

INSPECTION REPORT

GOSPEL OAK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Camden

LEA area: Camden

Unique reference number: 100025

Headteacher: Mr A Seymour

Lead inspector: Mrs S Vale

Dates of inspection: 10th - 12th January 2005

Inspection number: 266896

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 - 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 465 |
| School address: | Mansfield Road London |
| Postcode: | NW3 2JB |
| Telephone number: | 020 7485 7435 |
| Fax number: | 020 7267 1683 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Fiona Millar |
| Date of previous inspection: | 8 th March 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Gospel Oak is a two-form entry, mixed primary school situated in a densely populated area of Camden, an inner London borough. The area is highly diverse socially, ethnically and culturally. There are 465 boys and girls aged from three to eleven years on roll, including 52 full-time places in Nursery. It is much bigger than other primary schools. There are 100 refugees or asylum seekers and approximately 42 per cent of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. This is very high when compared to other schools. The range of languages that pupils speak at home is very wide; the main ones are Bengali, Somali and Albanian. The school has a large proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of fluency in English. Around 57 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. At 14 per cent, the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. Pupil mobility, at 20 per cent, is high, but below the local authority average. Gospel Oak is involved in the Excellence in Cities scheme and Sure Start to support children and families when they first start in Nursery. In 2004 the school received an Activemark Gold award for sport.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 22476 | Mrs S Vale | Lead inspector | Art and design Design and technology Music |
| 9646 | Mrs G Osment | Lay inspector | |
| 22967 | Mrs M Griffiths | Team inspector | Foundation Stage Geography History Modern foreign languages |
| 3574 | Mrs K Singh | Team inspector | English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology |
| 22704 | Mr G Williams | Team inspector | English Special educational needs Physical education |
| 22990 | Mr C Furniss | Team inspector | Science Citizenship Religious education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a highly inclusive and successful school with some very good features. Pupils achieve very well as a result of very good leadership provided by the headteacher, good teaching and strong support from the governors. From their low starting points on entry, the pupils make very good progress to reach average standards by Year 6. The school's outstanding partnership with parents contributes significantly to the pupils' personal and academic development. A stimulating curriculum promotes very good achievement. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and gives clear educational direction.
- An excellent partnership with parents has a positive effect on pupils' learning throughout the school.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very effective.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- Teaching overall is good, and about a third is very good. There is very good teaching in the Nursery and in Year 6. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning very well.
- Pupils achieve very well, behave well and have good attitudes to their learning.
- By Year 6, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above expected levels.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average by Year 2; in mathematics, they remain below average by Year 6, although they are improving.
- Standards in physical education are above national expectations by Year 2, and well above by Year 6.
- Attendance is just below the national average despite the very good efforts the school makes to get pupils into lessons.

Many aspects of the school's performance have improved significantly since the last inspection in 1999. The key issues identified then have been tackled effectively. Standards have improved in English and science, although by Year 2 they remain below national averages. Standards are also higher now in geography and in design and technology. Religious education now accords with the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in the Foundation Stage have improved. Teaching and learning are of better quality and a positive school ethos has been established. Behaviour is better than it was; the pupils are keen to learn and they want to come to school, as shown by their improving punctuality. The very good leadership and teamwork provided and encouraged by the headteacher have been central to the strong and successful drive for higher standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

| | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
| mathematics | E | D | D | B |
| science | D | B | C | A |

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

The pupils achieve very well overall. The Year 6 test results show that the pupils do very well when compared with pupils from similar schools. Many children start school with very low levels of attainment but they achieve well in the Foundation Stage and make good progress towards the standards expected by the end of the reception year. In personal, social and emotional development they are on course to reach them. The pupils achieve well in Year 2 and very well in Year 6. In Year 2, current standards are below the national averages in English and science but improving. By Year 6, current standards in these two subjects are average. In English, this represents a significant improvement on last year's test results. In mathematics, current standards at Year 2 and Year 6 are below average despite the progress pupils make. In ICT, standards are as expected in Year 2 but above expectations in Year 6. The pupils use their ICT skills well in other subjects. Standards in all other subjects are as expected. Pupils with special educational needs, refugees, more able pupils and those who have English as an additional language make good progress and achieve equally as well as their peers.

Pupils' personal qualities are developed well. The pupils have good attitudes to learning, promoted by the positive school ethos, and they behave well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance and punctuality are greatly improved due to the school's good and encouraging work, but attendance figures are still below national averages; punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The school addresses well a wide range of challenges and needs, such as the high mobility amongst pupils and the large numbers of refugees and pupils learning English as an additional language. **Teaching is good overall** and about a third of it is very good. Increasingly, the teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and as a result the pupils' learning moves forward quickly. The teaching promotes equality of opportunity very successfully. Very detailed assessment procedures are used effectively in reading and writing to help plan pupils' programmes of work. However, as yet, the marking in mathematics, science and other subjects does not help the pupils to know how they can improve their work. Support staff are used effectively to help pupils acquire knowledge, skills and understanding. The curriculum provides a stimulating range of activities that motivates all pupils to learn. There are very good opportunities for enrichment and extra-curricular provision. Pupils are cared for and supported very well. The school's partnership with parents is excellent and its links with the community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is led and managed very effectively. The headteacher provide very good leadership. The daily management of the school is very efficient. The detailed school development plan reflects a determination to continue improving. An effective senior management team helps drive developments forward positively and quickly and is very supportive of the headteacher's leadership. The school analyses data very carefully to bring about improvements. The high priority given to development and training ensures that pupils receive a good quality of education and also allows staff to develop their careers still

further. The governors are knowledgeable and supportive and they govern very well. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents hold the school in very high regard. They are particularly pleased with the way the school has listened to their requests to develop and value their own languages and cultures. The pupils are very pleased to be at the school; they feel valued and are helped to do well in their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and science by the end of Year 2, and standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Strengthen the marking so that the pupils understand how they can improve their own work in mathematics, science and the foundation subjects.
- Raise attendance levels still further.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **very good overall**. The pupils make good progress overall but, because they have so much catching up to do from their low starting points on entry, standards by the end of Year 2 are below average. By Year 6, standards are average. The school has a large number of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and the proportion of pupils who leave or join during the school year is also high; this has an impact on the overall standards which pupils achieve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage receive good support, achieve well and make good progress towards the early learning goals.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards of Year 2 pupils are below average in reading and writing, mathematics and science.
- Standards of Year 6 pupils are average in English and science but in mathematics remain below average.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above national expectations by Year 6.
- Standards in physical education are above national expectations by Year 2 and well above by Year 6. This is a considerable achievement.

Commentary

The Foundation Stage

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is well below what is expected for their age in all areas of learning. During their time in the Foundation Stage, children make good progress towards the early learning goals and achieve well. They are on course to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional

development by the end of the reception year but only about half are likely to reach the expected levels in all other areas of learning.

National Tests: Year 2

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 14.6 (13.7) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 12.8 (13.2) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| mathematics | 14.8 (14.5) | 16.2 (16.3) |

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

- Standards for pupils aged seven in the National Curriculum tests have been well below the national average for the last three years, except in 2002 when in mathematics there was a slight improvement. The 2004 national tests results for Year 2 for English and mathematics were well below average. Teacher assessments show that standards were also well below average for science. When compared with similar schools, test results in reading for Year 2 pupils were above average and those for writing and mathematics were average.

