

INSPECTION REPORT

BOXGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Abbey Wood, London

LEA area: Greenwich

Unique reference number: 100150

Headteacher: Ms. C. Owen

Lead inspector: Penny Holden

Dates of inspection: 15-17 March 2005

Inspection number: 266469

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	325
School address:	Boxgrove Road Abbey Wood London
Postcode:	SE2 9JP
Telephone number:	020 8310 1912
Fax number:	020 8312 9705
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. G. Unwin
Date of previous inspection:	25 January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Boxgrove is bigger than other primary schools with 325 pupils aged between three and eleven years of age, including 50 who attend the nursery, on roll. Nearly half the pupils are white and have been joined by pupils with families from ethnic minority backgrounds including the Asian subcontinent and Africa. There are also families from the long-established traveller community living at the nearby fixed site. There are a few refugees. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. There is a high turnover of pupils so that only two thirds of the pupils in Year 6 were in the school in Year 1. However, several families who have moved a considerable distance away choose to continue to send their children to the school. Nearly half the pupils are eligible for free school meals.

A very high proportion of pupils have special educational needs. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is much higher than usually found. The school has a special unit for eight pupils with moderate learning difficulties who attend in the morning and eight pupils with emotional and behavioral difficulties who attend in the afternoon. They come from Boxgrove and other local primary schools. Most pupils start school with very poor basic literacy, numeracy and speaking skills.

The school is part of Excellence in Cities and works with Sure Start, 'Place2be' and the Behaviour Improvement Programme. These initiatives to include the provision of family support services, family literacy and positive parenting training.

In 2004 the school won an Inclusion Charter Mark and in 2003 it was awarded a Basic Skills Quality Mark and a Schools Extra Award for its out of school hours provision. The borough is developing family learning and community facilities on the school site and a Children's Centre should be completed in spring 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Music, Physical education, Special educational needs
21491	Carolyn Maples	Team inspector	Science, Design and technology, Geography, History, Foundation Stage
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Boxgrove Primary is a **good** school with some very good features. Whilst standards are below those normally found in Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve very well considering that many start at the school with very poor basic skills. A number of pupils have worries in their home-lives which can make it hard for them to learn. The reason the school is so effective in helping pupils achieve is because all staff work together to provide a safe and interesting place to learn. Teaching is good and the school's leaders and managers are effective. They make the development of each pupil's literacy, numeracy and learning skills their priority. The school has a substantial group of pupils who arrive at an early stage of learning English but because they are so keen to do well, they work with enthusiasm and make good progress. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff know the pupils very well and strive successfully and effectively to raise achievement. However, standards are below the national average.
- Leadership ensures that pupils are happy and able to learn. All staff contributions are valued and recognised because they bring about improvements to pupils' achievements.
- Pupils are also valued and respected and adults go the extra mile to help them succeed.
- The school provides pupils with very rich learning experiences in class and out, broadening their understanding of life beyond their immediate locality. The curriculum is very good.
- Staff use their knowledge of the local community and those that live in it, including those from traveller and ethnic minority backgrounds, to ensure that every child feels appreciated and special.
- The school has an excellent ethos which promotes the pupils' personal development really well.
- Relationships with parents are constructive and this helps the school work with them to support their children's learning.
- Teaching is good overall with very minor weaknesses that make some lessons only satisfactory when all could be good.
- A small number of pupils miss too much school and this is hampering their progress.

Progress since the last inspection is good. Progress in both religious education and in information technology is much improved. Standards in writing have improved although the school know it still needs to work hard to improve them further. Collective worship takes place every day either in an assembly or in classrooms. Attendance is better but is still an issue for improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	C	D	D
mathematics	C	D	E	E
science	B	C	D	D

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

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Achievement is **very good** overall. Pupils start at the school with very poor levels of basic skill in speaking, literacy and numeracy and this makes it difficult for many of them to learn. Good leadership and teaching helps pupils to overcome these problems to do as well as they can. The nursery is very good at developing children's very early learning skills so that they can listen, take turns and start to build up understanding. This is built on in the Reception year. Despite this good

start, few pupils will meet the goals set for them at the end of the Reception year, leaving them with a lot to catching up to do.

As the pupils move through the school they end Year 6 with standards much improved but generally just below the national average in most subjects although many individual pupils do a great deal better.

The poor attendance of a small group of pupils holds back their progress throughout their time at school.

Test results in reading, writing, mathematics and science for pupils in Year 2 in 2004 were well below the national average, although this hides some variations. Pupils reached slightly better standards in reading. Boys generally get lower results in tests than the girls. The school's performance, when compared to other schools varies each year. In recent years it has varied, from being better than other schools to not as good. The school has very good records which show that the difference is closely tied to the number of pupils in each year group taking the test with significant special educational needs. These records demonstrate the good progress each individual makes often from a very low starting point. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics now are below those usually found in Year 2. In science, pupils are doing better than in previous years, reaching standards that are similar to those expected nationally.

Test results in Year 6 in 2004 were well below those found in most schools in English, mathematics and science. Results were slightly better in English and science when compared to similar schools.

Standards in Year 6 are affected by the fact that many pupils join the school, some with limited experiences of schooling and at a very early stage of learning English. Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve well, although generally standards are below the national picture in English, mathematics and science. There are clear signs of improvement in standards, especially in science because of the increased level of investigational work in science. This is having a positive impact on achievement as pupils are learning in a more effective and meaningful way.

Standards in information and communication technology are in line with those found in other schools nationally in Years 2 and 6. In religious education pupils reach standards that are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for and very good recall of the work they have done in history and geography. Work of an appropriate standard is evident for both these subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capabilities many make good progress so that they can learn alongside their classmates without extra support. The pupils who start school speaking very little English make good progress to quickly catch up with their English speaking classmates. Many of these pupils are so keen to learn they make better progress than others in their class.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are **good**. Their personal development is a credit to the school. Pupils are friendly, confident and enthusiastic. Their attitudes to school are good, they feel safe and cared for. Most pupils want to work, although a number become dispirited when their lack of skill or concentration lets them down. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. There are some children who find it very difficult to follow rules and conventions and those who have significant special educational needs which make them challenging to teach. The school manages and supports them very well so all can learn with little interruption. Attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory because a few pupils are persistent poor attenders despite the school's best efforts to improve the situation. .

