized primary school is situated about two miles from Bexleyheath town centre. Pupils mainly come from the area around the school, which is mostly one of average socio-economic circumstance. There are seven classes with 198 boys and girls on roll. The children begin the reception class in either September or January according to their birthday. Most pupils are white British with a range of other ethnic minorities, the most numerous minority ethnic group being Asian or Asian British Indian. Thirteen pupils have English as an additional language but all except one are fluent in English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is about average. Most of these have learning problems, but a few have emotional difficulties. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs. There is little movement in and out of the school other than at the normal time of transfer. The percentage of parents who claim entitlement to free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry is about average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 2700 | Peter Sudworth | Lead inspector | Mathematics Science Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language |
| 14007 | Liz Pike | Lay inspector | |
| 25787 | Edmond Morris | Team inspector | English ICT Geography History |
| 32162 | Adrienne Beavis | Team inspector | Foundation Stage Art and design Music Religious education Special educational needs |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Barrington Primary is a good school and it is led and managed well. It is fully committed to educational inclusion and provides a good education for its pupils. There is good teamwork, a harmonious working environment and very good relationships, which enable the pupils to do their best. Good teaching helps the pupils to achieve well so that they reach standards that are frequently above expectations for their age in key areas of work. Pupils show a very good attitude to work and a ready concern for one another. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils often reach above average standards in key areas of learning, but there is scope to use information and communication technology (ICT) more widely across the curriculum, to promote pupils' library and handwriting skills more effectively and to give pupils more independence when carrying out science investigations.
- The headteacher leads the school well, has very high aspirations for the future with a good knowledge of what needs to be done to improve further.
- The teaching is good so that the pupils enjoy their lessons, behave very well, adopt very good attitudes to their studies and achieve well in key areas of their work. Assessment arrangements are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Despite improvements, the role of subject leaders is not yet fully developed.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good.
- The curriculum is well organised and there is an exceptionally rich provision for extra-curricular activities.
- The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not always sufficiently precise in setting targets for these pupils' further learning.
- The outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage children is inadequate to develop their physical skills and to help them learn from the outside environment.
- The school provides very well for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The school gives better opportunities for pupils who show special talent and who have a higher academic ability. Work is matched more exactly to their capabilities. Good standards have been retained in key areas of learning and with an improvement in mathematics in Year 2 and in ICT throughout the school. The better balance of time given to different subjects enables the pupils to receive a more effective all-round education. Some improvements have been made to the accommodation. Pupils have more opportunities to investigate in science, but they still need more opportunities to think for themselves. Health and safety arrangements are now up to date.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

Pupils throughout the school achieve well in key areas of work. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills and knowledge and understanding of the world with many reaching a level above that expected for the end of the reception year. Year 2 boys and girls have consistently performed better than boys and girls nationally over the last three years. National test results have sometimes been in the top five per cent of schools in the country. Current standards in Year 2 are above expectations. The trend of improvement in results for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 has been above the national trend of improvement over the last five years. Despite the current Year 6 class having several pupils with special educational needs, pupils achieve well in English and are working beyond expectations, except for their library skills and handwriting, which need improvement. They achieve well in mathematics. Currently standards in mathematics meet expectations overall with several pupils working at a higher level. They are achieving satisfactorily in science. Year 6 pupils retain scientific knowledge well, but there is scope for improvement in their investigative skills. The trend of improvement in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science over time has matched that nationally. Across the school, pupils meet expectations in art and design and music and the local expectations in religious education. No judgements could be made in other subjects because of limited lesson observations. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve well because of the good support that they receive. Whilst pupils from minority ethnic groups generally make similar rates of progress to other pupils of a similar ability, Asian and British Asian pupils often achieve particularly well. Pupils who are academically able have good opportunities and achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are nurtured well. Pupils' moral and social development is very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are very good. Pupils are punctual and attendance in the last academic year was well above the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good education for its pupils. The well planned curriculum and excellent range of extra-curricular activities ensure that the pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. **Teaching and assessment overall are good.** Teaching is particularly effective in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 6. Pupils make good strides with their learning. The staff take very good care of the pupils. There are very good links with the parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is imaginative in her ideas and has a clear vision for the way forward. She has made a good start in leading the school forward since her appointment and has gained the respect of staff and governors. She has a good working partnership with the assistant headteacher. Teamwork is a strength of the school. The governing body is supportive and carries out its duties satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and their children have good opinions of the school. The school enjoys very good relationships with the vast majority of parents. Pupils state that they enjoy their lessons and like their teachers. The school works very well in partnership with parents and other schools and has particularly good links with the nearby secondary school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Enable the pupils to use ICT more effectively across the curriculum.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to think for themselves in scientific investigations.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop their library skills and to acquire a neater handwriting style and better presentation skills.

- Develop the role of subject leaders more fully.
- Review pupils' individual education plans for special educational needs more regularly and indicate more clearly the next steps in their learning so that it is easier to assess the progress that they have made.
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage so that they develop their physical skills more effectively and use the outside environment more profitably for learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The children's attainment on entry is average. The children achieve well in much of their learning throughout the school often reaching above average standards in key areas of learning by ages seven and 11. Their competence in ICT meets expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those who have special talents and above average academic ability achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The trend of improvement in Year 2 has been above the national trend of improvement.
- Pupils' reading and writing skills are above expectations, except handwriting.
- Pupils' library skills are undeveloped and presentation skills are not good enough.
- Pupils lack independence in organising scientific investigations.

Commentary

1. The overall level of attainment when children begin the Reception class is at the expected level. Good teaching enables Foundation Stage children to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world and they achieve well. Many of the children reach above the expected standard by the end of the Reception year in these aspects of their learning. They achieve satisfactorily in their physical and creative development and the majority reach the expected goals in these areas for the end of the Reception year.

2. Over time by the end of Year 2, girls have performed better than the boys in reading by roughly the national differences and by more than the national difference in writing. In mathematics boys have very slightly performed better than the girls. Year 2 boys and girls have consistently performed better than boys and girls in national tests over the last three years because of the very large percentage of pupils who reach the expected level and the significant numbers who reach the higher level. Results have sometimes been in the top five per cent of schools in the country. The trend of improvement in results over the last five years for all core subjects at the end of Year 2 has been above the national trend of improvement. Pupils often do well in reaching the higher levels, particularly in reading and writing.

3. Over time in Year 6, girls have performed better than the boys in English by about national differences with little difference between them in mathematics and science. The trend of improvement is broadly in line with the national trend of improvement. The school just failed to reach its challenging target in English and mathematics in 2004 because one pupil in each of English and mathematics did not meet the predicted level.

4. Well planned lessons and good teaching help pupils to achieve well in English in reading, writing and speaking and listening and very well in Years 2 and 6 in reaching above, and sometimes well above, average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, pupils' library skills are capable of better development. Handwriting and presentation of work could be of a higher standard. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2 in reaching above average standards. Almost all pupils are currently reaching the expected standard for their age and many pupils are exceeding them. The current group of Year 6 pupils contains a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Their achievement is good overall in mathematics and satisfactory in science. In the main, standards are in line with expectations in mathematics. Pupils retain scientific knowledge well, but there is scope for improvement in investigational science. Investigations are controlled too much by teachers so that pupils do not have enough opportunities to work out their own way of investigating or to think of their own questions to pursue.

5. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the expected standard in ICT, and this represents an improvement since the last inspection, though there is scope for pupils to use their ICT skills to better effect across the curriculum. No judgements could be made of pupils' attainment in history, geography and physical education because of limited observations of these lessons though some good teaching approaches were noted in the brief observations that were made. Throughout the school, pupils achieve soundly in reaching the local expectations in religious education and the national expectations in music and art and design.

6. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve well because of the good support that they receive. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar rates of progress to other pupils of a similar ability. Pupils who are academically able achieve well because teachers match the work well to their capabilities and they are provided with a further stimulus in the opportunities provided for extra-curricular provision.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 17.2 (17.6) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| writing | 17.8 (16.7) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 17.0 (18.3) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 30 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 | 28.8 (26.1) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 29.0 (27.8) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| science | 28.8 (29.1) | 28.6 (28.3) |

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. Pupils' social and moral development is very good and their spiritual and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and take their studies seriously.
- Attendance is above average.
- Pupils' personal development is good and there is very good racial harmony.

Commentary

7. The school is a harmonious community. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs mix and play well together. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in the above average level of attendance, below average level of unauthorised absence and good level of punctuality. There have not been any exclusions. Pupils have good opportunities to develop socially and the well planned activities for playtimes keep pupils occupied in meaningful ways in the rather restricted outside play areas and support the very good relationships among them.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data: | 4.9 | School data : | 0.1 |
| National data: | 5.8 | National data: | 0.4 |

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

8. As at the last inspection, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school and to learning are very good, including the Foundation Stage. Pupils are polite and courteous. They feel that relationships with their teachers are very good and this is confirmed by lesson observations. These good features and their desire to do well facilitate an atmosphere that helps the pupils to achieve well in their studies.

9. Pupils play very well together when they are outside. A very small number of pupils, often new arrivals in the junior classes, find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, but these incidents rarely affect the progress of the lesson significantly because of the teachers' consistent approach to behaviour. Pupils are generally compliant, want to learn and do their best. There is little evidence of any bullying. Pupils state that they would be confident to report any incidents of unacceptable behaviour and feel that teachers would deal with any such incidents quickly.

10. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their social and moral development is very good. Their spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils have good opportunities to develop responsibility through the work of the school council, which plays an important part in the school's organisation. Pupils develop a good sense of maturity and thought for others through residential visits and visits abroad, support for a range of charities and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils undertake conscientiously various roles of responsibility around the school. They are taught to respect the environment in a practical way for example, through looking after the insectarium. The school's emphasis on healthy eating and the emphasis on exercising sensible choices through the personal, social and health education programme help them to know that they have a responsibility to themselves as well as to others.

11. Pupils develop a very good understanding of moral issues through religious education, assemblies and educational visits from the local police on the consequences of crime for the victim. The school makes good use of pupils' different ethnic backgrounds so that they gain a good understanding of how others live and through the visits made by the school's teddy bear mascot as it accompanies different people to various parts of the world. The international week held recently and the sampling of different languages helped pupils to understand that there are different means of communication. However, opportunities are not used to the full to develop pupils' appreciation of music in assemblies or in art. Assemblies are regular and acts of worship are promoted through a planned series of themes. Currently, however, the planning for pupils' spiritual development through the curriculum across the school is an area for further development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education for its pupils. The well planned curriculum and excellent range of extra-curricular activities ensure that the pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Teaching and assessment are good. Pupils make good strides with their learning. The staff take very good care of the pupils. There are very good links with the parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment arrangements are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is particularly effective in the Foundation Stage and in Years 2 and 6.
- Teachers manage their pupils well and there are very good relationships between teachers and pupils which support their learning.
- There is a good match of work to pupils' capabilities.
- Good tracking of pupils' progress quickly helps to identify those who are falling behind and who need extra support.
- In a small number of lessons pupils are too noisy when they work.
- The learning support assistants could be used to better effect when the class works together as a whole.

Commentary

12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The activities for the children are well prepared and engage their interest. The calm and settled environment enables the children to settle quickly to their work when they arrive at school. A good feature of the work in the Foundation Stage is the way that the teacher monitors individual children's progress day-by-day so that tasks continually build up the children's understanding and take the children's learning forward. Overall, teaching is also good in the rest of the school. This is similar to the last inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 6 (16%) | 19 (50%) | 13 (34%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

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

13. Throughout the school, lessons are well planned and often teachers make thoughtful use of resources to help pupils' understanding. In a Year 4 science lesson to find out whether the size of the parachute canopy affected its performance, pupils experienced the force of air as they gathered round a large parachute, held the sides and wafted it up and down before they began their own experiments. In a Year 6 history lesson, pupils became history detectives as they tried to guess what various Victorian artefacts could have been used for. This activity stimulated pupils' interest, engaged their thinking and made for a very successful lesson. The setting out of part of the classroom into a Victorian room with wallpaper and furniture of the period provided a real sense of atmosphere for the lesson. Occasionally, better use could have been made of mathematical resources in mathematics lessons, such as 100 squares and number lines to support pupils' understanding of the position and relationship between numbers, particularly for those who have special educational needs. Teachers use individual whiteboards effectively in the mental part of mathematics lessons so that all are engaged in working out an answer.

14. Lessons begin promptly and quickly get into action. Tasks and prompts for lessons are written up on the board before they begin. This facilitates a good flow to lessons and helps the pupils to retain concentration. Teachers make good reference to previous learning in the subject and they share the learning intentions with the pupils. In this way pupils quickly get in tune with the lesson focus and the intended content, though there is less reference to how the pupils should be better learners by the end of the session. Lessons are well prepared and the planned work challenges the pupils' capabilities well, particularly in English and mathematics, which are well taught and for which good provision is made.

15. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils contribute to a good working atmosphere and pupils are confident to answer questions and to suggest ideas. Pupils listen well to one another's views and the teachers' use of talk partners to discuss a particular idea engages their thinking and supports well the development of their speaking and listening skills. Teachers are very patient with the pupils, preserve a calm atmosphere and manage them well. They deal well with the very occasional incidents of misbehaviour. However, sometimes pupils can be too noisy and go unchecked when working on their set tasks and this can affect the amount of work that they do. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and who have English as an additional language are well integrated into lessons and this enables them to make similar rates of progress as the other pupils.

16. Teachers make good use of language which is specific to individual subjects, such as the use of mathematical terms and technical vocabulary in science. Pupils begin to give this back in their own responses and this contributes further to their good speaking and listening skills. Teachers make good use of their time in supporting the pupils during their activities, probing the pupils' thinking further and ensuring that they understand.

17. Teachers make satisfactory use of the learning support assistants, enabling the pupils with special educational needs to take a large part in lessons. They work well with groups in the activity sessions, but they do not always consistently make best use of their skills during the times when the class is assembled together by quietly encouraging the pupils and getting them to respond.