National Tests: Year 6

STANDARDS IN NATIONAL TESTS AT THE END OF YEAR 6 – AVERAGE POINT SCORES IN 2004

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 25.4 (24.9) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| mathematics | 26.0 (25.9) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| science | 28.8 (29.6) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In the last two years, standards in English for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below average, and in mathematics were below average. In science, standards varied from below to above average. The 2004 test results for Year 6 were well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. Compared with similar schools, the Year 6 results were much more favourable. In English and mathematics they were above average, and in science, well above.

Current standards

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are improving but are below average in English, mathematics and science. By Year 6, standards are average in English and science but below average in mathematics. The dramatic rise in performance in English compared with the last test results is testament to the school's drive to improve standards in this subject. Central to this improvement has been the strong leadership of the headteacher and good quality teaching. Standards in mathematics, although remaining below average, are improving and seven out of ten pupils are working at the expected standards.

5. In ICT, standards are in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and above what is expected by Year 6. Standards in physical education are above national expectations by Year 2 and well above what is expected by Year 6. Standards in geography, history, art and design, design and technology and music are as expected and those for religious education are in line with the locally agreed syllabus.
6. The drive to improve standards has included all pupils, irrespective of their ability. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. They make good progress in their work and are successful in meeting their targets on their individual education plans, which are reviewed regularly. Pupils on the gifted and talented register achieve well because work is generally sufficiently challenging. Throughout the school all groups of pupils achieve either well or very well because the school is well led and managed, the subject co-ordinators are effective, and the teaching staff are both knowledgeable and work closely as a team. There is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
7. Following effective data analysis of standards based on ethnicity, which revealed lower standards by Bangladeshi and Black African pupils who speak English as an additional language, strategies to support pupils who have English as an additional language have been successful. The standards of these pupils are showing good improvement at the end of Year 2. As yet, it is too early to show the impact of this initiative on the standards of Year 6 pupils. The attainment and achievement, as well as the self-esteem, of white pupils from low-income families has also improved following the establishment of a group specifically formed to meet needs identified through data analysis.
8. Standards in English in Years 1 and 2 are below average in reading and writing and average in speaking and listening. Given the pupils' various stages of language acquisition, the teachers are very careful to speak clearly, to explain specific vocabulary that pupils need, and to ask questions to confirm the pupils' understanding. The support assistants adopt a similar process, which additionally helps to develop the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The pupils display very positive attitudes and persevere with work. By Year 6, the pupils achieve very well: their speaking and listening skills are much improved and the teachers provide opportunities in lessons to promote and extend them. The pupils read well in a variety of contexts.
9. Standards in mathematics are below average in Year 2 and Year 6, with clear evidence of an upward trend as a result of additional support being provided to fill gaps in pupils' learning. Achievement is good because of the good teaching, particularly the demonstrations and introductions using the 'smart' boards, which make the mathematical content more visual. This encourages the pupils to behave well, and have both positive attitudes towards, and a desire to learn, mathematics. These features impact positively on all groups of pupils.
10. By Year 6, pupils develop a sound knowledge and understanding of science and are secure in their development of investigative and problem-solving skills. Whilst regular, the teachers' marking does not include written pointers for pupils about how to further improve their work in order to further raise standards.
11. Pupils are taught computer skills very well. The ICT co-ordinator supports teachers in their classrooms and, as a result, the teachers are very secure in their own computer skills, which they use to help their pupils to progress very well. Year 6 pupils are confident in using e-mail; they also use spreadsheets to work out the price of

shopping, and mix sound, text and pictures for PowerPoint presentations. Additional classes for gifted and talented pupils and lunchtime clubs all extend pupils' learning. More able pupils are able to create pages on their school website. The school is now appropriately focusing on developing the use of ICT across subjects to improve standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' personal qualities are developed well. The attendance rate is below the national average. Most pupils arrive at school on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school expects high standards of behaviour and the pupils respond positively.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted effectively and, as a result, their attitudes are good.
- The school takes good action to promote attendance and punctuality; however, the attendance rate remains below that of other schools nationally.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.7 | School data | 1.2 |
| National data | 5.1 | National data | 0.6 |

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence in 2003/4.

12. The inspection team agrees with parents that the pupils overall are well behaved, although there are a small number of isolated incidents of challenging behaviour. Parents and governors commented that behaviour has improved dramatically over the last three years. The very strong relationships between adults and pupils and the very good role models that adults provide help the pupils to understand exactly what is expected of them. There have been no exclusions from the school in the past three years and no incidents of unpleasantness or harassment were seen during the inspection. Playground behaviour is boisterous but, on the whole, good-natured, and boys and girls play well together. No examples of bullying or racist incidents were seen. Teachers plan interesting lessons that challenge pupils and keep them involved. For example, Year 6 pupils were very well behaved in a very good literacy lesson when they were looking at how poets manipulate words through onomatopoeia. In an effective Year 5 German lesson, the good range of activities that the teacher had planned meant that the whole class was interested and motivated to work hard.
13. The nurturing of pupils' personal skills and the care that is taken to ensure that every pupil is treated as an individual create a strong sense of community in which all can flourish. Pupils respond well to this by taking responsibility for themselves and others, for example, through the school council, as monitors in classrooms, by collecting for charities, as Year 6 buddies to younger children and when Year 5 pupils train as peer mediators. Assemblies are used well to celebrate pupils' successes in work, sport and attitudes to school. All of these positive opportunities promote pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence and contribute to their good attitudes and improving standards of

achievement. As at the last inspection, spiritual development is not a strong aspect of the school's provision and the headteacher recognises in his evaluation of the school that more opportunities need to be planned for.

14. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their work. They behave well at all times and focus on their individual tasks. As a result, they are proud of their achievements. Friendships across cultures are well established and racial harmony is good in the school.
15. The numbers of authorised and unauthorised absences are high but, due to the good procedures in place to monitor attendance, the school is now regarded as one of the best in Camden for improved attendance rates. Learning mentors regularly question pupils and parents about why the pupils are late for school and this has had a very positive effect on punctuality, which was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher and the education welfare officer work closely together with families to support them and promote the importance of regular attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. The teaching and learning are good overall. The broad curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. There is very good care and support for pupils and an excellent partnership with parents, which enhances pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 to 6. In the Nursery and Year 6, teaching and learning are very good. Assessment procedures are good overall and used well in planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the very good lessons the teachers have high expectations of their pupils, set challenging tasks and expect high standards of behaviour.
- Not all teachers deal with noise in class effectively enough.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to plan stimulating lessons which promote pupils' interest and motivation well.
- Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and, combined with very good use of resources and a good variety of teaching methods, this ensures that pupils produce good amounts of work.
- Teaching assistants are very well trained and effectively deployed to provide valuable support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those from refugee families.
- Marking is very well developed in English; this provides good guidance for pupils to understand what they need to do to improve further. It is not as thorough in other subjects.
- All pupils are fully included in all learning opportunities, irrespective of ability, gender or background. Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively to ensure total inclusion.
- Planning is good and teachers are developing strategies well to ensure that assessment data are being used effectively to meet pupils' needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 68 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 23 (34%) | 27 (39%) | 17 (25%) | 1 (2%) | 0 | 0 |

