

INSPECTION REPORT

HAWKSMOOR SCHOOL

Thamesmead, London

LEA area: Greenwich

Unique reference number: 100197

Headteacher: Mrs B Brammer

Lead inspector: Ms R Frith

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 November 2004

Inspection number: 266976

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	453
School address:	Bentham Road Thamesmead London
Postcode:	SE28 8AS
Telephone number:	020 8310 2140
Fax number:	020 2311 0262
Appropriate authority:	Local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Lewis
Date of previous inspection:	17 May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hawksmoor School is a larger than average size foundation primary school. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds but overall, the socio-economic status of families is below average with an above average percentage of pupils receiving free school meals. When children join the school, they bring with them a wide range of experiences and abilities but overall, their attainment is well below that usually seen for children of this age, particularly in their language and personal and social development. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average and five pupils have a statement of special educational need because they need considerable help with their learning. Those receiving additional support mainly have social, emotional, behavioural, speech, communication or moderate learning difficulties. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and approximately 35 per cent have been identified as coming from homes where English is not the first language. This percentage is much higher than that seen in many schools. Currently, six pupils are receiving additional specialist support because they are at the early stages of learning English. Pupil mobility is higher than that seen in similar schools nationally with only just over a half of the pupils in last year's Year 6 cohort having spent all their time in the school. Over the last two years three teachers have left the school and two joined. Since November 2003, there has not been a deputy headteacher permanently in the school. At the time of the inspection, there was a part-time interim deputy headteacher and a temporary seconded deputy headteacher in post. The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities initiative, the Primary Strategy Leadership Programme, Sure Start, the DFES Wider Opportunities Music Pilot and the DFES EAL Pilot. The school received the Curriculum Award in 1997, the F A Charter Standard in 2002 and Investors in People in 2003. Staff have just heard that the school has been awarded Healthy Schools status.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Lead inspector	Foundation stage Geography History
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
24097	Grant Pedrick	Team inspector	Science Physical education
20063	Gerard Slamon	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Music

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. The headteacher has successfully created a good team of professionals who work hard to provide a secure and supportive environment where pupils are encouraged to do their best and enjoy their learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and this helps pupils to achieve well in most subjects. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching and learning are good and generally help pupils to achieve well. However, there is insufficient challenge for pupils in science, particularly the most capable, and too few opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills.
- Pupils' personal qualities are developed well and this leads to good behaviour, good relationships and good attitudes to learning.
- Despite good efforts by the staff to encourage pupils to arrive at school regularly and on time, the attendance rate last year was just below average.
- The school's ethos is good and pupils are presented with a good curriculum which enhances their experiences and opportunities. Good support is provided for those who need help with their learning. The layout of the accommodation restricts learning in some instances.
- Leadership by the headteacher is very good. Leadership by senior managers and the overall management of the school are good.
- Good systems are in place to ensure that pupils are well cared for and that the school is a safe place in which to learn.

Overall, the school has shown good improvement since the last inspection, particularly over the last year or so. This is a reflection of new leadership and management systems, and a renewed focus on raising standards. Staff have successfully addressed most issues identified in the last report, but recognise the need to continue to raise standards, particularly in science. Key features of the recent rapid improvement include the standards achieved in English and mathematics, the quality of teaching, the provision for information and communication technology and for pupils with special educational needs and the development of the Foundation Stage.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall, pupils achieve well during their time in school. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children have made particularly good progress in their personal, social and communication skills. Nearly all are likely to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning, although a few are not likely to reach the standards expected for their age in their early reading and writing. In Years 1 to 6, most pupils achieve well and those in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are working at average levels in reading, writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education. Standards in pupils' spoken English are below average. Pupils with special

educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language achieve well because their needs are quickly identified and effective support provided. The most capable pupils usually achieve well, apart from in science where the work is not sufficiently challenging.

Provision to develop pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, is good. Most pupils enjoy school and show interest in their learning. Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and expect them to work hard. This results in pupils behaving well and developing good attitudes and relationships.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school and the quality of teaching are good, overall. Throughout the whole school, teachers and support staff have high expectations of pupils' personal and social education, which helps them settle well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally use this well to gain the interest of the pupils and encourage them to learn. Expectation and challenge are good for most pupils. Although there have been recent improvements in science, teaching has not been consistently good in the past and pupils, particularly the most capable, have not achieved as well as they should. Staff promote equality of opportunity well and are particularly effective in supporting those pupils who have English as an additional language or have specific learning needs.