18. Assessment is good. Overall the school has good systems to track pupils' progress but there is scope for sharpening up the individual education plans for some pupils who have special educational needs. The pupils who have particular ability are identified well and there is good provision for these pupils in lessons and in extra-curricular activities which supports their progress. Pupils know what their individual targets for improvement are and they work hard to meet them. Good use is made of tests to plot pupils' progress and of national tests to find out if any aspect of learning needs more attention. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is up to date and accurate and written comments in pupils' books frequently give pointers for improvement.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is good throughout the school. It is enriched by an excellent range of additional activities. The accommodation and resources in the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is of a good quality and is well planned to interest pupils.
- There are very many opportunities for pupils to participate in a really wide range of extra interesting and stimulating activities.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
- Pupils are prepared well for the next stage in their education.
- The outside learning area for Reception children is cramped.

Commentary

19. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements, including the local expectations for religious education. There is good provision for sex and relationships education as well as drug education. The curriculum is good throughout the school, including in the Foundation Stage. It is carefully planned to ensure that the available time for learning is used well. All subjects are taught to at least a satisfactory depth. The school is starting to develop useful links between subjects to use the curriculum time more effectively. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum was judged to be unsatisfactory, as all subjects were not adequately taught because too much time was given to English.

20. The school gives pupils many opportunities to sample and enjoy a wide range of activities over and above those included in the National Curriculum. The excellent range of high quality clubs held at lunchtime and after school covers an exceptional range of sporting and other activities. The level of participation in sport, some of it competitive, and in art, dance and drama is very good. Pupils in all years also have regular and carefully planned opportunities to visit museums and other places of educational interest which improve their knowledge and understanding in subjects, such as history and geography. The regular theme weeks have proved to be an immense success with all pupils totally absorbed in a range of thoughtfully planned activities. The International Week was extremely popular and even included the whole school visiting Calais for a day. Visitors help provide a focus to learning, for example talking about wartime experiences or their own childhood days, and grab the pupils' imagination and help to keep the work interesting. The annual residential school trips for pupils in Years 4 and 5, and Years 5 and 6 enable pupils to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities, as well as learning to live together harmoniously in an environment away from home. The sleepover in the school for Year 3 pupils gives them a good preparation for these lengthier stays away which foster the pupils' social development and independence very well.

21. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good throughout the school. Planned work, particularly in English and mathematics, is appropriate as it is set at a level designed to help each pupil achieve well. All pupils are given equal access to the curriculum and the school ensures that they are fully included in all aspects of school life.

22. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the identification of children with special educational needs. They mostly make good progress and achieve well. Individual education plans set targets for pupils to achieve. However, the targets are sometimes too broad; they are not broken down sufficiently into small steps with success criteria so that pupils and adults can measure progress accurately. The twice-yearly review of individual education plans is not frequent enough to allow progress to be closely monitored. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school and have access to the full range of activities. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support their needs and the school plans to improve the range of reading books available for older pupils.

23. As a result of the good quality curriculum with its many extras, the pupils are all fully capable of coping with the demands of the next stage in their education. The good curriculum for the Reception children ensures that they move seamlessly into Year 1 and continue to achieve well. The same is true for the Year 2 pupils who have no problems with the work expected of them in Year 3. The high number of pupils reaching and exceeding the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 means that they transfer confidently to secondary education. An effective programme with the secondary school supports the pupils' successful transfer further. This involves meetings of staff from the two schools, support for the pupils with special educational needs and a detailed transition programme, which helps prepare the pupils emotionally for the transfer.

24. The outdoor learning environment for children in the Reception class is small and uninviting and does not make best use of outdoor learning possibilities. Overall, school accommodation has been improved since the last inspection by the addition of an attractive library. There is also a new corridor so that access to classrooms no longer entails walking through another class at work. It is kept clean by the hardworking site manager and his team. The outside accommodation, though limited, is being imaginatively used to help pupils' social development and learning. Playground markings and provision engage the pupils in relaxed learning activities. The woodland area has been imaginatively prepared for creative play so that the pupils can write letters to the 'elves' when they find their hidden letters addressed to them and this is supporting their English skills. Resources are satisfactory overall with some good resources for English, science and history, but the resources for ICT are now ageing and becoming unreliable. The limited number of interactive whiteboards are used well.

25. There is an adequate number of staff. The staff are suitably qualified for their responsibilities and they have good opportunities for in-service training to update their knowledge.

One member of staff is acclimatising to the primary phase having previously taught in secondary schools. A second member of staff has previously worked overseas and is gaining knowledge of the National Curriculum. The learning support assistants are a valuable support for the teachers and their time is mostly used purposefully.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for care, welfare, health and safety is very good. It provides very good support for pupils' personal development and academic achievement. It involves pupils very well in its work most particularly through the school council.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school council is used very well to involve pupils in the school's work.
- The personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils' personal development well.

Commentary

26. As at the last inspection, the school's ethos is one in which pupils feel happy, secure and are encouraged to learn and achieve well. There is very good provision for pupils' care and welfare and child protection. The arrangements and provision for health and safety are also very good, which is an improvement since the last inspection and first-aid arrangements are organised well. Teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as a governor, are involved in very effective arrangements for ensuring a safe environment.

27. Pupils' personal development is a priority at the school. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) lessons and circle time are timetabled every week. Relationships between adults and pupils, as well as between pupils, are very good. Pupils are happy and confident, consequently they are curious and participate well in what the school offers.

28. The school monitors and provides very well for pupils' achievement through tracking their progress and targeting those who are identified as needing support, although individual education plans are not always precise enough. The headteacher is closely involved in monitoring the targets set for pupils and their progress towards them. Last term the school introduced mathematics and literacy targets for each year group. Teachers discussed these with pupils initially and subsequently with parents so that all parties could be more fully involved in improving achievement.

29. The school council is used very well to seek pupils' views and to involve them in the school's work. The arrangements for it are effective; school council members represent each year group, meetings are held weekly and minutes taken and feedback is given to pupils fortnightly. Examples of the decisions and actions resulting from the school council include playground games and improvements to the toilets with coat hooks and locks. Furthermore, school council members announce the achievement awards at the weekly assembly and last term attended part of a governing body meeting.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very good; as are the links with the local community and other schools, including the on-site but independent nursery.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The information provided for parents is very good.
- Links with the local community are productive and established well.
- There are very good links with other schools, especially the local secondary school and the on-site independent nursery.

Commentary

30. The information provided for parents is very good. The written information is well presented, useful and accessible. Individual reports to parents about their children's progress are thorough and give helpful targets for children to work towards and for parents to support their children in achieving. More specific targets have recently been introduced for literacy and numeracy, which are shared with children and parents. Parents are encouraged to participate in the life of the school, for example by being involved with the active Friends' Association, by helping in school or on school trips and by attending an open day during which they could sit in class and listen to or join in lessons. Whilst attendance on this occasion was relatively low, feedback was positive. As a result, more have been planned for each term in the current year. All these contribute very well to parents supporting and being involved in pupils' learning.