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

16. Since the previous inspection, there has been an improvement in the overall quality of teaching. As then, the teaching is good overall but there is now a greater proportion of very good teaching. There is some variation in teaching quality between classes. The teaching is consistently very good in the Nursery and Year 6, and examples of very good teaching also occur in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5. Teaching in Year 1 is satisfactory overall. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed during the inspection.
17. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language and for pupils from refugee families is good. These pupils are well supported in lessons and receive very good guidance and help from learning support assistants. Specialist teaching is used well to raise standards, for example, in physical education. The school was awarded the Activemark Gold award in 2004.
18. Where teaching is strongest, teachers have very high expectations of their pupils. This is reflected in their successful management of pupil behaviour, achieved through brisk pace, effective use of support staff, efficient use of time and resources and probing questioning. Teachers set challenging and stimulating tasks, encourage pupils to contribute and do not compromise their insistence that all pupils listen attentively. This results in pupils being very aware of what is expected of them and responding appropriately. Very positive attitudes are established, allowing teachers to take an expressive approach to teaching, as seen in literacy lessons in Years 4, 5 and 6. The quality of learning is further enhanced through raising pupils' enjoyment in lessons. In lessons judged to be satisfactory, teachers were less secure in their knowledge and the noise level created by pupils was a shortcoming. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 1 class when the lively and often noisy behaviour had a negative impact on pupils' learning. It also affected the quality, accuracy and work output of pupils' written or spoken responses, as the pupils did not always listen with sufficient concentration or understanding.
19. Teachers mostly know their subjects well, and use their knowledge effectively to plan enjoyable activities and lessons, particularly using the interactive whiteboard. This promotes pupils' interest and motivates them well, for example, in a Year 4 lesson where an aspect of literacy was being taught through history. Although the task was challenging, pupils were expertly guided through the discussion by the teacher, building upon their previous knowledge. The task was purposeful, encouraging pupils to think about what they had learnt and how to develop their learning and understanding. Pupils responded well and good standards were achieved in a short time. Lessons are mostly conducted at a brisk pace and, combined with the very good use of the interactive whiteboard, produce good quality work.
20. Assessment is good overall. The school has developed effective, manageable and meaningful systems to assess all pupils' progress regularly. Particularly in English and mathematics, the teachers use the information from assessment effectively to inform

future planning. This use of assessment data is satisfactory in other areas, being developed using the successful achievements in the identified core areas. Marking is used very well in English and supports pupils well giving them very clear guidance on what they need to do to improve. This very good practice is not as well developed in other areas of the curriculum and does not show pupils how they can improve their work.

English as an additional language

21. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. The school has a large proportion of pupils who are at the early stage of fluency in English. There are a few new arrivals who have little or no English, a large number who need support to access the curriculum, and some others who need support in subject-related vocabulary. The school has appointed 1.4 full-time equivalent teachers to provide additional support. All teachers and teacher assistants are trained in supporting these pupils. The large number of pupils who belong to refugee and asylum-seeking families all are very well integrated within the school and are well supported. A high proportion of pupils who are not fluent in English enter both the Nursery and other year groups. The school has implemented strategies that have been successful in improving the pupils' learning. All staff have received in-service training and have good understanding of the needs of their bilingual pupils. Additional support is provided through specialist teachers who work with colleagues through partnership teaching. The number of teacher assistants has been increased to ensure that there is an additional adult in each class to support pupils. This is of particular support and benefit to improving the positive learning ethos within the school.
22. Specialist teachers work closely with class teachers and help pupils in lessons. The targets for learning are set in individual education plans and are specific to the needs of the bilingual speakers. These targets are monitored and reviewed and pupils' progress is well tracked. Pupils are given many opportunities to talk and discuss work with their peers. However, on some occasions, the newly arrived pupils were seen to be without any support from the class teacher or from the teacher assistants and this hindered their progress at these times. Teachers use good questioning, and explain key vocabulary well. The use of interactive whiteboards provides a strong visual element to the content of the lessons and, as a result, pupils understand what they are required to learn. However, more use of artefacts and materials would improve pupils' vocabulary skills. Teachers' positive acceptance of a diversity of languages in their classes enables bilingual and refugee pupils to settle quickly and, as a result, pupils are happy and confident.

Special Educational Needs

23. The quality of learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There is clear evidence that the co-ordinator is impacting positively on helping to raise standards for all pupils with special needs, whatever their difficulty. Pupils benefit from very clear individual education plans, which are monitored regularly to ensure that the precise targets for them and the progress they make are evaluated. The organisation of the special needs provision ensures that pupils are confident members of the school community. They are involved in all aspects of school life and this is a strength of the provision. There are examples of very good practice by support staff. They know their pupils well, discuss and deliver planning established by the class teacher and feed back on pupil responses, attitudes and progress to the

teacher. The very high quality relationships that exist within the school enhance provision and progress for these pupils. They are supported in class and sometimes through withdrawal. The needs of pupils determine which method will have the most impact on their learning. The school philosophy clearly believes that pupils are best catered for in mainstream classes, using appropriate differentiation supported by well-trained, high calibre support staff, and this works very well. The school has established a mentoring system to help remove barriers to learning and this has been a very positive move; for example, using musical therapy and working successfully with the Primary Learning Support Team. Parents are involved in discussions at all review meetings, which supports the improvement process.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of the pupils, the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There is very good enrichment through effective use of visits and visitors and a very broad range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are good and are well used.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum overall is good and there is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for ICT.
- There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils are fully included and have equal access to all the school offers.
- There is very good enrichment through the well-planned use of visits and visitors and a very broad range of clubs and activities.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and give very good support to teachers and pupils.

Commentary

24. The curriculum provided by the school is good and meets the needs of pupils in all areas of the National Curriculum, personal, social and health education and citizenship, and religious education. There is appropriate provision for sex education and drugs awareness. All policies and schemes of work are now in place and are regularly reviewed. Pupils for whom English is not their first language are well provided for and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The curriculum for ICT is very good and provides good support across other subjects. There has been good improvement in curricular provision since the last inspection.
25. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good in Nursery and in Reception. Good attention is paid to setting challenging and interesting tasks to support children's learning. The rooms are colourful and encourage children to want to find things out for themselves. Children take responsibility for tidying things away after they have used them.
26. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established. Literacy and numeracy are well supported through other subjects and good use is made of links between a range of cross-curricular areas, which helps to reinforce the teaching and make it more relevant to the pupils.
27. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship, with good use being made of circle time on a regular basis. The learning support

mentor also uses circle time with classes or groups of pupils to help deal with specific problems and issues which may arise. Relationships are very good and there is a very strong staff commitment to making sure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life, helping to create the positive ethos that is such a strong characteristic of the school.

28. The curriculum is very well supported and enriched by a broad range of clubs and activities. These are particularly strong in sports and for pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, including Somali, Bengali, Albanian and Congolese, which extend pupils' learning of their own languages and cultures. Other clubs include art, the environment, typing and French, and there are booster clubs and homework clubs. The after-school club provides a valuable service and is enjoyed by many pupils. Effective use is made of visits and visitors and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity of a residential visit to Devon.
29. Pupils with English as an additional language receive a broad and balanced curriculum and take part fully in all school activities. There are some notices, signs and books in other languages to show that the school values other cultures and languages. German and French are part of the older pupils' curriculum.
30. The school provides a curriculum that reflects other cultures positively. This adds to the confidence and self-esteem of ethnic minority pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to gain confidence about other cultures through religious education, assemblies, celebration of Black History Month, history, geography, music and art.
31. Accommodation and resources are good overall and are good for the under fives. The environmental area is very useful and is well used, especially in supporting science. The staff resources are good, with teachers being well matched to the needs of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are well trained and utilised and give very good support to the teachers.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure the care, guidance and welfare of the pupils are very effective. The pupils' achievement and their personal development are monitored well. The involvement of the pupils in the school's work is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's procedures to ensure pupils are safe are thorough.
- Good measures to settle pupils into school and in the Nursery ensure they are able to learn.
- Pupils feel valued because their views are sought and acted on.
- Although pupils have a good understanding of what they are learning, they are not sure in all subjects what they need to do next to improve their work.