The headteacher and staff have worked hard to develop good links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges. The curriculum is good, with particular strengths in the way staff have enriched pupils' experiences by the provision of additional learning opportunities. The accommodation is unsatisfactory overall because the layout sometimes makes it difficult for teachers to move around the class or to use the full range of teaching and learning methods. Staff ensure that pupils are all included, well cared for and feel supported. Pupils' views are taken into account well so they become involved in school developments.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good and governance of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher gives very good leadership based on her overall vision for the school and her strong desire for improvement. The headteacher, senior staff and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are fully committed to running a school where all pupils are included and helped to develop well, both academically and socially.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have positive views about the school and are pleased with the quality of education provided. They believe that teaching is good and their children make good progress. Nearly all pupils like school. They think teaching is good and staff help them if they have problems with their work. They feel well supported and are confident that any personal problems they might have will be taken seriously by staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise the teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in science and, in particular, provide more challenging work for the most capable pupils.
- Promote pupils' development of a wider vocabulary and improve their speaking skills.
- Continue to work with parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time.
- Take appropriate steps to improve the layout of the accommodation so that it supports modern teaching and learning approaches.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils achieve well and by the time they leave school have attained average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in science have been well below average for the last couple of years.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of the good teaching and their good attitudes to learning.
- The 2004 national test results for pupils in Year 2 show a significant improvement in standards.
- In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 6 reached average standards in English and mathematics but well below average standards in science.
- Pupils' speaking skills are below average.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because their needs are identified early and good quality additional support is provided.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well and reach standards in line with their levels of English acquisition.
- Higher attaining pupils usually achieve well apart from in science.

Commentary

1. On entry to school, children display a wide range of attainment and have had a variety of experiences but overall, their attainment is well below that for children of the same age nationally, particularly in relation to their personal, social and communication skills. Each year a few pupils join the school speaking little or no English or have special educational needs and this also affects the overall standards on entry. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. Due to the quality of teaching and provision of a broad and interesting curriculum, children achieve well. Staff focus on developing their personal and social skills and on developing their speech and range of vocabulary. Progress is good so that by the time they enter Year 1, many children are working at the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in all areas of learning. A few are not likely to reach average standards in their early reading and writing.
2. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2 was above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics when compared with pupils in all schools. These results show a significant improvement from the previous year, especially in reading and writing. They also show a higher percentage of pupils gaining a level above that expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science, indicating greater challenge, particularly for more capable pupils. Overall standards in science were below average. When compared with schools with a similar number of pupils receiving free school meals, they attained well above average standards in reading and writing, above average standards in mathematics and average standards in science. These results have halted the decline in standards seen over the last couple of years and standards are now improving in line with the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (14.5)	15.8 (15.7)

writing	15.2 (13.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.2 (14.6)	16.2 (16.3)

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

3. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6 was average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. These results show an improvement in English and mathematics but indicate some underachievement in science, particularly for the most capable pupils. The proportion of pupils gaining a level higher than that expected for their age in science was just a third of the national figure. Recent improvements overall ensure that the school's rate of improvement over the last five years is above the national trend. When compared with pupils who attained similarly in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils also attained average standards in English and mathematics and well below average standards in science. Overall, these results reflect the recent improvements in teaching and provision that encourage pupils to achieve well. However, the very recent improvements in science provision have not been in place long enough for them to have impacted on overall standards. The school did not meet the unrealistic targets set for English and mathematics in 2004. This was mainly due to the high level of mobility among this cohort where only just over a half of the pupils had spent all their time in the school.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (26.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.8 (26.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	27.0 (27.3)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Evidence from this inspection indicates that overall, pupils have achieved well by the time they leave school. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently working at average levels in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards are similar to those highlighted in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' speaking skills are below those usually seen for pupils of primary school age.
5. No significant difference was noted in the achievement between boys and girls during the inspection although there have been some differences in the Year 6 national test results. For example, over the last three years, girls did better than boys in English and science and boys did better than girls in mathematics.
6. More capable pupils are generally appropriately challenged, apart from in science where teachers are not always sure of what pupils could achieve and sometimes provide work which is not particularly challenging. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection in its provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented and currently their needs are met well. Appropriate work is set in lessons and additional challenge provided through the wide range of clubs and additional activities. Pupils with special educational needs overall achieve well. They make very good progress in meeting the targets set out in their individual education plans. These targets are now very clear and manageable so that pupils achieve what is expected of them. Pupils' progress in general lessons is good. Staff mostly take account of the levels at which pupils are working but do not always consider using an appropriate range of activities to match individual needs.
7. From the information provided by the school and through observation and discussion with pupils, it is clear that there is no significant underachievement of pupils from specific minority ethnic groups. Because of the school's good focus on inclusion, all pupils have access to an