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Teachers and support staff work well together to help the pupils learn. Many support assistants are very skilled at helping pupils understand their work and make good progress. The very best lessons are where teachers and other adults plan activities that help pupils of different levels of ability to do work that challenges them. Adults are very good at managing pupils including those who find concentrating and following rules difficult. Staff have high expectations that all the pupils can learn to learn. They show enormous patience helping pupils make small steps of improvement in behaviour and learning and praising each advance. Their persistence is rewarded by good achievements. Assessment is thorough and pupils' progress is carefully tracked so that no one can fall far behind without being quickly identified and helped.

However, there are a few occasions where teaching is only satisfactory because support staff including teachers observe the introductory part of a lesson and just listen. They do not use their time as efficiently as they could by team teaching or observing and recording pupils' engagement for example.

The curriculum is very good in the Foundation Stage, infants and juniors. This is because there are many interesting activities such as visits and visitors linked to much of the work. Activities outside the classroom including the clubs at the end of the day are very good. Accommodation and resources are good and the building work is being well managed to disturb the school's work as little as possible.

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are very good. Links with parents and the community are very good. Links with extended services, other schools and colleges are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance and leadership are **good** overall, management is **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and management of the school are very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very well. They use their different skills very well to complement the work that they do and make a highly effective team. Their work alongside that of the subject leaders in the school have a very positive impact on standards and bring about improvements in the school. Governance is good. Governors are fully involved in school life and ask appropriate questions to test that the school is achieving as much as it can.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. The views of pupils are sought and the school values and acts on these very well. Those who attended the parents' evening before the inspection were universally positive about all the school offers and the help it gives their children. They felt they could always come into school for information and to discuss their child's education. Parents are involved as much as possible in their children's education and they are given good quality information about how well they are doing. The school is also generous in giving help to parents when it is needed.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Standards of work.
- Continue to improve teaching so that it becomes very good throughout the school.
- Impress on parents their duty in ensuring pupils attend school every day so they can make the progress they are capable of.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good. From a very low start pupils in the nursery and reception achieve well. Although they do not reach the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception they have made good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 continue this good progress but their standards in tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were still below average. Inspection evidence shows standards are rising and pupils are achieving better this year. This picture is also true in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- More pupils are achieving well, although standards remain below average.
- Investigative work in science is strong and is helping pupils achieve higher standards than they were in Years 2 and 6.
- The significant number of pupils with special educational needs including those who attend the learning centre make good progress.

Commentary

1. Pupils begin school with very poor levels of basic skill. Many have poor concentration; find sharing and taking turns hard. This hampers their start at school because these behaviours make learning difficult. The nursery develops these and other early learning skills very well and pupils make appropriate progress by the end of their year in Reception. In spite of this, not all pupils reach the goals set for them nationally and so pupils start Year 1 with below average standards.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.7 (13.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.4 (13.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.8 (15.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 36 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 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.3 (25.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	23.7 (24.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.2 (26.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Test results in English, mathematics and science in 2004 were generally well below the national average for their age group in both Years 2 and 6. However, in English and science in Year 6 standards compared with similar school were slightly better and only below average. Boys generally get lower results in these tests than the girls. The school has tackled this problem energetically especially in English and mathematics where the gap between boys and girls is narrowing without lowering the standards of girls. There remains, however, a group of boys who do not naturally value learning and persistently test the school's patience and resolve to help them. It is a strength of the school that staff do not give up and however hard the challenge they persist with

helping the pupils to learn. The poor attendance of a small group of pupils holds back their progress throughout their time at school and not all of their parents recognise this link. Work in class is showing improvement and in both Years 2 and 6 standards are better than last years tests indicate.

3. In English, test results vary year on year between above average and below in comparison to similar schools. Generally pupils perform below national averages, although most make good progress. The school's very good records which track individual progress over their time shows that each pupil makes good progress often from a very low starting point. The difference in test results is closely tied to the number of pupils in each year group with significant special educational needs. In lessons observed, pupils in all age groups make good progress in reading and both boys and girls enjoy books. However, more girls than boys admit to reading for pleasure at home and this contributes to the lower standards of boys. Pupils make the most progress in their skills in speaking and listening which are generally extremely low on entry. Pupils by Year 6 are confident and communicative, keen to share their ideas. Writing remains the aspect of English many pupils still struggle with and are most reluctant to tackle. The quality of their writing improves if they are recording something they have experienced themselves or is linked to a topic that has interested them.

4. In mathematics, pupils currently in Year 2 are working at a higher level than previously showing an improvement in standards, although they remain below average. Many pupils start school with very low levels of mathematical skills and they have to achieve well to reach the standards that they do. In Year 6 the standards attained are affected by the fact that many pupils join the school in Years 3 to 6 with poor mathematical skills.

5. In science the pupils currently in Year 2 are reaching standards that are similar to those expected nationally doing better than in previous years. Pupils now in Year 6 are also showing an improvement by reaching levels just below those expected for their age. This improvement has been brought about by increasing the level of investigational work in science in all years. This has had a positive impact on achievement because pupils have a much better understanding through learning in a more active and meaningful way. The practical slant of the subject has made it very popular with pupils so they make the most of every lesson.

6. Standards in information technology are in line with the national average and pupils achieve well across all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils talk enthusiastically about history and geography and can remember accurately large amounts of the detail of past work. Work of an appropriate standard is on display and evident in books for both these subjects. In religious education, pupils show interest and achieve well, particularly in discussion, reaching standards just below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points. Many make good progress so that they advance to working independently, learning alongside the rest of the class with little or no additional help. Pupils in the learning support unit make good progress in improving their learning skills and in developing strategies to manage their poor behaviour. However, they are only in the unit for limited amounts of time before returning to class most still need some support to consolidate this improvement.

8. The pupils who start school speaking very little or no English are generally extremely well motivated to learn. Some also have very good learning habits developed in their previous schools albeit in another language. They make remarkable progress to quickly catch up with their English speaking peers. Indeed, many of these pupils make better progress than their peers.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.4
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
National data	0.4

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

9. The level of attendance is very low in comparison to other schools and is therefore poor. This is despite the schools very best effort to monitor and promote good attendance. The school works hard to encourage parents to get their children to school and to arrive on time, however a small but significant number do not support the school by ensuring their children's regular attendance. There was one fixed period exclusion in the school year prior to the inspection.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	140	2	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	5	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	7	0	0
Black or Black British – African	75	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	12	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The level of attendance is poor; punctuality to school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos of the school is very strong.
- Behaviour is good throughout the school despite some very challenging children.
- Attitudes to school are good because the school works hard to ensure they remain so.
- The school does a lot of work to ensure that pupils' understand what it is to grow up in a multi-cultural society.