31. The arrangements for parents to gain further information are also secure. Teachers are available at the end of each day informally and formally by appointment. The foyer is welcoming and the letters and leaflets available in it are useful. Administrative staff are friendly and supportive.

32. There are productive and well-established links with the local community, both very close to the school and further afield. These include pupils sending Christmas cards to the school's close neighbours in Barrington Road, extensive support for the Salvation Army, particularly at Harvest Festival time, sports work with Charlton Football club and fund-raising for the local hospice. Visits to and links with organisations further afield, including the annual whole school trip to France and visits to the Horniman Museum, also substantially enhance the curriculum.

33. The transition to the school is made as smooth as possible. There are close links between the reception class and the on-site but independent nursery. These links result from the nursery children making frequent visits to the Reception class and the headteacher having a management and oversight role in the nursery. The older pupils' transfer to secondary school is assisted by the very close links that exist with the local secondary school. Each year group visits it as part of the curriculum links, predominantly within art but also for science, dance and modern foreign language activities. These links enhance the curriculum well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the way forward and has made a good start since her appointment. Teamwork is a strength of the school. The governing body is supportive and carries out its duties satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher gives the school a strong sense of direction and works effectively with senior staff.
- There is very good teamwork amongst the whole staff.
- The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and used effectively.
- The detailed school improvement plan identifies relevant areas for improvement.
- The governing body has a good relationship with the school and manages the finances well.
- Further development is needed in using data to monitor effectively all pupils' progress.
- The role of subject leader in monitoring the curriculum and standards is not consistently developed across the school.
- The role of the governors is not fully developed in strategic planning and in challenging the school for curriculum development and improvement.

Commentary

34. Leadership and management are good as they were at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher, in particular, has very high aspirations for the school and has some very imaginative ideas, such as the use of the outdoors for learning potential and the theme weeks that

are organised. She has a clear vision for the way forward and has made a good start since her appointment in bringing about improvements. She has formed a very good working partnership with the assistant headteacher and they combine well as a team. Responsibilities for the curriculum have been re-organised and improvements have been made to the accommodation. The senior leadership team supports the staff well, which includes some relatively inexperienced teaching staff. There is a strong sense of teamwork throughout the school and communication is good. There is a good sharing of responsibilities so that all teachers, including the headteacher, hold responsibilities for curriculum subjects. There has been some awareness raising of the role of subject leaders since the last inspection but there is much scope for further development of their roles in monitoring the curriculum. The teaching and leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The school is fully committed to educational inclusion and the community is racially tolerant and harmonious. This supports a hardworking atmosphere in which pupils learn well.

35. The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and used effectively to give a clear picture of the way forward. This translates to a detailed school improvement plan that clearly identifies realistic and appropriate areas for development in all aspects of the school's work and it is linked to the budget. The school has made a good start in using data to monitor its performance, but this needs some further development. Plans include the use of computer software to enable the school to track pupils' progress more effectively, including those from ethnic minority groups or special educational needs.

36. A good performance management programme for teachers is supported by classroom observations with feedback. Performance management is linked to the staff development programme that, for example, allows teachers to visit other schools to look at good practice. Performance management for non-teaching staff also takes place. This good practice is reflected in the school's Investors in People award. The school welcomes students from other establishments and makes a good contribution to initial teacher training.

37. The school day runs efficiently and everyone can get on with their tasks. Parents and visitors are made welcome by staff and children. The administrative and other non-teaching staff are fully part of the team and work hard to keep the school running smoothly.

38. The governing body has a good relationship with the school. All statutory duties are met, including those in relation to race equality and disability. Finances are managed well. The governors receive detailed reports and use effective financial procedures to ensure that the school makes the best use of its financial resources. Governors make regular visits and participate in many school activities. However, the governing body role in helping to shape the vision and direction of the school and in challenging the school in curriculum subjects is not well developed. The curriculum working party monitors standards and results and receives reports from subject leaders. The governors are not yet completely aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have still to develop a full programme of focused visits. That said, they are fully supportive of the work of school and its staff and are determined to see further improvements.

39. Leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well qualified and gives good support to staff. A system is being developed to use data to monitor more closely pupils' progress. Parents are supportive of their children. The school works well with outside agencies for the benefit of pupils.

40. Rightly, the school commands a very good level of support because of the good educational provision that it offers. The imaginative and enthusiastic leadership from the headteacher, the good relationships in the school and the good support from the governors, parents and local education authority mean that the school is well placed to make further improvements. In contrast, the limited amount of space for storage and working has an adverse affect on some teaching, for example the outside play space for the Foundation Stage is very limited. Equally, the burden of responsibility placed on the staff of a small school and the relative inexperience of some mean that the school does not have a great wealth of experience and knowledge to draw on for school improvement. However, the senior leadership team gives good support to colleagues in overcoming this.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 598,808 |
| Total expenditure | 595,096 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,005 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 11,751 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 15,463 |
| | |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.

41. Children start school in the Reception class in the September or January following their fourth birthday and have had some pre-school experience. A series of visits with their parents ensure that children make a positive start to school. The majority of children have skills on entry that are in line with expectations for their age. A few have skills that are better than expected and some are not attaining quite as well as expected.

42. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is never less than satisfactory and is mostly good. The very good assessment arrangements are a strength of the provision. Teachers' planning identifies opportunities to assess what children are learning and notes are made from observations during each activity. A good record keeping system ensures that children's progress is regularly checked. As a result, children achieve well and make good progress. Most are on course to meet the early learning goals in the six areas of learning¹ by the end of the Foundation Stage and many will exceed them.

43. Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good, these stem from the high expectations of good behaviour by the teachers and learning support assistants. Relationships in the Reception class are very good and help the children become confident, develop good self-esteem and learn well. The support for children with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good in all areas of learning. Tasks are matched well to children's particular needs.

44. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator is keen to innovate and try new ideas for example, the recent introduction of a handwriting programme linked to the physical education curriculum. The learning support assistant is well qualified and very effective in her support of children. Full time support is provided for the class when the full complement of children has been admitted; this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

45. The classroom is small and rather crowded. However, new furniture and storage arrangements allow the staff to make best use of the available space.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show very good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Children are independent and form very good relationships with each other and the adults in the class.
- Children are keen to take responsibility for daily tasks.

Commentary

46. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Children's achievement is good; they respond well to the high expectations of the staff and other adults. Most children are on course to exceed the expectations for the end of the Reception year. Children's behaviour is very good; they listen carefully, concentrate and work happily together with their classmates. Those who find this more

¹ The six areas of learning comprise communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative, physical and personal, social and emotional development.

difficult are managed well and supported by staff. A system of rewards acknowledges children's learning in all areas, they are proud to show visitors their growing collection of stamps on their cards. This helps their confidence and self esteem.