appropriate curriculum which meets their needs and helps them to achieve well. The highest achieving group has been Black-African children who frequently receive particularly good encouragement and support from their parents. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported in school so that they achieve in line with their peers and their level of English acquisition. The school's good ethos is effective in helping all pupils to succeed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Attendance is just below the national average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about the school and its activities.
- The school helps pupils become well rounded individuals.
- Too many pupils arrive late each morning.

Commentary

8. Pupils enjoy school and the many different opportunities it offers them. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 have developed good attitudes to school and good behaviour. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to take their turn and get involved with their tasks. In the playground and around the school, they are good-natured and lively. Relationships are good. Boys and girls get on well together, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix happily. Pupils of all ages respond well to adults. This positive picture has been created because the school is very successful in establishing clear boundaries for behaviour. Staff across the school have a consistent approach to discipline, which effectively takes into account the age of the pupils. In the Foundation Stage, for example, staff adopt a patient, calm manner, while at the top end of the school they insist on mature and sensible attitudes. As a result, pupils' natural exuberance rarely becomes boisterous or aggressive. There were nine temporary exclusions last year and there have been four this term. This reflects the school's firm but fair approach to unacceptable behaviour.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	179	5	0
Mixed – White and Black African	55	1	0
Black or Black British – African	59	3	0

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

9. The school lays great importance on giving pupils the chance to develop as individuals, and it does this well. The role models given by staff help pupils to know right from wrong and to function as members of a community. Beyond this, the school offers pupils opportunities to discover their talents and interests, and to recognise their own uniqueness. They can do this

through sport, for example, or music – particularly the Wider Opportunities project – or by taking on a role of responsibility, such as a reading buddy or a school council representative. Theatre group visits and drama workshops help build a feeling for the arts and for creativity. There is a deliberate emphasis on highlighting the achievement of individuals, which is evident in the good quality displays around the school, and also comes through in lessons and other activities. In the recent multicultural week, for example, pupils from all backgrounds were encouraged to think about and celebrate their heritage, and to be proud of all the very different things that make them who they are.

10. Although higher than at the time of the last inspection, attendance is now just below the national average. Unauthorised absence has risen because of the school's strictness in authorising term time holidays. Lateness is still a problem for the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. In the morning, too many families arrive after the bell has gone instead of being in the playground ready for the start of the day. This is despite the fact that the school day begins later than in most primary schools to give parents the chance to get their children in on time. As a result, many pupils have an unsettled start to their day.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	1.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall and pupils are supported well through experiencing a good curriculum and good levels of care. Links with parents, the community, other schools and colleges are all good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching assistants support the pupils well and help them to make good progress, particularly those pupils with special educational needs.
- Staff use their knowledge of the pupils, gained through thorough assessment, to plan work which ensures all are able to succeed.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and pupils respond well. This helps to create a good ethos for learning.
- The lack of space in some classrooms restricts the use of a wide range of teaching and learning approaches in line with current national practice.
- Some teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve in science, particularly the most capable pupils.