- Pupils are free from harassment and as a result feel safe and secure.
- The school works very hard to improve the level of attendance.
- A significant number of parents do not support the school by getting their children to attend regularly.

Commentary

10. All staff in the school work hard to ensure that pupils' attitudes remain good, as a result pupils' positive attitudes contribute to a calm, productive atmosphere in the school. Pupils are interested in their work; they are responsive, eager to learn and concentrate well. Pupils have a high level of co-operation and work sensibly with each other. Staff manage behaviour in the classroom and on the playground very well and as a result behaviour throughout the school is good despite some children exhibiting signs of very challenging behaviour; this ensures a calm atmosphere throughout the school. At the pre-inspection parents meeting, parents confirmed that they are very happy with the standard of behaviour in the school.

11. Pupils' are polite and courteous and show respect for each other and for all adults in the school. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The school promotes racial harmony very well and this is evident throughout the school, effective procedures to deal with harassment means that all pupils' are confident little bullying takes place and that any issues are dealt with very quickly by any member of staff. Pupils and their parents say that they feel safe in school.

12. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility, such as looking after the younger pupils at lunch times and acting as playground 'buddies' and playground monitors. Pupils respond well to these opportunities, which help to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

13. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school has made a significant improvement to promoting spiritual development, which is now very good. It is very well supported through RE, circle time and assemblies, which are relevant, and in which pupils show respect and are given the opportunity to reflect. Moral and social development is very good; pupils are encouraged to think of others by raising and collecting funds for local and national charities, which are relevant to them. The ethos of the school and the emphasis on the school rules means that pupils are aware of the impact of their actions on others and constantly reminded of the responsibilities of living in a community, by reference to making the 'right choices'.

14. Provision for pupils' cultural development has also improved significantly and is now very good. The school prepares pupils very well for living in a multi-cultural society. The school promotes other cultures very well and pupils' learn to understand and to respect these cultures through such activities as refugee and multi-cultural weeks where the children experience a range of different cultures. Very good use is also made of visitors such as authors and poets and visits to places of interest such as to the local traveller site.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Taking everything together pupils get a **good** education. Teaching and learning are **good**. There are some very challenging pupils who find it difficult to concentrate on learning. However, the efforts of staff in the school and the good teaching ensures most are well motivated, have positive attitudes to learning and take their work seriously. The curriculum is very good offering pupils many interesting and exciting activities to bring their learning alive. There is no computer network throughout the school which makes managing information technology work very complex.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teaching and all other staff work well as a team and take every opportunity to help pupils to learn. They use a wide variety of ideas, visits and resources to make what they are teaching come alive to the pupils. This teaches the pupils to enjoy learning and to engage in lessons with enthusiasm.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Management of pupils is successful and skilful, especially of the more truculent and disaffected ones, so learning skills are improved over time
- Staff make great efforts to make work interesting
- The development of a greater variety of approaches and teaching strategies including talk partners and an understanding about learning styles has been very effective in improving learning
- The practical work in subjects such a design and technology and science, with no reliance on work sheets, makes learning good.
- Staff are very good at caring for the whole child as they recognise many need support before they are ready or able to begin to learn effectively
- The challenge of work for some middle and top ability pupils is not as well accurate as it is for less able pupils
- Teachers and support staff sometimes just sit and watch during whole class sessions rather than becoming involved in sharing the lead, or assessment observation or in assisting learning.

Commentary

15. Teaching is good because all staff work well as a team in lessons to interest and engage the pupils. Where a pupil has a special educational need and has some additional support in class this is very effective. The work is often adapted and tailored to closely match the pupils' needs by the support assistant. This allows all pupils to follow the same activity but at a level to suit their learning requirements. On a small minority of occasions the level of work for some middle and top ability pupils is not as challenging as it could be because the same work is set for all. Teachers plan carefully to ensure lessons are as interesting as possible and use resources well to catch the pupils' interest. Where possible visits and visitors also play a part in lessons and contribute to the good teaching.

16. Some pupils do not find learning easy and do not arrive at school with the skills to learn. However, a strength of teaching is the way pupils are managed. Firm, consistent application of school expectations of behaviour applied with patience and care, especially with the most confrontational and disaffected pupils, works over time. This combined with the great efforts taken to make work interesting helps all pupils' learning skills to improve. Staff are very good at caring for the whole child as they recognise many need support to develop the ability to learn before they can make progress. Many schools would have abandoned their efforts with some of these pupils long before Boxgrove staff give up on them. All staff, including the dinner supervisors and site manager, take enormous pleasure in every pupil's success especially those least likely to succeed.

17. In the most effective lessons staff use a wide variety of approaches and teaching strategies to both interest pupils and to help them understand. These strategies include talk partners and asking targeted questions of named individuals. Methods such as these keep every pupils alert to every part of a lesson and let the staff check that each individual understands. Staff are alert to the fact that each pupil has their own preferred learning styles and lessons now take account of this. This strategy has been very effective in improving learning. Staff frequently make reference to the importance of being good learners, thinking about thinking, learning about learning. This has alerted pupils to understanding that they have a responsibility and can help their own learning.

18. Pupils learn best at Boxgrove Primary School when they are actively involved in their work. This makes the practical work in subjects such a design and technology and science very important. There is no reliance on using work sheets to give pupils information and this makes their learning and understanding good. The writing pupils produce for subjects where they have practical experience, including history and geography, is often better than that produced to fulfill an English task.

19. Classrooms are stimulating and inviting environments for learning with a wide range of supports for learning ranged around the rooms. Many are individual to individual teachers and

pupils have to learn new support strategies with each teacher. Some are more successful than others and are used regularly by pupils whereas others make classrooms look interesting and bright but are not used to enhance learning.