47. Most children are independent in managing their belongings and help tidy up at the end of the session, but they could be more independent in helping to give out items and set out things for activities. Two children enjoy being 'helping hands' each day and for example, take the register to the office. They can explain their responsibilities and are proud to help. Children move about the school sensibly and with confidence and participate well in school events including school assemblies where they are keen to join in with the singing. Children are supported well by parents at home and some come in on a regular basis to help in school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The imaginative use of resources brings stories alive.
- Very good links are made with other areas of learning.
- Careful and thorough assessment enables staff to know how children are doing and to take their learning forward.
- The use of worksheets sometimes restricts children's use of imagination.

Commentary

48. Teaching in this area is good. Very careful and thorough assessment means that staff can identify the needs of individual children so that they make relevant progress. Children's achievement is good. The majority of children are expected to reach the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage and many will exceed them. Staff make imaginative use of inside and outside resources to bring stories to life and develop children's speaking and listening skills. In one very good example, following the class reading of a story 'Going on a Bear Hunt', children were taken outside in groups to re-enact the story in the woodland area. They 'swished' through the long grass – made from raffia, and splashed through a paddling pool 'river', as well as walking through a 'snowstorm' made from paper snow. In the classroom another group used musical instruments to recreate the noises from the story. Good questioning helped the children use their language skills to recall the story and the special vocabulary used. Children listened well to each other and worked together happily.

49. Children are encouraged to read and can choose books from the school library to take home each week. An area is set aside where they can choose to sit quietly in the classroom. Children are keen to try out their skills in class reading, finding sound in some words and asking good questions. Children are learning letter sounds and can sound out and write simple words. Most can attempt to write their first name without help. Children's learning of letter shapes is linked with movement through a special learning programme. The children learn handwriting patterns and practise these in many ways including in physical education lessons with ribbons. The intention is that this work will help them to begin joined writing from the start, to spell well and free them to use their imaginations in writing as they get older. Some use of worksheets was observed. These restrict the children's use of their imaginations and do little to take their learning forward.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made with children's life experiences to make learning real.
- Children join in enthusiastically and are keen to learn about numbers.

Commentary

50. Teaching in this area is good. A wide range of activities is provided that help children learn to count up to ten and beyond, write and recognise numbers, name different coins and shapes, and measure length, capacity and volume. These are often linked to children's experience. For example, children sing with enthusiasm about shopping in the supermarket, counting the number of items in the basket, saying how many there will be with one more. Real coins are provided for them to recognise and say how many they will need to use to buy items. Adults give very good support to children's learning, playing games to help children recognise and count coins. Good questioning is used for example, to help children recognise the position of things using the correct mathematical vocabulary. Classroom routines are used well to develop children's mathematical skills. Children are able to say how many there are in the class and find the number on the line. As a result of this provision most children achieve well and are on course to meet the goals set for them at the end of the Foundation Stage and many to exceed them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Interesting activities help children learn about the world around them.
- Children use computers confidently.
- The outside play area is not well developed for practical environmental work.

Commentary

51. The school has taken care to address the criticism from the last inspection; a range of multicultural play resources is available so that children can begin to learn about other cultures through play. Children's achievement in this area of learning is good and the majority are on target to meet the goals set for this area of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and children enjoy learning about the world around them. Planning is well thought out to make good use of visits and visitors and extend children's experience. A visit to a factory to design and make a bear is the basis for a project and children are busy making teddy biscuits and designing menus for the teddy bears' picnic. An opportunity is lost here, because of the use of prepared worksheets, to get children to think for themselves about foods for the picnic menu and healthy eating. Children have real experience in making the biscuit mixture, using tools to cut shapes and watching the changes occur in the cooking. They clearly enjoy the experience and are learning about the properties of materials. Children use a variety of tools and equipment to explore sand and water and dough. In information and communication technology, children learn to use the computers with confidence, control the mouse pad and select colours to draw pictures of the Three Bears. Good links are made with creative learning in selecting colour and pen size.

52. Good use is made of the school grounds in this area of learning. However, the outdoor play space offers few opportunities to have practical experience in caring for the environment for example, taking care of flower beds and organising equipment.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good cross-curricular links.
- The outdoor area and equipment do not provide sufficient opportunity for children to develop their physical skills.

Commentary

53. Children's achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory. The majority will reach the early learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage. The school makes best use of the facilities it has for example, children go outside on a 'bear hunt' and move in different ways to the story. However, opportunities for children to use a range of large equipment to develop skills in co-ordination and control are restricted. The outside play space has no equipment for climbing and balancing and the space is too small for the effective use of wheeled toys. The big toys that are available are mostly old and scruffy.

54. Teaching is satisfactory, children are well controlled in the large hall space and listen to instructions carefully. They control apparatus well and were observed using ribbons on sticks to create patterns in the air to music. Care needs to be taken that lessons are not too static so that children have plenty of opportunities to move and practise their skills. Children move about the hall sensibly, running, hopping skipping and jumping, depicting a creature they have met on a walk.

55. Children are confident and change their clothes independently only needing help with the fiddly items - shirt buttons and shoe fastenings. In their writing most have good hand control and a firm pencil grip.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's work is valued and celebrated in colourful displays.
- Activities allow children to play imaginatively.
- Opportunities for children to develop creative skills are sometimes restricted.

Commentary

56. Children's achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory and they are on target to meet the early learning goals for this area by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some good aspects. For example the role-play area is set up as a teddy bear school for children's teddies. This allows children to use their imagination based on real experience to create their own school day and extend their vocabulary. Children are given real experience performing with musical instruments to make sounds to go with a story and record their efforts for all to hear. They enjoy singing together and taking part in assemblies and can tap rhythms using their hands on their knees.

57. Children use different tools and materials confidently and are learning to use paint and colour appropriately. They have made beds for teddy using junk boxes and paints and collages with leaves and fruits from the garden. The school has worked hard in providing storage to allow children more independence in choosing and selecting resources. However, in some activities when templates are provided and there is over direction by adults, the scope for developing children's skills in observation and creative techniques is restricted. For example, when making a

hat for their teddy children are provided with a pre-cut hat with paper shapes and sequins for decoration. Opportunities are lost here to extend the children's vocabulary in discussion about suitable materials and techniques and to allow them independence in selecting what they will use. The outdoor area is used for children to explore sand and water and play imaginatively, but it is not sufficiently developed to be a good resource for this aspect of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good. Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to their work and behave very well in lessons.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- Library skills are weak and handwriting skills are not developed sufficiently enough.

Commentary

58. There has been a good improvement in English since the last inspection. Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen, speaking and listening skills throughout the school are now good and the management of the subject has improved.

59. In the 2003 national tests the pupils in Years 2 and 6 attained standards well above the national average and above those found in similar schools. Pupils currently in these years are working at levels above those expected for their age. The good improvement in speaking and listening is a direct result of the many well-planned opportunities pupils have in lessons to develop these skills. For example, they use 'talk partners' to discuss their ideas before reporting back to the class and are regularly encouraged to speak clearly and in full sentences. By the time the pupils leave the school, they are confident and articulate speakers and are willing listeners to the views of others.

60. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and speaking and listening as they receive good quality teaching. Teaching in Years 2 and 6 is consistently good and often very good. Pupils in these classes achieve very well. Lessons are planned well with work for different groups of pupils carefully matched to their prior attainment. This ensures that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well as they move through the school. Lessons are interesting, often with appropriate links to other subject areas, such as history, designed to fire the pupils' imagination. In all classes, pupils are managed well and teachers create a good working atmosphere that helps pupils concentrate without interruption. Pupils' contributions are valued and this is reflected in teachers' marking, which is supportive and helps pupils achieve better by suggesting ways to improve their work.

61. Handwriting and presentation skills throughout the school are underdeveloped. Work in books and displays is sometimes untidy and this detracts from the content that is often well thought out and interesting. The school has recognised that this is an area for development by introducing a planned programme to improve handwriting throughout the school. Library skills are also weak. Pupils have regular visits to the mobile library to borrow books but have little understanding of how a library is organised to help them to locate information quickly and efficiently. The school library has recently been refurbished to a high standard with a growing supply of good quality books. This resource is now ready for introducing pupils to a greater knowledge of retrieval and research skills.

62. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons. They often display a maturity beyond their years in their relationships with adults and each other. When working in pairs and groups, they support each other and share ideas sensibly and fairly. This was clearly seen in a very good Year 6 lesson studying Macbeth in which the pupils collaborated most successfully to rewrite the plot in a 'rap' style. They then performed their efforts to a very appreciative class.

63. English is led and managed well by an enthusiastic subject leader. The monitoring of the subject is much improved and the analyses of test data are proving effective. The findings are used well to set individual targets for pupils as well as to identify particular groups in need of more support to help them achieve better.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. Pupils' language and literacy skills are used well in other subjects of the curriculum, although their inclusion is not always planned. When their inclusion is planned, as with speaking and listening skills, then the benefit to pupils' achievement in both subject areas is considerable. In subjects such as history, pupils often write at great length and the lesson time is used effectively to improve their writing skills, as well as their knowledge and understanding of historical events. This frees up curriculum time so that more time can be spent on such writing or greater time allocated to another activity.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 2 pupils do well in national tests and the trend of improvement is above that nationally.
- More attention could be given to the application of mathematics and to investigation in Years 3 to 6.
- Not enough use is made of visual aids and equipment to support pupils' understanding.
- Good use is made of individual whiteboards during mental sessions to ensure all pupils are thinking.

Commentary

65. Pupils achieve well in mathematics. At the time of the inspection, many Year 2 pupils were reaching a good level of understanding for their age. Overall, their performance was above expectations and better than at the last inspection. They were able to identify the missing number in a sequence of two- and three-digit numbers and they have a good understanding of place value. The recent good trend of results and of improvement in mathematics in national tests at this age is helping the pupils as they move on to the juniors. Many Year 3 pupils showed a very good understanding of four-figure place value. Pupils worked with good levels of accuracy in adding 100 and 1000 mentally to a given number.

66. Current standards in Year 6 are at the expected level, though with a significant number of pupils working at the higher level. Several pupils have special educational needs and the cohort is not as mathematically able as the previous year. Overall, pupils show good accuracy in calculation and in handling concepts in shape and space, such as the accurate measurement of angles and in estimating their relevant size. The pupils with special educational needs work hard to overcome their difficulties supported well by the teacher and the learning support assistants.

67. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in the juniors. Teachers quickly settle the pupils down to work at the start of lessons and get the lesson underway. They have high expectations of how the pupils should record their work and this results in neat presentation, which helps the pupils' accuracy. The Year 6 teacher insisted that the pupils had sharp pencils with which to measure and draw angles and gave a clear demonstration of how to mark the paper with the pencil point above the protractor when measuring. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding by good quality questioning and the pupils explain their strategies, which helps their speaking and listening skills. This technique enables the teacher to assess how the pupils are thinking. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and these give the pupils confidence to contribute answers and to seek help if they do not understand. Teachers set a good and purposeful atmosphere for learning and so most pupils work conscientiously and

with an earnest endeavour. Very occasionally, however, pupils are too noisy when working and this affects the amount of work they complete. Most pupils take their mathematical studies very seriously and enjoy their work and put much endeavour into it. The teachers' good use of mathematical terminology assists the pupils to acquire a good framework of language to discuss their work with their teacher and with one another. Occasionally teachers do not make enough use of visual material to support pupils' understanding, although such resources are close to hand.

68. The curriculum is soundly thought through and lessons are planned well with good attention paid to the needs of pupils' with different abilities. Good use is made of ICT in some lessons and this helps the pupils' understanding. In Year 1, effective use is made of the interactive whiteboard in demonstrating techniques which help the pupils to learn. In one lesson it was used very well when the pupils needed a sense of right and left and backwards and forwards to find money that had been placed on a grid and then to record the movements in sequence that they had made from a given starting point. Nevertheless, not enough emphasis is placed on investigation in mathematics to see pattern and relationships and to apply their mathematics to everyday practicalities. Some teachers do not use pupils' errors enough to profit their learning.

69. The subject leader is new to the role in the school, although with past experience of being a mathematics co-ordinator elsewhere. It is not possible, therefore, to assess her contribution to the school's development in mathematics. She has, however, a clear sense of purpose and where improvements might be made. Good improvement has taken place since the last inspection. Standards have risen in Year 2 and better attention is given to matching work to the needs of the able pupils. There is also an extra-curricular activity for the most able pupils which challenges their thinking.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Pupils make good use of mathematics in science when they undertake their experiments. They measure, record their results in different ways and interpret them to find out if they are significant. In geography, they develop a sense of scale and learn to read coordinates to give map references and in history they compare the difference in age span between different historical periods.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils retain knowledge well, but are not given the confidence that comes from independent working when investigating.
- Teachers ensure that pupils reason their predictions and conclusions.
- Resources are good and are very well organised.

Commentary

71. Pupils achieve well throughout the school in their acquisition of knowledge and satisfactorily in investigative science. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection but more is needed in investigational techniques. Standards in Year 2 are above expectations. The good curriculum ensures that a high proportion of the pupils reach the expected level for the end of Year 2 and significant numbers reach the higher level. Currently about one-third of the Year 2 pupils are working at a level above expectations for their age. Many Year 6 pupils retain knowledge well because they show good levels of interest in their work and they listen and follow up their studies. Their skills in investigative science are at the expected level. Overall, their current level of attainment meets expectations.

72. Teaching observed during the inspection was good in the infants with an equal mix of satisfactory and good teaching in Years 3 to 6. Overall teaching is good. Teachers manage the pupils well. Relationships are friendly and respectful which helps set a good atmosphere for learning. Pupils enjoy the subject and work with interest and enjoyment, particularly when undertaking experiments. Teachers make good use of mathematics, as when pupils measure and work out the results of their tests. They revise well on previous work before beginning new learning to ensure pupils are reminded of key facts or procedures for experimenting. The quality of questioning is considered well so that pupils are made to think. A particular strength is the way that teachers encourage pupils to reason their predictions when they try to imagine what is likely to happen during their testing. Pupils respond well to this and often make very reflective suggestions. One Year 3 pupil based his prediction of the paper towel which would be the most effective to soak up water on it 'feeling thick, soft and having bumps on it'. This constant involvement of the pupils in their learning engages their interest and retains their concentration. However, at times the process of the investigation is not thoroughly thought through. During a lesson in the juniors, the height from which parachutes were dropped to test whether the size of the canopy made any difference to their effectiveness, was insufficient to make it successful, despite the good use of accurate timing mechanisms.