Commentary

11. Pupils generally make good progress throughout their time in school and achieve well. This is because of the good overall quality of teaching, provision of a good curriculum and the pupils' good attitudes to learning. The chart below gives an outline of the quality of lessons seen during the inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, which indicates a significant improvement since the last inspection. Following her recent appointment, the headteacher has been particularly effective in building a strong team of staff who demonstrate a consistent approach to teaching based on good subject knowledge and good knowledge of pupils' different learning styles.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 59 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	13 (22%)	34 (58%)	12 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Teachers' planning is good and a significant feature of the best lessons. Teachers are able to plan more effectively now because assessment practice has improved and they are now more aware of the next stages needed in the pupils' learning. Information is also used to track pupils' progress over time so that early intervention can take place if pupils are not seen to be achieving as well as they should. In the best lessons, teachers have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and share that with them at the start of the lesson. They provide appropriate support and challenge, which ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment maintain a good pace in their learning. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils well in lessons and encourage them to improve and work harder if they think they can. Most are also effective in indicating through their marking how pupils can improve their work.

13. Teachers are developing their practices in the light of national expectations and this is helping to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. For example, the effective management of the nursery and reception classes has resulted in a broader team approach to the planning and provision for these children. Teaching styles have been developed well so the children now receive much greater opportunities to learn through structured play. As they get older, activities and the organisation of lessons change and develop so that the children are well prepared for work in the National Curriculum. Teachers across the school have also developed their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and this, together with improved resources, has extended and improved the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The use of interactive whiteboards is providing an exciting challenge and pupils are responding well.

14. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is good. This has a significant influence on how staff manage successfully the pupils in their care. Staff are encouraging and supportive, which results in pupils becoming more confident in their abilities and what they might do to improve. Staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to these as they know what they should do. This means that time is generally used well and little lost because of the need to modify behaviour.

15. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in lessons. Where support is more effective, activities are tailored to individual needs; further time is given by teachers and teaching assistants to discuss learning objectives and activities so that a check is made on pupils' understanding. Some good examples were seen of teaching assistants working well with individual pupils and enhancing their learning. The improvements in the management of special needs provision since the last inspection has helped to raise the quality of teaching and support, thereby improving pupils' achievement. The school has improved its work with higher attaining pupils and those that are gifted and talented. More capable pupils were seen being well challenged but discussions with pupils indicate that teaching in science has not been good in the past because pupils were not sufficiently challenged. In particular, teachers were not effective in developing the pupils' scientific investigative skills and scientific thinking. Teachers are aware of differences that may occur in the responses and learning of girls and boys so try to use a wide range of methods to ensure that all are included and interested. This is, however, constrained by the lack of space in some rooms.

16. The teaching of pupils speaking English as an additional language is good and helps them to achieve well. Learning is developed well as teachers include key vocabulary in their planning and adults provide effective support. The recently appointed specialist teacher focuses mainly

on pupils when they first join the school so as to give them access to the full curriculum as quickly as possible. This is proving to be successful and an effective way of using her expertise. Those at the early stages of learning English are encouraged well and develop their confidence to speak in English. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and of different faiths and backgrounds are well supported, so that they are included in all class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their abilities. Staff are sensitive to the needs of such pupils and value the diversity within the school.

The curriculum

The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is good in breadth and balance with very good opportunities for enrichment and for learning outside the school day. Resources are satisfactory overall but the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development by senior managers is good.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and the arts, strongly enhances the curriculum and pupils' social development.
- The information and communication technology curriculum has been strengthened by the addition of a well resourced suite.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and limits teaching and learning in practical subjects.
- A disproportionate amount of time is given to swimming and this limits the time spent on other activities.
- The planned curriculum for science does not take enough account of the needs of higher attaining pupils.

Commentary

17. As part of its drive to push up standards, the school has recently strengthened curriculum planning in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology, for example. As a result, standards attained by pupils in Year 6 have risen significantly since the last inspection. There is a proper focus on English and mathematics and good use is made of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Mathematics skills are well developed and increasingly used in other subjects, including information and communication technology. Some good writing was seen in a range of subjects and the school is seeking ways to extend this provision. Setting arrangements in English and mathematics, in Year 3 to Year 6, help to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils at different stages of learning. The science curriculum meets statutory requirements, but planning takes too little account of the needs of higher attaining pupils to plan independently, choose apparatus and carry out their own experiments.
18. Planning for religious education is guided by the local agreed syllabus and meets statutory requirements. Provision for information and communication technology has significantly improved since the last inspection. Skills are progressively developed in the suite and teachers are becoming adept at identifying opportunities for pupils to use these skills across a range of subjects. Classroom computers are being upgraded to support this innovation. The school's planning for other subjects is generally good, indicating the skills to be taught and increasingly identifying links to be made between subjects. This is beginning to help ensure that all subjects are taught in sufficient depth, and in meaningful ways. An exception to this is the planning to develop pupils' speaking skills so they build systematically year-on-year. In all subjects, year group teachers plan together to provide a consistent approach to teaching and learning, although individual teachers have their own styles, matched to the needs of their classes.