Commentary

32. The systems for safeguarding pupils' health and safety are well established. The headteacher and site manager undertake risk assessments and the governors' safety committee meets regularly to address any issues. Child protection procedures are very good. Record keeping is comprehensive so that concerns about pupils can be

identified at an early stage and acted on promptly. Incidents of racial harassment, name-calling or bullying are meticulously recorded, closely monitored by the headteacher and dealt with professionally. The pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtimes, and lunchtime arrangements in the dining hall are well managed.

33. Parents are very happy with the induction arrangements for their children. Nursery staff make home visits and children and their families are invited to spend time in the Nursery prior to starting. Coffee mornings are held for parents of the youngest children where speakers from inside and outside the school endeavour to address any concerns that they might have. Pupils who enter the school other than in the Nursery are also thoughtfully inducted. The ethnic minority achievement co-ordinator meets parents to discuss the arrangements and any additional language support that might be necessary. Learning mentors are also involved and new pupils are 'buddied' with those already attending to help them settle into school routines. This all contributes to the school's positive ethos.
34. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive and pupils revealed that their teachers listen to them and that they are trusted to do things on their own. Pupils are encouraged to express their opinions through the school council and through questionnaires that the school issues to them. The school council initiates collections for charities, has set up a reading club with younger children, visited the Houses of Parliament to meet local MP Glenda Jackson and met members of Camden Council to discuss safe routes to school. All of these opportunities make strong contributions to the pupils' personal development.
35. Teachers assess pupils' academic needs well during lessons. They ensure that pupils fully understand the learning objective by stating it clearly at the beginning of lessons, revisiting it during a lesson to ensure all pupils are focused, and re-addressing it in plenaries to assess how much pupils have learned. Teaching assistants are used very well to help pupils get the most out of their lessons. The thorough marking of English work is enabling pupils to understand what they need to do next to improve, but in other subjects marking is not as informative or helpful.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has an excellent partnership with the parents. Links with other schools and the community are very effective.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school very successfully encourages parents to be involved in their children's education.
- Parents are very well informed about what is happening in school and how well their children are doing.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school makes very good use of the local environment to enrich the curriculum.

Commentary

Example of outstanding practice

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|--|
| <p>Gospel Oak has created an excellent partnership between the school and parents. It is based on openness and a total acceptance of the value of all members of the school community. All parents,</p> |
|--|

whatever their background or culture, are made to feel welcome and a valued and important part of their child's education. Parents are very well informed about what is happening in school and how well their children are doing. Parents are very happy that their different cultures are celebrated and valued. After conversations and meetings with the school, a number of after-school clubs including Somali, Bengali, Congolese and Albanian have been instigated. These are developing pupils' linguistic skills and knowledge and understanding of their own cultures. They are regarded very highly by parents. A positive approach to the teaching of Black History has been introduced and parents also value this highly. The school's channels of communication are excellent – both the headteacher and his teaching and non-teaching staff are highly visible around the school and in the playground, and parents feel that their comments and suggestions are listened to.

36. Although low in number, responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive. In meetings before and during the inspection, parents spoke very highly of the headteacher and expressed their confidence that the school will continue to improve. Parents show their support by attending meetings, productions, class teas and assemblies in high numbers, volunteering to listen to readers, organising after-school clubs and through fundraising for the school association (GOSA).
37. The school consults parents on many aspects of their children's education, including the homework policy, school dinners, the travel plan and the development of the grounds. Newsletters provide good information about school events and pupil successes. The website is also a good source of information for parents. Year groups send out curriculum information and also hold meetings so that parents can understand and support what their children will be learning. Each term, parents are invited to open evenings when they can see their children's work and talk to teachers informally. Many parents are very supportive of the school's homework policy and the school appreciates the help they give their children. The headteacher, class teachers and learning mentors are highly visible in the playground at the end of the day and this is an invaluable method of communication between parents and school. Issues can be addressed before they escalate into larger problems. There are two formal consultation evenings between class teachers and parents where test results are shared and targets set. The annual reports are very detailed. They show clearly how well and at what level pupils are achieving, what they know, understand and can do and the skills they are acquiring. Clear targets for improvement are set in English, mathematics and science.
38. The school works very closely with the two main receiving secondary schools. This involves shared teaching in modern foreign languages, mathematics, design and technology and dance and also support for clubs, including art and gymnastics. Pupils are invited to taster days, to take part in summer schools and there are joint projects started in Year 6 and completed in Year 7. During the inspection, parents spoke very positively about how their children are helped to settle into the secondary school very successfully. Students from the secondary schools are encouraged to spend their work experience placements here and the school actively welcomes trainee and graduate trainee teachers. Many pupils are involved in sports fixtures against other schools, for example, in football for both boys and girls, swimming, rounders, athletics and netball.
39. The school makes every effort to involve the parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language in all school activities. The school buys translation and interpreting services as and when required. Staff and parents who can speak more than one language also help in interpretations. The annual International Evening Celebration attracts hundreds of pupils from the school and neighbouring community,

providing very good opportunities for parents to listen to music and songs, observe dance and taste food from different cultures.

40. There are very good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs, who are kept fully informed of the progress of their children and invited to frequent reviews of targets set and achieved.
41. Teachers use the local environment very well to enhance many lessons. For example, in literacy, dragon hunting on Hampstead Heath; in art, inspiration is provided by visits to the National Portrait Gallery; in ICT, the pupils are taken to the City Learning Centre; in religious education, pupils visit the Belsize Park synagogue; and in science, they visit the Science Museum and Imperial College London. Members of the local community act as reading volunteers and the Mansfield Road Residents Association supported the school through its street party. Year 6 pupils took part in a young citizens' festival organised by the local police and the Gospel Oak play centre uses school facilities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are very good. Very good teamwork by key staff, in partnership with the senior management team, supports the headteacher's very good leadership and management. Knowledgeable and understanding governors ensure that the governance of the school is very good. These are all major factors in overcoming the barriers to achievement and in improving standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good leadership by the headteacher.
- There are very clear lines of communication between all parties involved in the school.
- The governance of the school is very good.
- The very good management reflects a school with high expectations.

Commentary

42. The leadership, management and governance of the school have improved a great deal since the previous inspection in 1999. The school faces a number of challenges to raising achievement, such as high levels of mobility, social deprivation, and increasing numbers of pupils learning English as an additional language. Since his appointment in 2001 the headteacher has brought about significant improvements by establishing a very clear educational direction for the school that focuses on raising the pupils' standards, achievements and self-confidence. The very detailed school development plan contains targets for improvement across all subjects and aspects of the work of the school, which are monitored and regularly reviewed by both senior staff and governors. Very good teamwork between all members of staff ensures that lines of communication are very clear. Progress against objectives is assessed and next steps agreed through regular review and school self-evaluation meetings. Key staff monitor closely the quality of teaching and learning, especially in English, mathematics and science, and examples of good practice are shared among staff. All these systems and measures are successful in moving the school forward on a broad front.
43. Strong emphasis is placed on effective assessment systems to track pupils' progress, and to develop a stimulating and relevant curriculum. This has inspired pupils so that

they want to come to school and learn. There has been a positive change of ethos in the last three years, resulting in an enriched environment for learning.