20. The senior managers and curriculum leaders are involved in continuing to improve teaching so there are few important weaknesses. However, in the weaker lessons teachers and support staff sometimes are not used to best effect. They sit and watch during whole class sessions rather than in sharing the lead, carrying out an assessment activity or by sitting with particular pupils helping their concentration, for example.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	6 (15%)	16 (39%)	19 (46%)	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.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is very good throughout the school and covers all required areas of learning. The curriculum is enriched by a very good, broad and diverse range of additional activities. The accommodation is good and there are plentiful resources of high quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a good team of skilled support staff who work closely with teachers.
- A good range and number of visits to places of interest, and cultural events within the school make the curriculum more exciting.
- The lack of a computer network limits the use of information and communication technology, restricting learning opportunities.

Commentary

21. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in the curriculum. The provision for information and communication technology is greatly improved and religious education is now allocated sufficient teaching time. All subject areas now have well-established and able coordinators and there has been a very significant expansion in the number and range of extra curricular activities at lunchtime and the end of the day. The school building is being continually improved and developments like the new library are a great asset to teaching and learning.

22. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Pupils are given full access to the curriculum and receive good quality support from teachers and a strong team of support staff.

23. The school provides many very good opportunities to enhance the curriculum for pupils both in school time and out. Very good use of the local community provides a rich experience for pupils and many visitors come into school and visits are made to many local museums, art galleries, theatres and other places of interest. Funding initiatives have provided out of school learning experiences for many pupils through activities such as football, cricket and art and drama.

24. The accommodation is spacious, well kept and maintained and is further enhanced by some good displays that make the building more attractive and show the value the school places on the rich and diverse cultural heritage of its pupils. The outside area of the school is an asset with varied facilities including a climbing wall which provides children with opportunities for adventurous play.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Pupils' academic and personal development is tracked very well. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The schools very good support systems monitor pupils' academic and personal development very well as they progress through the school.
- Very good levels of care for pupils, ensures that they feel well supported.
- Staff and Governors are fully involved in health and safety reviews of the school.
- Very good induction procedures for pupils entering the school ensure that pupils settle quickly.

Commentary

25. The school has very thorough health and safety procedures in place. All staff and Governors are vigilant in ensuring that the environment is kept safe by routinely checking grounds, buildings and equipment. Any concerns are promptly addressed.

26. Child protection procedures are firmly in place. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher have both received appropriate training and have ensured that all staff are kept up to date with the procedures and are well aware of the need to inform them should they have any concerns. Pupils who suffer minor accidents or who are feeling unwell are very well looked after. As a result, pupils feel safe and well cared for. At the pre-inspection parents meeting, parents confirmed that they are very happy with the level of care provided for their children, and that their children feel safe and nurtured.

27. There are very good opportunities for the school to obtain pupils' views through a range of meetings and discussion with the pupils as well as pupil questionnaires. Very good procedures to monitor pupils' academic and personal progress as they proceed through the school, together with very good relationships throughout the school mean that all adults in the school know the pupils extremely well and are quickly aware if something is wrong. The school makes very good use of different therapists, counsellors and learning mentors to support identified pupils and this further enhances the level of care provided. Pupils spoken to confirm that they are extremely happy that there is always someone they can turn to for help and advice.

28. Very good induction procedures for pupils entering the school ensure that pupils feel welcome and settle into school quickly. If pupils start at the school in older year groups, they meet the headteacher who talks to them and shows them around the school, they are then assigned a 'buddy' to show them around and help them understand school procedures so they can fit in quickly and take an active part in school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very happy with the work of the school.
- Information provided for parents about pupils progress, the school and the curriculum is very good.
- Good links with other schools ensures that there is a smooth transfer for pupils when they move to secondary school.
- Links with the local community support learning very well.

Commentary

29. Parents regularly receive a wide range of very good information, which lets them know what is happening in school. Curriculum information through class newsletters and home learning sheets provide parents with useful information in showing them how they can help their children at home. Many parents support their children by helping them with their homework and ensuring that it is completed and returned to school.

30. Information provided for parents on their children's progress is good. They regularly receive information on their children's targets as well as good written reports which clearly show what their children know, understand and can do as well as what progress their children are making. There are very good opportunities for parents to discuss pupils' progress informally at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as at formal consultation evenings. Parents confirm that they are very happy with the level of communication they receive.

31. The school works very hard to deal with parents concerns or complaints, as a result, parents feel they are well consulted and that the schools open door policy means they are always made to feel welcome. The 'Friends of Boxgrove' is very supportive of the school and raises significant funds for the school.

32. The school is very well supported by its links with the local community. Pupils' personal development is enhanced through regular fund raising for local and national charities. A very wide range of visitors come into school on a regular basis to support the curriculum through story tellers, authors, poets, theatre groups, sporting activities and musicians. In addition regular visits are made to places of interest. All of these ensure that pupils receive a wide range of experiences.

33. Good links with other schools, particularly with other secondary schools, which include a planned programme of visits prior to transfer, help pupils when transferring to secondary school at the end of Year 6. This is despite a lack of support for the transfer arrangements from the neighbouring local educational authority. Good use is made of students from a local college who are linked with identified pupils and come into school and work with and support pupils in the classroom. Care is made to link students and pupils with the same first language, which further enhances their support.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Leadership by the headteacher is very good. Management systems are very effective and efficient. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy, is a most effective leader who guides her staff very well.
- Senior staff give good quality leadership in their curriculum areas.
- Very good management structures are in place. They are clearly focused on raising achievement.
- There is a very strong commitment towards inclusion.
- The governing body, through its clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, influences its development.
- There is no leader with overall responsibility for the nursery and the reception classes.

Commentary

34. The headteacher guides the school's work very strongly. She has built up a tremendous team spirit in the school that includes all who work there. The very good relationships between staff are a key factor in helping pupils achieve well. Senior staff provide good leadership and are fully committed to raising standards and achievement. They aim for improvement, not just in academic areas, but also in the very important aspects of pupils' personal development. Senior staff are very good role models for staff and pupils alike as they show great respect for the views of others and are consistently diligent in their work. They create effective teams that work together closely with a strong sense of purpose.

35. Management is of a very high quality. Strategic planning is effective. The school's improvement plan covers the main areas for development and is regularly evaluated and reviewed. It includes the action plans of subject leaders as well as whole school issues. This makes it a rather weighty document and the main priorities are somewhat difficult to tease out. However, in practice this does not hamper development but a simpler document would allow the staff to celebrate achieving targets or actions more readily.