19. Pupils are well prepared socially and emotionally for secondary school. The school works hard to forge good links with schools to which pupils transfer. This helps ensure a smooth transition and continuity in pupils' learning. There is a very good range of new learning interventions such as support groups to provide for pupils who need extra help and those identified as gifted or talented. Cross-curricular events, such as Multicultural Week and public performances, add enjoyment to pupils' learning and enrich their spiritual, social and cultural development. These aspects of pupils' development are also very well provided for through a very good range of extra-curricular activities, trips, visitors and visits. These include residential trips, which are very well planned to support what pupils learn in school. All pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 attend weekly swimming lessons at the local pool. This is a good example of the school's concern for the well being of its pupils but swimming sessions take up a considerable amount of curriculum time when the journey to and from the pool is taken into account. Teachers and governors have not recently considered this provision to ensure the most effective use of time.
20. The school ensures that boys and girls of different abilities and backgrounds are fully included in all curricular opportunities. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Weaknesses in basic skills, in particular reading, are well identified, assessed and monitored. Very well focused targets with effective support enable pupils to achieve well and access the full curriculum. The curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language, allowing them to achieve as well as other pupils of similar abilities. Planning ensures that, where necessary, extra support is provided for pupils speaking English as an additional language. Currently, specialist support is appropriately focused on the nursery and reception classes.
21. The school is well staffed with skilled teachers and learning support staff who make a good contribution to pupils' learning and their subsequent good achievement. Resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory overall. The indoor accommodation lacks the potential to support modern approaches to teaching and learning. Some rooms are very cramped and do not allow for adults or pupils to easily move around the room or for pupils to easily work with each other. Practical activities such as those needed to develop scientific investigation are severely restricted in some rooms. Despite this, staff, and in particular the site manager, work very hard to make the best of the accommodation.

Care, guidance and support

The attention given to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on monitoring, are good. Pupils' involvement in the development of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school cares for every child as an individual.
- Daily routines are well organised and run like clockwork, thereby ensuring a stable learning environment.
- Pupils' contributions to the life of the school are valued.
- Those pupils who experience difficulty with their learning are well supported.

Commentary

22. Good relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school help the pupils to feel secure and confident in their surroundings. These begin with good induction procedures for children starting in the nursery and for those who arrive part way through the school.

Underpinning this positive ethos is a well-structured system of monitoring the progress of individual pupils and giving them the help they need to do their best. The role of the learning mentors is especially valuable here, as they are able to provide personalised support or refer pupils on to other people who can help them, such as outside counselling services. Careful attention is given to child protection issues, and the good new initiatives developing in the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme are giving pupils a sense of how to look after themselves and make sensible decisions. Academic monitoring is developing well, for example through the new tutoring days, and this is helping pupils to think about their progress and their targets for themselves.

23. Concerns about the learning of pupils with special educational needs are identified as early as possible so that their progress can be monitored and, where appropriate, individual education plans drawn up. Pupils entering the school at a later stage are quickly assessed and where special educational needs are identified, plans are immediately drawn up for their support. Plans are reviewed regularly and both parents and children are becoming increasingly involved in target setting. Support for learning needs is well organised and focused. Pupils with emotional and behavioural needs are well supported through the school's policy for managing behaviour and very effective nurture groups such as those run by learning mentors. Pupils with statements receive their full entitlement of support.
24. Recently introduced procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils speaking English as an additional language are good and enable the school to provide support where it is needed. The co-ordinator provides good advice for teachers and support staff so that they have a good understanding of the needs of these pupils.
25. The school's structured approach to care and guidance is evident too in the way daily routines are organised. Breaks and lunchtimes are thoughtfully planned and systematically organised, and as a result everything runs smoothly. Playgrounds are zoned for particular activities, so that everyone has a fair share of the space and no games dominate. Midday supervisors are recruited from among the learning support assistants, so that they know the pupils and the pupils know them. Learning mentors oversee proceedings. There are clubs for those pupils who need to avoid the liveliness of the playground, or outdoor activities, such as dancing, for those who want some structure to their time.
26. The school recognises the unique contribution its pupils can make to its life, and gives them many opportunities to play their part. Older pupils have the chance to do their bit, as prefects, head boy and girl, peer mediators or reading buddies. All pupils have their say through completing pupil questionnaires, and elect their friends to represent them on the school council. This is already making an impact on the school. Last year, for example, pupils helped to redraft the prospectus, while this year they are working on much needed improvements to the Key Stage 2 playground.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to involve parents in its work.
- Written information for parents is clear and helpful.
- The school makes the most of what the local area and schools have to offer.