44. All the staff and governors are committed to ensuring that pupils achieve as well as they can, and in this they share the high aspirations of the headteacher. The school is fully inclusive. Data are analysed thoroughly to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should. The progress of different ethnic groups is carefully analysed. Through this analysis the school has discovered some underachievement amongst white pupils from families with low incomes and has subsequently taken steps specifically to support these pupils. This has had a positive impact on not only their self-esteem, but also on both their attainment and achievement. In addition, the headteacher looks closely at the value-added data available about pupils' achievements as they move through the school. This is increasing and improving year on year.
45. Linked to the school's priorities are very good procedures for self-evaluation, performance management and staff development that help to identify and bring about further improvements. All senior managers have attended leadership courses to give them high-level skills that they apply each day. At the heart of what they do is an encouragement of all pupils to do their best. Pupils find success in subjects other than English and mathematics and this raises their self-esteem, giving them a more positive attitude to the subjects they find difficult.
46. The leadership and management of pupils who have English as an additional language are good. All pupils are assessed to determine and record their stages of language acquisition and their progress is tracked and monitored against the targets set for raising standards. All bilingual pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are provided with good support. Data from statutory and optional tests are analysed well and the school pays careful attention to improving all the pupils' standards.
47. Subject co-ordinators have good knowledge of their subjects and carry out their roles well. The management of special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator has done much to raise the profile of this area, including working very closely with the Primary Learning Support Team and the music therapy service.
48. A knowledgeable governing body supports the school very well. Governors have a clear idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses and make decisions on an informed basis, for example, from visiting the school, following up links with classes, analysing data and monitoring finances. The governing body has recently started holding in-depth interviews with members of staff on subjects such as homework, teaching assistants, instrumental music teaching and the outside classroom. This ensures that the governors are fully conversant with what is going on in school and increases their understanding of the quality of education that the pupils receive. The governing body is actively recruiting parents who represent smaller ethnic minority groups so that their views can be represented.
49. The governors and headteacher ensure that the budget reflects the school's educational priorities. Good financial procedures are in place and there is careful monitoring of the financial position during the year. Whilst expenditure per pupil is very high, this takes into account some additional funding the school has received. The principles of best value are applied fully to all aspects of spending. As the school has

high standards of achievement, an improving and stimulating curriculum, good teaching and high-quality leadership, it provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Total income | 1,882,807 |
| Total expenditure | 1,830,876 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 4,006 |

| Balances (£) | |
|--|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 64,414 |
| Balance carried forward to the next year | 51,931 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision for children in Nursery and Reception classes is **good**.

Children begin Nursery with levels of attainment that are well below average, especially in personal and social development and language skills. All children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. This is because the teaching is very good in the Nursery and good in the reception classes and there is a wide range of challenging, stimulating activities provided throughout the Foundation Stage. All adults work together to provide a secure environment in which the children feel valued and safe. This provision is well managed and each child's progress is carefully monitored. The deployment and contribution of support staff is very good. All adults ensure that the children are kept purposefully busy and that there are good opportunities for their individual needs to be met. The partnership with parents is excellent. Parents are provided with clear information about everyday routines and this helps to ensure that the children settle confidently into new routines in both the Nursery and Reception. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The teaching has improved. There are now more frequent opportunities for focused teaching in language and number activities and the provision for outdoor play is better than it was.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between children and adults are very good.
- From the outset, the children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions.
- The daily routines offer security and lead the children towards increasing independence.

Commentary

50. Most children achieve well and are on course to reach or exceed the goals expected in this area of development by the end of Reception. All staff work hard at promoting very good relationships with children and, as a result, all children are happy and relaxed, and benefit fully from the wide range of activities provided. They come into their classes happily and quickly settle into the daily routines. Children in the Nursery understand that they have to choose an activity to do when they arrive. When necessary, teachers and support staff correct the children firmly but gently, supporting self-esteem. Consequently, children quickly learn the correct way to behave. The high expectations of the staff and the opportunities given to the children through the very good teaching enable the children to make very good progress. Children in the Nursery understand that they have to take turns when they use scissors to cut play-dough. Older children in Reception have learned to co-operate well and understand about making a line sensibly to go to dinner.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is used to develop children's speaking and listening skills.
- Strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of early reading and writing skills.

Commentary

51. Over half the children are on course to attain or exceed the goals expected by the end of the reception year, which is an improvement since last year. Children develop speaking and listening skills well through many opportunities in the daily class routines. In the Nursery, lunchtimes provide a 'family' atmosphere when children sit in small groups with an adult, providing them with the opportunity to talk and listen to one another. During the inspection, Reception children talked about the story that they were sharing with their teacher and good use of questioning encouraged the children to discuss their ideas.
52. Very good attention is given to the development of writing skills and this allows children to achieve well. There are many opportunities provided for children to write, such as writing about models they have made in the Nursery, or in Reception, writing about when they were babies. All adults in both Nursery and Reception reinforce early writing skills and there is a good supply of paper, pencils and crayons available for children to use. Higher attaining children in Reception are beginning to write independently. In response to the teacher's gentle encouragement, they are confident about trying to spell simple words for themselves and to use capital letters to begin sentences.
53. The development of reading skills has a high priority. There is a very good programme of teaching sounds and all children are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents. Careful records are kept of each child's development so that appropriate help can be given to enable them to progress. There are many opportunities for children to listen to stories and to enjoy looking at books.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults question children well and use a wide variety of activities to support learning.
- The good quality teaching emphasises the correct use of mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

54. Over half the children are on course to attain or exceed the goals expected by the end of the reception year, which is an improvement on last year. Many opportunities are provided for counting. Nursery children counted carefully as they climbed the beanstalk in a game that they were enjoying. Children in Reception enjoyed counting sounds carefully up to 20 as they listened carefully to their teacher playing musical instruments. Adults' consistent use of correct mathematical vocabulary means that children also confidently use the correct words. In Reception, children learn the meaning of the words 'full' and 'half full' in a practical context, using sand to fill containers. There are good resources, such as board games, large number tracks, and objects for sorting and counting.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the world are well planned.

Commentary

55. In the Nursery, very good teaching provides a good range of activities to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their learning. For example, they have the opportunity to select tools and techniques to make a collage. Good teaching in Reception offers opportunities for children to 'find out' and explore, such as when they use the computer. They use the mouse confidently and in one program, click on the flag and drag it to the top of a building. Over half the children should attain or exceed the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for outdoor physical development is good.
- There are many opportunities for activities to improve children's co-ordination.

Commentary

56. In both Reception and Nursery, outdoor activities are used well and many learning opportunities are available. As a result, over half the children are on course to reach or exceed the levels expected by the end of the reception year. Children in both the Nursery and Reception have access to a wide range of wheeled toys and enjoy using the space around them. There is also a range of activities to offer practice in manipulating small toys and building materials. Children in the Nursery benefited from very good teaching when they rolled and kneaded play-dough carefully. Good teaching in Reception provided children with good experiences when they aimed the football into the goal and kept a careful tally of the goals scored.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good planned opportunities for children to develop creative skills.