36. The school is fully committed to including every pupil whatever their ability or needs. Every member of staff is prepared to work tirelessly to help any child do well however, difficult they can be to help. They do not give up on pupils whose behaviour can be extremely discouraging. All members of the school community are highly valued and respected and are encouraged to become involved in all school activities. The headteacher and her staff take a keen interest in the welfare and progress of all pupils. Through careful monitoring they ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to benefit from the many educational and social events planned. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in school life.

37. Governors are fully involved with all aspects of the school's work. Some give up considerable time to work in the school with pupils. They are good representatives of the local community and of the families with children in school so their decisions are closely linked to pupils achieving the best they can and having a well rounded experience. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and monitor the school's achievements regularly. Finance is carefully regulated and monitored. The budget is managed well to provide the pupils with the best experience possible.

38. The nursery and the reception classes do not have a leader to ensure that the curriculum is fully meeting the needs of the children. Activities are planned to cover the curriculum but there is some lack of focus on raising levels of achievement. The needs of some individual children and some specific groups, such as those with English as an additional language and the more able, are not always met. This results in children's progress being inconsistent as they move through the Foundation Stage.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,081,033
Total expenditure	1,063,853
Expenditure per pupil	3,786

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	122,282
Balance carried forward to the next	139,463

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Thorough assessment gives adults good knowledge of children's abilities.
- The balance between adult-directed and child-selected activities and between class teaching, individual and small group work is inappropriate.
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to children's learning.
- Relationships are good and adults value children's contributions, creating a secure learning environment.
- The curriculum is broad, varied and covers all required areas of learning.

Commentary

39. Children enter the nursery and Reception classes in September and January according to their birth date. Nearly all the children in the two Reception classes previously attended the nursery and this helps them transfer smoothly into the next stage of their learning. Children enter the school at levels which are well below average in most learning areas. They make satisfactory progress, but by the end of Reception are still well below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and reach the targets expected of them in this area of learning by the end of Reception. Children with special needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, progress at the same rate as their peers.

40. The classrooms are well resourced, and adults carefully plan an imaginative range of activities both inside and outside which provide children with a good variety of experiences. When children are involved in self-chosen activities adults make skilful interventions to enhance their learning, but the balance between adult-directed and child-selected activities is inappropriate. The youngest children, those in the nursery class, spend more than half of their time in closely directed, large group activities, which limits their access to the stimulating experiences on offer. In contrast, children in Reception classes are ready for more direct teaching and would benefit from more frequent periods of small group work, carefully planned to build on the skills they already have and provide them with greater challenge.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The classrooms are welcoming places where children feel secure and are eager and motivated to learn.
- Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and help children learn to behave well.

Commentary

41. Children are interested in learning and are confident to try new things. They can choose activities for themselves, find the equipment they need and most can co-operate harmoniously with others for long periods without adult support. They have a well-developed sense of what is acceptable behaviour. One nursery boy told another child very clearly and authoritatively that "you have to share". Adults talk to children in a respectful and encouraging manner at all times, providing

children with good role models, which result in children having positive relationships with each other. Even the youngest nursery children play an important part in tidying up their classroom at the end of sessions and two Reception children showed great skill with a dustpan, brush and beans on the floor! Children make good progress and, overall, most reach the standards expected of them in this area of learning by the end of their time in the Reception class.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to practise their spoken language skills.
- In the Reception classes a more structured approach to the teaching of reading, writing, and handwriting would increase the pace at which children acquire these skills.

Commentary

42. Many children have limited speech and language skills. Adults show great patience and skill in encouraging children to speak, asking open ended questions and waiting for answers rather than filling in the gaps or answering for the child. Children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary, for example, when tasting fruit Reception children were encouraged to “think of another word instead of nice”. Children develop the confidence to speak out loud in front of a group, and some are confident enough to sing alone. As a nursery child reached the end of a song, his classmates broke into unprompted applause, impressed by his achievement.

43. Nursery children are encouraged in mark-making through devices like an easel on which to “sign up” if they want a turn on a tricycle. Children are encouraged to link sounds to letters and one of the older and more able Reception children independently wrote “l l s w t m l” which she read back as “I like some water melon”. Even the youngest children enjoy books and stories, holding books the right way and turning the pages one at a time. Overall, children make satisfactory progress but end their reception year still well below average in this area of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults try hard to provide children with opportunities to use numbers in practical situations.
- Opportunities are missed to extend this work for more able children by linking number names with their numerals.

Commentary

44. Careful planning tries to bring mathematics into a range of meaningful situations. For example, children developing their physical skills by playing skittles are encouraged to count how many skittles they have knocked over. Nursery children going home at the end of the morning counted, with their teacher, how many children were left and sang the Green Bottle song using the appropriate number as their starting point and matching the song to children as their numbers reduced. About half of the older Reception class can use the terms “more” or “less” to compare numbers, and one boy noticed, as the teacher led the class in counting lunch boxes “it’s not getting less now, it’s getting bigger”. Even the eldest Reception children are at the early stages of recognising and writing numerals and more should be done to link number names to their numerals. Despite satisfactory progress, most children end Reception still well below average in this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with rich experiences including opportunities to nurture a rabbit and guinea pig, and to dig and grow plants.
- Children's limited spoken language skills slow down their achievement.

Commentary

45. Although children receive good teaching and are provided with high quality opportunities to investigate objects, materials and living things, they find it hard to ask questions about why things happen or to express their observations and this limits their learning. For example, Reception children showed great interest and enthusiasm making smoothies as part of their topic on fruit. Good open-ended questioning encouraged them to make suggestions as to what would happen to the fruit in the blender, but their language skills limited their responses. Similarly, despite direct experiences and every encouragement, nursery children were unable to say that beans need water to grow.

46. Children are encouraged to learn about the passage of time through the use of sand timers to regulate time spent on tricycles. Reception children have done work on their local environment producing a display showing nearby streets and features, which helps to develop their sense of place. There are computers in all three classrooms and nursery children are able to independently manipulate a mouse and match shapes in a computer game.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In all three classes, children get adequate opportunities for energetic outside play, with access to a good range of large and small apparatus.