73. In the main, teachers are not yet confident enough and have a tendency to control the investigative work too much, not allowing the pupils to organise their own thinking and to work more independently. Scrutiny of work shows that too often in the past, teachers have organised the way in which the pupils should record the results of their investigations and provided too many worksheets. Staff are beginning to realise this because the heavy use of worksheets for pupils to record their work is reducing significantly. Teachers ensure that pupils set out their work neatly and label their diagrams accurately.

74. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A strength has been the acquisition of resources, which are now good, and the very well organised storage system. The subject leader has been effective in analysing national test results and pupils' responses to questions to find out where curriculum improvement is needed, but there is scope for better monitoring of standards across the school during the course of the year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection is good.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to their work.
- Resources are old and unreliable.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in other subjects.

Commentary

75. At the time of the last inspection the provision was judged to be unsatisfactory as the computers were very old and incapable of coping with the demands of the curriculum. As a result, standards in Years 2 and 6 were judged to be unsatisfactory. This weakness was resolved by purchasing a bank of laptop computers, improved class based resources, increased levels of appropriate software and training for teachers in how to use the resources effectively. However, the machines have now become unreliable. All pupils now have regular ICT lessons and are achieving satisfactorily. The standards attained in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found nationally. All aspects of the subject are taught but some to a greater depth than others. Word-processing is good and pupils are taught to type text efficiently so that time is not wasted. Data handling is also covered well with pupils regularly creating graphs from their own data. Some areas are less well developed, such as control technology and using other ICT equipment, including video cameras.

76. Pupils thoroughly enjoy ICT work and are very proud of their efforts. Despite the limitations of some of the equipment, they persevere and work willingly on new projects. They have a very good attitude to their learning and behave very sensibly in lessons. They share tasks fairly and often give each other good support when difficulties are encountered. Pupils are able to explain in detail the work they have completed. Year 6 pupils talked animatedly about using a spreadsheet to plan the quantities of food and other items for a party and how the formulae helped them quickly adjust the plan for a differing number of guests.

77. During the inspection the teachers had to have the failing laptop machines linked to the mains electricity supply as the batteries regularly failed to charge successfully. Having unreliable equipment makes teaching and learning difficult and the school has recognised that a further improvement to the provision is a priority. The teaching observed during the inspection was good overall but as there are many problems with the resources then pupils are only able to make satisfactory progress over time.

78. The subject is led and managed well by the headteacher who has a good overview of the provision and clear ideas for future developments. She has identified all the areas needing improvement and has plans, with allocated funding, to improve the provision. This will enable the school to keep pace with the rapid developments that are a feature of the subject. This has already started with the introduction of some interactive smartboards. These are proving to be a useful tool for teaching in all subjects, as well as helping the pupils in their ICT work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

79. Although ICT is used on occasions to support work in other subjects there is still scope for improvement. Extending the use of ICT in other subjects is an area identified by the school for further development. At present links are not always systematically planned. When such links are made it improves pupils' learning in both ICT and the other subject. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 history lesson in which the pupils used the Internet effectively to find out more about Victorian education.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

No lessons were seen in **geography** and only two lessons in **history** so it is not possible to give an overall judgement about the provision. School plans were studied, discussion took place with pupils and their work in books and the many attractive displays were examined.

Commentary

80. **Geography** is taught throughout the school with an appropriate emphasis on geographical skills. Maps and globes are used effectively to help pupils learn about their world and gain some understanding of scale and direction. Barrington Bear, a school teddy bear mascot, is used to good purpose to help Year 2 pupils gain an understanding of where various countries are located and the differences between them and the United Kingdom. 'His' travels are extensive and 'he' regularly reports back to the school from a wide variety of countries. Many pupils throughout the school follow his exploits with interest and regularly look at the displays to see where 'he' has been. Year 4 pupils visit a local park and this helps to make them more aware of environmental issues, such as litter. They have been helping to design a play area for the park after a talk by the Park Ranger. The International Week held by the school made a particularly good contribution to pupils' understanding of the wider world and to their cultural development. As part of the week the whole school visited Calais for the day and pupils thoroughly enjoyed spending their euros in the hypermarket. They learned a great deal about France, its people and culture during the week, as well as the many other countries that they studied. As pupils move through the school, they build systematically on their knowledge and skills. Understanding of world geography is particularly good as in all years the pupils regularly find out from maps where various events take place.

81. In **history** pupils develop a good chronological understanding and an awareness of when events happened in relation to each other. Good historical enquiry skills are encouraged throughout the school and pupils are given opportunities to frame their own questions based on their prior learning. For example, Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of why the Great Fire of London spread so rapidly to suggest ways to prevent it happening again. They display their ideas imaginatively in a poster as an edict from King Charles II. Year 5 pupils find out about the Second World War by using a wide range of sources including many artefacts and attractive books about the period. In Year 6 the pupils research life in Victorian times. They use the Internet as well as books to find out information and are totally absorbed by the period. They are able to use a variety of sources to draw their own conclusions and to raise questions that form the basis of the next piece of their research. The high quality displays in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms are an indication of the good level of resources in the school and really stimulate in pupils the desire to learn.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and is often linked with this area of learning.
- Visits to places of worship and visitors to school extend and enrich the programme.
- Resources are much better than at the time of the previous inspection.

Commentary

82. Evidence from lesson observations, analysis of pupils' work, displays and documents and discussion with pupils indicates that standards are in line with those expected locally for pupils in Years 2 and 6.

83. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress as they move through the school learning about the life of Jesus, Bible stories and the significance of religious festivals and symbols from different faiths. There is also a focus on the moral and personal elements of the subject in, for example, studies about belonging and refugees and the homeless. Such topics also make a good contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

84. In Year 2 pupils are thinking about special people and what makes them special. In Year 6 pupils have knowledge of world religions including the Hindu faith and Islam and their origins. They are learning about the symbolism of colour in the Christian church and can talk with satisfactory knowledge for their age about events and stories from the Bible, for example the Ten Commandments and the creation.

85. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory overall and some was good. Teachers' planning is sound. A good variety of approaches is planned including stories, discussion, video clips, looking at artefacts and other resources to engage pupils and develop their knowledge and understanding. Examples of good teaching include the imaginative use of resources and discussion between talk partners. Year 2 pupils were given play dough to make a figure of someone special and asked to describe the person's special qualities to a partner. The partner was then given the instruction to squash the figure into a ball. Pupils were challenged to think about how they felt and why this was so. There were some good responses describing strong emotions. In Year 3, talk partners and group discussions were used effectively to tease out pupils' knowledge of symbolism in the Christian christening ceremony. They made a good attempt with a difficult topic. In some parts of lessons, the pace is too slow and pupils are not fully engaged in thinking about their work. The use of worksheets sometimes does little to take learning forward because they are very directed or merely colouring exercises. Analysis of work in Year 2 and Year 6 shows that pupils'

work is generally well presented and marked regularly. This is particularly so in Year 6 where work is consistently well presented and marked to show pupils how they can improve.