Commentary

57. Nursery and Reception children enjoy pretending, and good resources support their learning. Children have the opportunity to make models, paint and draw, make music and enjoy imaginative play. Very good teaching in the Nursery helps children to learn to mix colours and some children know, for example, that red and yellow make orange when they are mixed together. Children in Reception have learned to weave with strips of material and made patterns. They have also painted portraits of themselves. These experiences help children to develop their creative skills and over half are likely to reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 2 to 6 and by Year 6, standards are in line with those expected in all aspects of language and literacy.
- Achievement in Year 1 is satisfactory but is limited by weaker listening skills.
- Very good assessment systems are in place and are used very well to focus work effectively and to support pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and pupils from refugee families.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, with consistently very good teaching in Year 6 and examples of very good teaching in Years 2 to 5. This represents about one third overall. Year 1 teachers do not address noisy behaviour quickly enough.
- Very good leadership and management ensure rising standards and a continuing upward trend.

Commentary

58. National test results in 2004 at the end of Year 2 showed standards in reading and writing to be well below national average, but compared with similar schools they were above average in reading and average in writing. At the end of Year 6, the 2004 tests results were well below average compared with all schools, but well above compared with similar schools. In lessons now, standards are below those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Standards have improved significantly in reading so they are now close to the national average. In writing they are below average and in speaking and listening they are just in line with expected levels. Standards in English in Year 6 have improved markedly. They are now average overall, and above average in reading and average in writing, speaking and listening. Pupils' achievement is good in Year 2 and in Years 3 to 6. From well below average attainment on entry, the pupils make very good progress by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly to their peers, as do the pupils with English as an additional language and those from refugee families, due to the very good support they receive. The school has now fully recovered from the dip in standards in the previous few years that was caused by mobility and other related factors.
59. Reading has improved significantly due to good teaching, improved resources and effective support from teaching assistants. The recently introduced initiative, 'Reading Bug', is already impacting positively on increasing pupils' interest and love of reading. Writing is now satisfactory due to the pupils experiencing a wide range of genres and cross-curricular integration, such as history being taught through the medium of literacy. This has stimulated learning and challenged thinking. Speaking and listening

skills are well promoted in all lessons and listening skills are particularly well developed.

60. Teaching and learning are good overall, with differing strengths in Year 2 and Years 3, 4 and 5. In Year 6, teaching and learning are consistently very good. The variation in teaching and learning is due to the teachers' expectations of pupils' approach to learning and in the management of noise levels within lessons. In Year 1, too little emphasis on controlling noise levels in class affects pupils' concentration levels and impacts on their understanding. In most classes, behaviour and attitudes to reading and writing are very good and aid the pupils' very good achievement. The teachers' enthusiastic approaches encourage and motivate pupils to learn and to use their imagination in their writing. The purposeful activities stimulate pupils to think about what they have learnt and how to improve their work. They create a very positive ethos for learning in which high expectations and the valuing of pupils' contributions are evident. This promotes social and moral development, confidence and self-esteem. Where teaching is very good, there is a high level of challenge, pace is brisk, learning enjoyable and pupils achieve very well. There is good coverage of the curriculum. Relationships are of high quality and teaching assistants are effectively deployed and contribute well to the learning ethos.
61. All aspects of English, reading, spelling and writing are assessed. Assessment is ongoing and pupils' individual or group performance is assessed both during and at the end of lessons. Teachers' good knowledge of pupils' achievement informs both staff and pupils of pupils' progress and what they need to do to improve. Pupils' work is closely monitored to track pupils' progress, set targets and monitor levels of progress and standards, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.
62. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leaders are strongly supported by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They work effectively together and, through a thorough and rigorous evaluation of all aspects of English and provision, have a very good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of this subject. This is used very well to identify areas for further development. The quality of marking encourages pupils to become accessory in their own learning. The curriculum is good and is supported by quality resources.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

63. The development of language and literacy skills is very well promoted throughout the curriculum. The school focuses on maintaining high standards in all aspects of English, improving speaking and listening, reading, writing, handwriting and spelling through its inter-curricular approach. This was clearly visible in the literacy lesson taught through the medium of history. Recording in science is a key feature, as is labelling of diagrams.

French and German

64. French lessons are taught in Year 6 by a teacher from the local comprehensive school and German lessons are taught in Year 5 by a member of the teaching staff here. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards or provision as only two lessons were seen during the inspection and because both year groups only started their lessons last September. In both lessons seen, the teaching was good and, as a result, pupils enjoyed their language lessons and achieved well.

65. In both lessons, there were good opportunities for pupils to practise what they had learned previously, and the good variety of activities meant that they were well involved throughout. In German, pupils confidently counted to ten and were able to ask the time, and reply. In French, pupils were learning vocabulary for pets and they enjoyed a fun game asking about one another's pets, asking confidently, for example, 'as-tu un chien?' In both lessons, pupils were confident in their use of the new vocabulary that they were learning and, because the teachers were good role models, their pronunciation was good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school because of the good teaching and learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Assessments, and the use made of this information, are very good. However, marking is only satisfactory.

Commentary

66. Results for Year 2 in the 2004 national tests were well below average but in line with those of similar schools. For Year 6, results were below average but above those for similar schools. Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement in mathematics has improved from satisfactory to good.
67. The standards of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are below the national average. Pupils' progress has been better in the last two to three years because of the very good leadership and the good teaching provision. Pupils' progress also accelerates in Year 6 as a result of the very good teaching they receive. More able and average ability pupils are working securely at the expected levels. However, the standards of a large proportion of below average ability pupils are low, and this brings overall standards below the national average. The high number of pupils who either are at the early stages of learning English or who leave or join during the school year impacts negatively on overall standards. Pupils of all ability groups and backgrounds achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they achieve well. There is no discernible difference in the progress of boys and girls.
68. By Year 2, most pupils can count, order, add and subtract numbers to 20. They are learning the value of tens in a two-digit number. More capable pupils can count in twos and tens and know the place value of hundreds, tens and units. By Year 6, most pupils are familiar with the four basic rules of number and apply what they know. They learn to change fractions into decimals and percentages, as was seen in one lesson. However, a large proportion of pupils' skills in multiplication tables and mental calculations are underdeveloped, which hinders attainment. The teachers are aware of this and appropriate focus is given to developing these skills and offering praise, encouragement and reward systems to further improve standards.