Commentary

47. Children climb on apparatus with increasing confidence and agility and are developing control and co-ordination with a range of small apparatus. Adults try to extend the physical challenges on offer to children by setting individual targets. For instance, on low level balancing apparatus, children are encouraged to walk along the plank balancing a toy frog on their head, or carrying a doll on a plank between two of them. All children are provided with opportunities to handle and use small objects, malleable materials and a range of tools and equipment in order to develop their small motor skills. Reception children showed good manipulative skills, as well as high levels of perseverance, when chopping up fruit for smoothies.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginary role-play is encouraged in all three classes through the provision of well-chosen props which stimulate and support children's ideas.
- Creative activities are available throughout the day for use at times of free choice.

Commentary

48. Adults try to make activities as stimulating as possible. For instance children playing with dough were encouraged to comment on its colour and smell as well as its texture. They were delighted to discover that their pink dough smelt of strawberries and stayed involved in the activity for a long time, telling others as they approached to “smell the dough, it’s strawberry!” In one classroom the role-play area is set up as a “Ready Steady Cook” kitchen and this is encouraging boys, in particular, to dress up and act out a role. This is helping them to develop their imagination, and to express and communicate ideas.

49. In this area of learning children’s limited spoken language skills slow down their progress, as creative development involves not just participation in a range of activities, but also children need to express their ideas, feelings and responses and describe their actions. For example, a boy had spent a long time constructing a complex model using Lego. Although clearly a great many ideas and a good level of imagination had gone into his work, he was unable to express anything except “it’s a transformer”. In order to extend creative work further, children need to be able to reflect on their work and that of others.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good**. Teaching is good overall and in a good number of lessons it is very good. Standards in reading and speaking and listening are improving although writing still remains a difficulty for too many pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good teaching in English
- Progress in speaking and listening is very good
- Pupils enjoy of reading and some have developed good reading habits at home as well as in school
- Writing skills are still too low and too many pupils find writing a painful and laborious activity.

Commentary

50. Many pupils begin school with very poor levels of basic skill in early reading, writing, speaking and listening. Many arrive with poor concentration; which hampers their ability to make progress in English.

51. Pupils' standards in English in the standardised tests in 2004 were well below the national average for their age group in both Years 2 and 6. However, in English in Year 6 standards compared with similar school were slightly better and only below average. Boys generally get lower results in these tests than the girls. The gap between boys and girls is narrowing without lowering the standards of girls through the work the school has done to make the English curriculum more interesting to boys as well as girls. There remains, however, a stubborn group of boys who do not naturally value learning and persistently test the school's patience and resolve to help them.

52. Teachers track individual pupils' progress term by term to ensure each makes appropriate progress in all aspects of English. The good records kept by the school show that over their time at Boxgrove each individual makes good progress often from a very low starting point. The variation in level of test results year on year is closely tied to the number of pupils in each year with significant special educational needs. In English, pupils with special educational needs make good progress considering their starting points because their literacy skills are given priority.

53. In lessons pupils in all years make good progress in reading and both boys and girls enjoy books. This is because teachers are very skilful at teaching reading and offer pupils a wide range of reading material to appeal to different tastes. However, more girls than boys read for pleasure at home and this contributes to the girls higher standards.

54. Pupils' progress in speaking and listening is very good. They generally start school with extremely low skills on entry and some begin to learn to speak English at school. By Year 6 pupils are able to listen well to one another and are confident and communicative speakers, keen to share their ideas.

55. Writing remains the aspect of English many pupils still find most difficult. From their earliest days in the school pupils struggle to develop good writing habits and at best many are reluctant writers. There is a temptation for staff to protect pupils from this struggle and to find other ways of recording especially when they are young when actually they need as much practice as possible. In addition, the quality of their writing improves when they write about something they have experienced themselves or is linked to a topic that has interested them.

56. Teaching English is good and it has been a focus for much school development over time. Teachers make the beginnings of lessons very interesting to grab the pupils' attention. Talk partners and other strategies work are very well used by teachers to involve pupils fully in lessons. Teaching and support staff play an important part in adapting the tasks to suit the needs of individual pupils in English lessons. Very effective questioning targeted at individual pupils is another very effective strategy used by staff to keeping pupils on their toes actively learning. These questions are also used well to check individual pupils' learning and understanding.

57. The subject is very well coordinated and a good programme of monitoring and development has improved the teaching of English across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Language and literacy across subjects other than English is often good because the pupils have had an experience that is so relevant and real they have lots of ideas to express. The school develops the pupils' speaking and listening skills extremely well and the full range of the curriculum gives them excellent opportunities for this. They often start at the school very reluctant to share an opinion finding it difficult to identify appropriate vocabulary. But by the time they reach Year 6 they are confident and forthright speakers. They are able to listen to one another and adapt what they are saying to make important points. This opportunity for active experience also shows itself in pupils writing. Work is often more interesting, better structured and of a higher level when writing about subjects across the curriculum than in a standard English task.

MATHEMATICS

Provision In mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are improving but remain below the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good so pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Assessment procedures are used very effectively.

Commentary

59. The standards attained in the 2004 tests taken by Year 2 pupils were well below the national average. Pupils currently in Year 2 are showing an improvement on this and are now attaining standards below those expected nationally. Many of them start school with very low levels of mathematical skills and they have to achieve well to reach the standards that they do. In the Year 6 tests in 2004 the standards attained were also well below the national average. This is partly because many pupils join the school in Years 3 to 6 with poor mathematical skills. Some of these have had little or no schooling and many are at an early stage of learning English. Also, a small number of pupils have poor attendance records and this has a negative impact on the standards they attain. It is to the school's credit that pupils currently in Year 6 are working at a standard only just below that expected nationally and continue to achieve well. Over recent years the girls have performed much better than the boys in the national tests. This was particularly the case last year when many boys failed to reach the expected level in mathematics. The school has worked hard to address this imbalance and the attainment of boys is rising so that the gap between them and the girls is closing. This results in improved standards as the girls are maintaining their levels of attainment.