86. The curriculum follows the Bexley Agreed Syllabus and is partly based on a nationally recognised scheme of work. Pupils are taught a wide range of topics and that there is a good balance between learning about Christian and other world faiths. Pupils are engaged for a suitable amount of time each week on their religious studies.

87. The school has completely addressed the criticism from the last inspection that resources and artefacts are not well used to stimulate pupils' interest. A good range of resources and artefacts is now provided and they are used effectively. In addition the school makes good use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. For example, Year 6 study art in religion and talk to visiting Christian clergy about the symbolism of colour in church vestments.

88. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and suitably qualified. There has not been an opportunity yet for her to observe lessons, although teachers' planning has been monitored. The governors monitor the subject through reports to the curriculum working party. A portfolio of examples of work for assessment and monitoring standards is being developed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and Technology, Art and Design, Music and PE

One lesson was seen in design and technology, two in art and music and one in physical education. It is not possible, therefore, to judge provision.

Commentary

89. In **art**, evidence gathered from discussion with pupils, analysis of pupils' work, displays and documents indicates that standards are in line with those expected nationally for pupils in Years and 6. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

90. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Those with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and take part in all activities. In the two lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory in one and good in the other. Where teaching was good, pupils were enthusiastic and engaged in their tasks. In the conclusion, careful questioning about the sculptures they had designed to improve the school environment led to pupils evaluating their work well. Pupils' behaviour was controlled well in discussion and pupils were keen to contribute. Where teaching is not so successful a noisy atmosphere and pupils' lack of technique in joining materials leads to frustration and some do not concentrate fully on the task in hand. Pupils enjoy art activities and mostly work together well with their classmates.

91. Sufficient time is given to art in the school timetable and there is relevant focus on art from other cultures. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers' planning is thorough. Pupils experience a wide range of activities. Year 1 pupils use a variety of techniques and media to make self-portraits. Year 2 pupils make observational drawings by looking carefully through a viewfinder and extending pictures from part of an original. Year 3 pupils design sculptures to enhance the school environment and Year 4 pupils design and make chairs.

92. Resources for art are satisfactory. They are organised well.

93. Good links are made with other subjects. In Year 6, pupils use hoops to create mobiles, using a variety of media to show traditional tales. In Year 1 pupils use a graphics program in information and communication technology to make a self-portrait using different line widths and colour.

94. The school makes very good use of theme weeks, visits to museums and galleries and visiting artists to enrich the curriculum. Pupils' art is also part of the local community in, for example, a mural in an underpass and mosaics on the school path.
95. Only one Year 3 lesson could be observed in **design and technology** and this was satisfactory. The lesson focused on making things move using pneumatics. The lesson structure for designing the models in pairs was satisfactory, but a selection of demonstration models to motivate their thinking would have given pupils a clearer idea of the possibilities. There was insufficient clarity about the recipient of the article to be made. Most year groups were to concentrate their design and technology lessons into the second half of the term.
96. There was limited opportunity to hear and see work in **music**. However, evidence gathered from observation, discussion with pupils, displays and documents indicates that standards are in line with those expected nationally for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Two lessons were observed, one good, the other very good. In the very good lesson, the teacher had recorded sounds for pupils to identify. Pupils were really challenged and had to listen very carefully. They made very good guesses as they listened, for example, to marbles stirred in a jar, a microwave and water running out of a sink. Pupils were challenged to make sounds with parts of their body other than their voices and to find ways to make music with a collection of objects presented to them, including a packet of sparkly sweets. An awed silence fell as children listened for the crackles and pops from the sweets in the teacher's mouth. In the good lesson, pupils tried hard to use voice and fingers to accompany a song. They were challenged to recognise instruments in recorded accompaniments and were learning about different instruments of the orchestra. In both lessons, a range of control techniques was used well throughout to keep pupils' attention focussed on their tasks. Pupils work well together and co-operate with each other. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. High expectations mean that achievement is good, including for pupils with special educational needs.
97. The music curriculum is based on a nationally recognised scheme with elements of a published scheme. These are used effectively to give pupils a good range of musical experiences and comply with the requirements of the national curriculum. Sufficient time is given to the teaching of music in the school timetable.
98. Resources are good with a range of tuned and non-tuned instruments. Pupils participate in many musical activities including instrumental teaching, a school choir, class assemblies and end of term concerts. The standard of singing in school assemblies is satisfactory and pupils participate well. They keep time to a backing track and sing in unison. Pupils are given the chance to play instruments in school assembly each week. In those assemblies observed, reference was not made to the title and style of music played. Opportunities are missed to extend pupils' skills in listening to music and in musical appreciation.
99. One full lesson and a partial lesson were observed in **physical education** and the teaching was good. The brief visit to a Year 6 games lesson involved the pupils actively in small groups. Pupils showed a ready enthusiasm and good levels of co-operation and sportsmanship. Boys and girls together enjoyed tag rugby, displaying satisfactory passing skills and a developing sense of position. In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils executed their movements and moved energetically and with confidence and good co-ordination. The teaching strategy helped the pupils remember their sense of right and left.
100. The subject is well provided for in the curriculum and meets National Curriculum requirements. The school has received good support from a local school's sport partnership in formulating its scheme of work which is now being trialled. This initiative has enabled the subject leader, who leads the subject very effectively, to enthuse and advise other members of staff. The subject is well supported by a yearly residential outdoor activities course for older pupils, a very good range of extra-curricular activities and inter-school competitions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes pupils aware of the need for healthy eating and takes part in a local initiative related to this.
- Pupils have regular weekly lessons according to a well structured curriculum.
- There are good links with the health service.

Commentary

101. The school has a well structured scheme of work for personal, social and health education which provides pupils with a regular weekly lesson. The curriculum provision is supported by work in science on healthy eating and safety in the home. The local education authority's healthy eating initiative for pupils in Years 1 and 2 supports the curriculum in a practical way. The good attention to this aspect of the pupils' education has enabled the school to receive the healthy eating school's award. There is a good link with the health service and with parents which facilitates the good provision for pupils' sex and relationships education and the preparation for puberty. The school operates an effective school council which promotes pupils' involvement in the running of their school and helps to develop their understanding of citizenship and democracy. Additionally, its school council includes representatives from the governors, parents, pupils and staff, which ensures that the school remains alert to the healthy school initiatives.

102. One lesson was observed in Year 5 during the inspection. In this pupils demonstrated a good level of maturity in discussing issues related to drugs education. Pupils showed a good knowledge of current issues about the safe use of drugs.

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 | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 2 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 4 |
| 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).