69. Overall, teaching and learning are good and, as a result, pupils' achievement is good. All teachers plan and organise lessons well, providing appropriately challenging tasks that engage pupils' interest. The work is consistently linked to previous learning and this helps pupils to progress well. Questions are used well to find out what pupils know and to challenge them to work out mental calculations accurately. Interactive boards are used very well to demonstrate and explain work and this visual content of lessons has a positive impact on learning. In two very good lessons in Year 6 classes, the teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour were very high; the pace was very good and appropriate praise motivated pupils in their learning. Teacher assistants are used very well to support pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
70. Assessment procedures are mostly very good. One very good strategy that is working successfully is to assess gaps in pupils' mathematical learning and provide additional support to fill these gaps, before introducing work of higher levels, so that learning is built systematically. The test results are analysed rigorously and related information is used very well to track the pupils' progress and provide additional support through teacher assistants, when and where this is required. However, marking is only satisfactory. Teachers tick work but do not identify the strengths or give pointers for future developments. This results in pupils not knowing how to improve their work.
71. The subject is well managed and led by an experienced teacher. The high focus on improving standards is appropriate and the support to achieve this, through giving demonstration lessons and monitoring teaching and learning, is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in other subjects. Pupils use numeracy skills in other subjects but would benefit from more planned opportunities for this to happen. In literacy lessons, mathematical vocabulary is explained well. In science, pupils use line and pie charts to measure and record results. In ICT, the pupils communicate findings in graphic and tabular forms and use spreadsheets when they find out the cost of shopping. In art and design, the pupils use the 'Colour Magic' program to draw shapes and patterns to emulate famous artists such as Warhol and Mondrian. They use their skills in design and technology to measure, for example, when they make bird-tables.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-focused strategies and good teaching are raising standards.
- Achievement is good and all pupils make good progress.
- Standards are still below the expected level in Year 2.
- Investigative skills are developed well.
- Marking is not always used effectively to help pupils know how to improve.
- The subject leader has a very clear focus and leads and manages well.

COMMENTARY

73. In the 2004 national tests, standards for pupils in Year 6 were average. Teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils were well below the national average. Observations and analyses made during the inspection show that standards in Year 6 are about average overall but above average in investigative work. In the current Year 2, standards are below the expected level rather than well below, and pupils' investigative skills are about average. This is an improvement since the last inspection and standards have risen significantly in the last three years.
74. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well and make good progress. The teaching of skills and knowledge is effective so that by Year 2, even though standards remain below the expected level, the pupils make good progress. There is an emphasis on practical investigations so that pupils actually learn from experiences and find things out for themselves. In Year 1, for instance, pupils were looking at light and were already beginning to make predictions and think about ways of testing things out. Year 2 were investigating what forces are used when riding a pedal scooter. They considered and then recorded the pushing, pulling and turning forces used by different toys, by making things out of play-dough and rolling toys over different surfaces. Scientific language is being developed well and good foundations are being laid.
75. In Years 3 to 6, these foundations are built on effectively and the emphasis on practical investigation remains good. Year 3 pupils identified and tested the differences between types of rock. Year 4 pupils looked at insulation and devised an investigation to see which materials keep liquids warm longest. Pupils in Year 5 devised a fair test to see what makes a difference to the rate of evaporation. Year 6 pupils undertook fair tests to explore how shadows are formed. By Year 6, all pupils spoken to had a clear view of, and could explain, what constitutes a fair test. They have good investigative skills by this stage and their knowledge and understanding are secure and are improving.
76. The quality of science teaching and learning in the school is good and is helping to raise standards but a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was also observed. Teachers plan well and co-operatively and have clear learning objectives which they share with pupils. Good use is made of ICT to support the learning and all teachers were seen using the interactive whiteboards. Though not all teachers are fully confident with them, and there were few examples seen of pupils themselves using them, the interactive whiteboards do provide stimulation and help make explanations and demonstrations clear. Relationships are very good and this helps to foster the positive attitudes that pupils have; they enjoy the science lessons and want to learn. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and most employ good behaviour management strategies that help keep pupils well focused. However, there were examples of a lack of consistency, which meant that pupils became rather noisy and time was wasted in trying to re-establish the focus of the lesson. Some of the teaching was a little too teacher-directed, which led to a narrow and limited focus and lost opportunities to sufficiently extend the more able pupils. The support given to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good and the teaching assistants support them very well. However, on one occasion, a pupil with very little English was unable to take any effective part in the lesson because there was no support and no provision had been made.

77. Teachers know their pupils well and good use is made both of the unit assessments and of analysing test results to identify and address areas of weakness. It is on the basis of these analyses that booster classes are run to help improve pupils' performance. However, there is some doubt as to the accuracy of some of the teacher assessments, an issue that has been identified by the science co-ordinator. The marking seen in the pupils' books was very basic and mostly consisted of a tick and an initial, with occasional, and sometimes vague, comments. There is a policy about quality marking of pieces of work but there was no evidence that this was being consistently adhered to. So pupils are not always helped to understand what they know and how they can improve.
78. The science co-ordinator has a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She monitors, leads and manages the subject well and has helped raise the profile of science and also introduced well-focused strategies to raise standards. Literacy and numeracy are well supported and there are good links with other subjects, including art and design, and design and technology. Good use is made of the environmental area. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards for Years 3 to 6 are above the national expectations as a result of very good teaching. Pupils' achievement is very good.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 start from a low base and their standards are in line with national expectations. Their achievement is very good because of very good teaching.
- The co-ordinator is experienced and provides very good leadership and management.
- The priorities for future development are appropriate.

Commentary

79. Standards are as expected by Year 2 and above expectations by Year 6. The pupils achieve very well throughout the school. The number of computers is sufficient. Each class has its own computers and additional laptops are brought in when available to use ICT skills in other subjects. All pupils regularly use the computer suite. Year 2 pupils used a program well to design their art work in the style of Mondrian. In one very good lesson, pupils were using roamers to understand that control devices must be programmed. They were able to give commands to go forward, backward and to do a ninety-degree turn. They achieved very well in their ICT skills and attained the expected levels of standards. However, lack of literacy and numeracy skills hindered progress. Year 3 pupils use the CD-ROM very well to find information and use the computer to write their character descriptions. More able pupils save, amend and retrieve text competently. Year 6 pupils can mix text and graphics for PowerPoint presentations and are competent at importing graphics from the Internet. The pupils experience a good range of opportunities to develop their ICT skills in word-processing, graphics, using e-mail, the Internet, data handling and control and modelling. Year 6 pupils use Excel and work on spreadsheets to find out the cost of their shopping. They use the digital camera to take photographs, for example, when they go on their residential visit. Additional classes for gifted and talented pupils and

an ICT club after school hours support pupils' learning in the subject very well. More able pupils have created pages on the school website.

80. The above average standards in Year 3 to 6 are the result of very good teaching. Teachers have a very good understanding of pupils' previous learning in ICT and they build on this very effectively. They plan lessons very well and pupils know exactly what they are learning. Teacher assistants are used well to support work and help pupils to concentrate on their tasks. The co-ordinator does not have the responsibility of a class and is used very effectively to support other teachers through demonstrating, sharing teaching, and monitoring lessons. This has helped staff confidence so that they ably support pupils and extend the pupils' learning.
81. The co-ordinator's leadership and management are very good. He has a very good view of the working of the subject across the school. All teachers have had training in ICT and those less confident are supported well. Assessment in the subject is good. For example, a piece of work at the end of each unit is assessed. The priority to develop the use of class computers to extend pupils' learning in other subjects is appropriate at the stage of development the school is at and the co-ordinator, with support from a colleague, is working very well to establish this.
82. The school has made good improvement from the previous inspection. The school has maintained above average standards and has improved the provision from good to very good. The quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and leadership and management has improved from satisfactory to very good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. Pupils make good use of ICT skills in several curriculum areas. Pupils use their literacy skills and mix text and graphics. They use their word-processing skills across many subjects. The Internet and CD-ROMs are used for research in all subjects. Year 6 multimedia presentations are of high quality. Pupils use computers in mathematics to improve learning in number, shape and data handling. The pupils use their ICT skills well in science when they investigate, compare results and communicate findings in text, tabular and graphic forms. In art and design, pupils draw pictures related to their topics and have used the digital camera to take self-portraits and manipulate images. In design and technology, they have imported pictures of birds and used computers to design bird tables.