60. Pupils' good achievement is a direct result of the good teaching they receive as they move through the school. In the good lessons teachers have high expectations of their pupils' and set work designed to challenge their thinking. They create a positive working environment and insist on high standards of work and behaviour at all times. This results in pupils learning at a good rate, as

they are able to concentrate without interruption. The use of 'talk partners' in lessons gives the pupils many opportunities to discuss concepts and ideas and clarify their own thinking. This was clearly seen in a good Year 4/5 lesson about division. The pupils were encouraged to talk to each other about what happened when a number was divided by ten. By the end of the lesson all were able to understand the importance of place value in division and the more able were starting to relate this to their understanding of a decimal point as a marker. Teachers place a great deal of emphasis on correct mathematical vocabulary. It is constantly stressed and reinforced and pupils encouraged to use it in their productive discussions with talk partners. It is often prominently displayed for the pupils to see throughout the lesson.

61. Pupils respond well to their teachers, are attentive in lessons and are eager to learn. They are proud of their achievements. Pupils enjoy and rise to a challenge. Most pupils present their work neatly in their books and the vast majority successfully complete the work set for them in lessons. Their behaviour in lessons is good and often very good. They are attentive to their teachers and are willing to make useful contributions to discussions.

62. The subject is well led and managed. The quality of teaching is monitored to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school. Pupils' work is looked at to see if their varying needs are being met and that the work set is at an appropriate level. The termly meetings with teachers to discuss the provision and identify pupils requiring additional help are extremely valuable. They enable the coordinator to be able to have a very clear picture of the overall provision and to provide support where it will be most effective. The setting in Years 5 and 6 on two days each week is also proving to be useful in raising standards as the work can be more closely matched to the pupils' needs. More able pupils in Year 6 are also able to attend a weekly master class in a local secondary school to further challenge and develop their knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level.

63. The good procedures for assessing pupils, tracking their progress and setting appropriate targets are also proving effective in raising levels of achievement. The data collected is used to identify any groups or individuals who are not making good enough progress so that they can be given additional support. The results of national and other tests are also carefully analysed to highlight any areas of strength or concern. Problems written in words were identified as an ongoing aspect needing improvement and lesson planning is taking this into account to help improve the pupils' skills.

64. The vast majority of pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons. They are eager learners and proud of their many achievements. They successfully complete work assignments at school and those set as homework. In the most successful lessons, where the teachers have good pupil management skills, behaviour is very good and leads to a calm and peaceful working atmosphere in which all pupils can flourish and produce good quality work.

65. There has been a satisfactory improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has been maintained and there has been a good improvement in the use of mathematics across the curriculum.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. The pupils' skills in mathematics are often used in other subjects of the curriculum. When such links are made they prove useful, making learning more relevant and helping pupils reinforce their skills and understanding in mathematics. For example, in science Year 5/6 pupils use a sensor to monitor temperature and present the data as a line graph. In design and technology lessons pupils have to measure accurately and in geography have to understand scale when looking at or drawing maps.

SCIENCE

Provision In science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 are as expected for their age. At the end of Year 6 standards are below the national average.
- The exciting curriculum in Years 1 and 2 results in pupils achieving very well.
- The quality of teaching is good. Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have a good attitude to work and are eager to learn.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

67. Standards in Year 2 in 2004, based on teacher assessment, were below those found nationally. However, the pupils currently in Year 2 are reaching standards that are similar to those expected nationally and better than standards found in similar schools. In the 2004 tests the pupils at the end of Year 6 attained standards well below the national average. Pupils currently in Year 6 are showing an improvement on this and are reaching levels just below those expected for their age. The improved level of investigational work in all years is having a positive impact on achievement as pupils are learning in a more effective and meaningful way. Through this approach the pupils in Boxgrove are learning to be true scientists.

68. The curriculum planned for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good and based on a great deal of investigational work. Pupils' understanding of scientific principles is developed through a lot of 'hands on' activities. They thoroughly enjoy this and there is a real buzz of excitement in lessons. The pupils in the Year 1 lesson about changing materials by heating and cooling had a wonderful time looking at and handling an interesting variety of foods both raw and cooked. This led to much useful discussion about the cooked food and whether it could be returned to its original state. The raw and hardboiled eggs were particularly popular with the pupils and they thoroughly enjoyed being allowed to actually touch the egg yolk.

69. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have the high expectations of their pupils and constantly challenge them to do their very best. They manage their pupils very well and this enables them to plan lessons in which the pupils can be given the independence to organise themselves and experiment in groups. Lessons are carefully planned to build successfully on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. For example, in a good Year 3/4 lesson about thermal insulation the pupils already knew how to conduct a fair test and were very aware of how to experiment in an organised manner. This meant that they could move straight on to testing the various insulators without needing a great deal of direction. Learning is enhanced by the teachers' use of good quality resources that stimulate and interest the pupils in lessons.

70. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given to learn in a practical manner. They have a good attitude to their work and usually present their findings neatly and accurately in their books. Pupils are keen to learn and work together on investigations very sensibly. They support each other, share resources fairly and discuss their work and their findings.

71. Science is well led and managed. The provision is carefully monitored and assessments are used effectively to raise achievement by identifying areas for further development. Useful links to enhance learning are often made with other subjects. English lessons are sometimes used to write about the experiments enabling science lessons to be more hands on with the time used for investigating in depth.

72. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and planning have improved and the use of information and communication technology is included in lessons. For example, Year 5/6 pupils successfully used a temperature sensor in one of their experiments.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improvement in provision and standards since the last inspection is very good.
- The quality of teaching is good. Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have a good attitude to their work.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- There is no whole school network to enable resources to be used more effectively.

Commentary

73. At the time of the last inspection ICT was a Key Issue as the provision was judged to be unsatisfactory and not meeting statutory requirements. Resources were inadequate, the curriculum was not fully covered and there were variations in teacher expertise. As a result standards in Year 2 were below national expectations and well below at the end of Year 6. All of these weaknesses have been successfully resolved through improved resources, training for teachers and the use of the ICT resources in the local City Learning Centres (CLC). All pupils now have regular ICT lessons and are achieving well. The standards attained in Years 2 and 6 are now similar to those found nationally. All aspects of the subject are taught to an appropriate depth either in the school or the CLC.

74. The quality of teaching is consistently good or better. Teachers have received training that has improved their skills and understanding and has made them more confident in their teaching. This has resulted in the pupils learning more effectively as new work is explained to them simply and clearly, often using a data projector to demonstrate the program to be used. Teachers manage their pupils well and create an atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate and learn well. In a very good Year 1/2 lesson, in which pupils were making labels for their science work on materials, the teacher's enthusiasm was infectious and the pupils worked hard as they were eager to succeed. They thoroughly enjoyed handling the various materials provided and then using their ICT skills to choose suitable words from a word bank to describe them. Pupils learn at a good rate as the planning of work is thorough and takes into account their individual needs.