HUMANITIES

Geography

84. Only two lessons were seen in geography. Therefore it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision or the quality of teaching. However, the evidence in pupils' books indicates that standards attained by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are at the expected levels and achievement is good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. This is because the recommendations of the previous inspection have been followed and the school now has planning in place that develops pupils' skills progressively.
85. In two lessons in Year 3 the pupils made good gains in learning about weather in different parts of the world such as the Caribbean and Antarctica because the

teachers presented the lessons in lively, interesting ways that involved and challenged all pupils.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards across the school are in line with national expectations.
- The school is developing good links with other subjects.

Commentary

86. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain the expected levels and their achievement is good. Pupils in Year 6 have studied the 1960s and have enjoyed interviewing other people about their personal memories of these years. Younger pupils in Year 2 have learned about Florence Nightingale and looked at how children's toys have changed over the years.
87. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection and these ranged from satisfactory to very good. The pupils were interested and enthusiastic because of the teachers' good planning and secure knowledge. In a very good lesson following a visit to the National Portrait Gallery, pupils in Year 5 were keen to learn about the Tudors and were gaining a good knowledge about King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I from opportunities they had been given to use portraits of these monarchs as sources of historical evidence. The school is developing good links with ICT as pupils carry out research in history and both videos and reference books are also used in their studies. Year 3 and Year 5 pupils have extended their literacy skills by writing about the Romans and the Tudors respectively.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Awareness of, and respect for, different faiths and cultures are developed effectively.
- Pupils are encouraged to think about and reflect on issues, which makes the subject relevant to their needs.
- Marking does not show pupils how to improve.

COMMENTARY

88. Religious education was identified as a key issue at the last inspection and the school addressed this issue well. All classes are now taught religious education, the policy and scheme of work are in place and standards have improved. Improvement overall since the last inspection has been good.
89. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 and the amount of written work is quite limited, as much religious education is approached through discussion. A scrutiny of the work available indicates that standards are at about the level expected

of the locally agreed syllabus. On the basis of four lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 and a work scrutiny, standards are secure and as expected.

90. Pupils in Year 3 examined portraits of Jesus and reflected upon what the artists were trying to portray. This required some perceptive reflection and the pupils were able to talk about what different people thought about Jesus before producing their own portraits, concentrating not on 'accuracy' but upon trying to reveal the person. Year 4 pupils looked at various holy books, including the Bible, the Torah, the Q'uran and the Guru Granth Sahib. Sharing of, and respect for, different faiths and cultures was evident; this is a strong feature of the work in religious education. In a Year 6 study of Christianity, and in particular the Ten Commandments, once again the sharing of faiths was evident through the links made by both teacher and pupils to Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. Reflection was emphasised, with pupils encouraged to think about relevance and meaning in relation to their own experiences.
91. In the lessons observed, the teaching was good overall and some was very good. Lessons are well planned and teachers work well together. There are good links with other subjects and religious education supports literacy well, with opportunities for extended writing and good development of religious vocabulary. However, much of the marking is limited to ticks and does not help pupils to improve. Good use is made of ICT to support the subject, with the interactive whiteboards being used well to stimulate discussion and ideas. Teachers are good role models and encourage positive relationships.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' skills are developing well, and they use a range of media.
- Good curricular links exist with other subjects.

Commentary

92. Standards in art and design are in line with national expectations by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This is not as good as at the time of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be above national expectations. This is partly due to less time being spent on art and design and more on English and mathematics in order to raise standards in these core subjects. Pupils are offered a variety of experiences to learn, develop and display skills using a variety of media, such as sketching, painting, and opportunities to try painting in the style of other artists. Throughout the school, art is linked very well with work in other subjects and cross-curricular activities are encouraged; for example, work in Year 3 on Roman mosaics relates to the pupils' work in history.
93. Pupils' work is displayed to a high standard and is a major influence in the positive learning environment around the school. There are some good examples in Year 6 of sketches in the style of Henry Moore. ICT is also used well to support pupils' learning in this subject.

94. The art club which is run after school is very popular and allows pupils to experience the subject in greater depth.

Design and technology

95. This subject was sampled and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards or provision. Very little completed work was available and no lessons were observed. The school plans to teach this subject in depth later in the year. This was also the case at the time of the previous two inspections. Resources are satisfactory. There are some examples of pupils designing and making hand puppets in Year 2 and learning how to do running stitch. This sewing work is continued, for example, when pupils make fish cushions in Year 4.

Music

96. This subject was sampled and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards or provision. The available evidence, including two lessons, indicates that teaching is at least good and that pupils achieve well. They sing well in assemblies. In the two music lessons observed, the teaching and learning were either good or very good. Lessons had a clear focus and were both challenging and enjoyable, the teachers had good subject knowledge, and the pupils responded well to the interesting range of musical activities in which they engaged.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Throughout the school, pupils are well briefed on health and safety matters and are aware of the effect exercise has on the body.
- Residential visits for Year 6 provide good opportunities to extend and complement school-based activities.
- Pupils achieve very well in competitive sport.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

97. Standards in physical education are above those expected nationally in Year 2 and well above in Year 6. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection when standards were judged to be similar to those found nationally.
98. Over time, both in lessons and through a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, pupils develop confidence, self-discipline and other personal qualities, such as dependency and supporting their peers. In the lessons observed in both Year 2 and Year 6, all pupils displayed very positive attitudes towards this subject and they exhibit similar commitment when representing the school in competitive sport. They are aware of the need to warm-up and cool-down and they handle equipment with care.

They acquire many skills, such as spatial awareness and using their bodies to simulate cats, as was seen in a Year 2 dance lesson. Pupils benefit from a well-balanced curriculum that offers a wide range of elements including gymnastics, games, athletics, dance and swimming. These are extended for Year 6 pupils when they attend a residential week offering different activities, which enhance and complement the physical education curriculum.

99. In Year 2, the teaching and learning are good. Teaching and learning are very good in Year 6 due to the specialist teaching provided. Teachers consider the individual needs of pupils very well and provide opportunities for them to measure and record their own standards so that they can compete against their own previous best performance in order to improve. Teachers provide opportunities for the pupils to work in pairs to evaluate each other's performance and to develop strong partnerships to promote social interaction and high quality relationships. The management of pupil behaviour, subject expertise and resources, contribute to the high standards being achieved. In swimming, for example, 90 per cent of pupils can swim 25 metres unaided.
100. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The school delivers a very extensive physical education programme. It addresses many aspects of the elements provided, enabling pupils to record their own standards and progress. Resources are good overall and accommodation is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

101. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship, with good use being made of circle time on a regular basis. The learning support mentor also uses circle time with classes or groups of pupils to help deal with specific problems and issues which may arise. There is a good planned programme of work, which covers various relevant elements such as relationships, responsibility, hygiene and bullying. Aspects of this subject are also covered in science, religious education and during assemblies. In the Foundation Stage, personal, social and emotional development is taught well and underlies many of the well-planned activities. Relationships are good and there is a very strong staff commitment to making sure that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life, helping to create the positive school ethos.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>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 | 2 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 5 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 2 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 1 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| The leadership and management of the school | 2 |
| The governance of the school | 2 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 2 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 2 |
| The effectiveness of management | 2 |

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