75. Pupils thoroughly enjoy ICT work and are very proud of their efforts. They have a good attitude to their learning and behave sensibly in lessons. They share tasks fairly and often give each other good support when difficulties are encountered. Pupils are able to explain in great detail the work they have completed. Year 6 pupils talked animatedly about their PowerPoint presentations on Buddhism and the fun they had manipulating the images of themselves that they took with a digital camera.

76. The subject is well led and managed. The school's own resources have been much improved and the use of the CLC enables teachers and pupils to use a range of top quality resources. This helps motivate both the teachers and the pupils, as they are all able to learn new skills and keep pace with the rapid developments in ICT. The data projectors and interactive whiteboard are proving to be a useful tool for teaching in all subjects as well as helping the pupils in their ICT work.

77. The bank of 16 laptops is well used in classes and enables pupils to use a variety of programmes to improve their knowledge and understanding of ICT. At present, however, they are not linked to a network so that saving and printing work is more difficult. To print a piece of work it has to be saved on a disc and then taken to a computer that is linked to a printer. This is very time consuming and the lesson loses some of its impact, as the pupils often have to wait some time to see their finished work. The lack of a network also means that the laptops have no Internet access and pupils are therefore limited to using their two classroom computers for research work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. The school has identified a number of useful links between ICT and other subjects. These are carefully planned and are designed to improve pupils' learning in both ICT and the other subject. For example, in science the pupils in the Year 5/6 classes used a temperature sensor and in history they used the Internet to find out about rich and poor children in Victorian times. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2, as part of their geography studies, collect data about cars parked outside the school and enter it into the computer to print it out as a graph.

HUMANITIES

79. Only three lessons in religious education and two in history were observed during the inspection. No geography lessons took place. This is not enough to make an overall judgement on provision and teaching. However, from looking at curriculum planning, previous work, displays and talking to pupils and staff it is evident that these subjects are covered appropriately. In the lessons seen pupils showed interest and enthusiasm. In discussion about all three subjects, pupils' knowledge and understanding is of a better standard than their written work. A residential trip, a good range of visits to museums and other places of interest and visitors into school stimulate the pupils' imaginations and give a good focus to humanities work. Within classrooms the use of artefacts, videos and dramatic role play generates great enthusiasm and helps pupils to recall facts. Subject coordinators play an effective role in monitoring teaching and ensuring continuity for their subject throughout the school. Humanities subjects have a good range of well organised resources which stimulate children's interest.

80. An appropriate emphasis is placed on teaching skills in **geography** linked where possible with other subjects. For example, the Year 1 work on Boxgrove Road was linked with mathematics and information and communication technology. Pupils carried out a survey on parked cars at different times of the day and produced a block graph of their findings on a computer. Each class in the school is named after a country in the world and this has contributed to pupils' geographical knowledge, as they have learnt basic facts about the different countries. A residential trip to Swanage focuses on geographical skills with pupils using and interpreting maps, identifying physical features of the environment and developing an understanding of the differences and similarities between Abbey Wood and Swanage. This trip clearly makes a major impact on pupils, providing them with good quality firsthand experiences to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

81. In **history** pupils do not just learn facts, but are acquiring historical enquiry and interpretation skills. For instance Year 3/4 pupils have a firm understanding of how we find out about the past and are beginning to understand the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence using a good range of sources, including census information and old and new photographs. In some classrooms well illustrated and effective timelines help to develop pupils' chronological understanding and an awareness of when events happened in relation to each other.

82. There has been good progress in the teaching of **religious education** since the last inspection and sufficient time is now allocated to the subject. The school now follows a scheme of work which has been developed from the Agreed Syllabus. Assessment in religious education is yet to be developed. Teachers link the work on different religions and their beliefs to pupils own lives. For example, work on Bar Mitzvahs in Year 4/5 was preceded by discussion on children's responsibilities and how these increase as they grow older. Pupils showed a good level of understanding, quickly coming up with many very relevant examples.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Two lessons were observed in physical education, but no lessons were observed in music. Teachers' plans in both subjects were looked at and pupils were seen and heard singing on a video.

84. **Art and design** and **design and technology** were not inspected during the inspection. However around the school are many examples of interesting work in both subjects. There are very good opportunities to take part in both art and design and technology activities during the year including drama clubs where the pupils make costumes and props. Where possible the school involves adult artists in running specialist workshops and activities to enhance the opportunities they are given.

85. Evidence shows that all aspects of **music** are taught. All of the teaching is by a music specialist who plans appropriate work to enable pupils to build successfully on their skills and knowledge as they move through the school. They compose their own music and record it using graphical notation. Pupils listen to music as they come in to and leave assemblies. They listen to a range of different styles such as, Irish and rock music extending their experiences. Pupils have opportunities to sing and play in events such as the Christmas productions. There are drumming and guitar lessons for around 20 pupils to attend and increase their musical knowledge and skills. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to listen to and perform music and are keen and eager to participate in all activities.

86. All aspects of **physical education** are covered, including outdoor and adventurous activities over the year. Many pupils can swim 25 metres confidently by the time they leave the school. The gymnastics and games lessons seen during the inspection were well organised and pupil management was good. The residential school journey for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to Swanage gives them many opportunities to take part in adventurous and outdoor activities in a safe environment, as well as learning to live together in harmony away from home. There are a number of lunchtime and after school clubs for pupils to join. These include dance, football and cricket. The school holds two sports days each year that are well attended and enjoyed by parents and carers as well as the pupils taking part. The sports week was a great success and included skipping, karate, parachute games and 'Bollywood' style dancing. Subject leadership is good. The subject leader keeps an extremely useful record of pupils' work and the overall provision through photographs of pupils working. Assessment sheets are completed by teachers at the end of each unit of work to help to ensure pupils make appropriate progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Pupils are provided with a thorough programme to improve their personal, social and health education. This also includes drug awareness and sex education. Circle time is used well to support personal, social and health education. Its impact can already be seen in the behaviour of the pupils and relationships throughout the school. There are good opportunities to enable pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship across the curriculum, for example, in geography.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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