Commentary

27. The school does its best to enable parents to be partners in their children's education. Staff are readily accessible at the beginning and end of each day so that parents can chat to them and discuss any worries. Parents are encouraged to make their own contribution through the newly revived Parent Teacher Association or as classroom helpers, and those who do are very enthusiastic about getting involved. The school helps parents too, by offering them very affordable childcare facilities before and after school. The school is always keen to sort out parents' individual concerns, and has begun to seek out their views systematically through questionnaires.
28. Information for parents has been successfully reviewed to make it more readable and useful. The prospectus, governors' annual report, newsletters and curriculum letters are all well presented and paint a realistic picture of what is going on at the school. Newsletters are bright and eye-catching, but are not sent out very frequently, as some parents have commented. Reports to parents on their children's progress are good. They give parents a clear indication of how well their children are doing for their age, which is very helpful. However, some use too much jargon, which is off-putting for parents, particularly those who do not speak English as their first language. The recently appointed co-ordinator for English as an additional language has a clear plan to involve parents in promoting multilingualism through inviting them to record well known stories in the languages represented in the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs receive and sign copies of individual education plans. The school is encouraging them to become more closely involved in how their children's needs are being supported and the reviews of progress made by them.
29. The school uses its connections within the local area to expand on what it can offer its pupils and to broaden pupils' horizons. Close partnership with the neighbouring secondary school has boosted pupils' learning in, for example, physical education and drama, through work with specialist teachers and facilities. The school takes full advantage of what is available on its doorstep with visits to, for example, City Airport, Plumstead Museum and places in Kent and Essex. These visits help bring pupils' topic work to life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good, the governance of the school is satisfactory. The leadership of the recently appointed headteacher is very good and is a major factor in the recent improvements. The leadership of senior staff is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The drive and vision of the headteacher are based on a desire for better standards.
- Information gathered from the recent, rigorous self-evaluation is being used effectively to help plan future developments.
- The leadership of senior managers is clearly focused on raising attainment for all pupils and improving the quality of provision.
- Changes and absences in the senior management team have placed greater strains on permanent managers.
- Good approaches to financial management are helping the school to achieve its educational priorities.

Commentary

30. The recently appointed headteacher is a major factor in the recent rapid improvement in the school. Her very good leadership has resulted in improvements in standards and the development of key senior staff. Leadership and management roles are developing well despite the problems caused by the lack of a permanent senior management team member

being in school. Senior staff work hard to compensate for changes in the team and, with governors, are beginning to look to the future when roles will be reviewed. There is a sense of shared purpose, some very good teamwork and a clear shared view of future developments.

31. The majority of curriculum co-ordinators have a clear vision for their subject areas. They are involved in monitoring their subject areas through medium term planning, pupils' work and observing an agreed number of lessons per term. The co-ordinators have a set time out of class each week for their subject management. Performance management is well focused on raising attainment and is very effective. This, together with the very good continuing professional development of staff is helping to improve teaching and learning across the school.
32. The school is keen to ensure that all pupils are fully involved and able to make the most of what is offered. The provision for special educational needs is very well managed. There has been very good progress since the last inspection when progress was restricted by the unsatisfactory quality of individual education plans. The co-ordinator has led developments well and helps to ensure that needs are identified as early as possible and the fullest support given to meet them. Teaching assistants are provided with regular in-school and other specialist training to enable them to develop more fully the skills required for their developing support role. Provision for pupils having English as an additional language is well managed by the recently appointed, experienced co-ordinator. Part of her action plan is to build up a bank of bilingual books and tapes which reflect the languages represented in the school.
33. The headteacher's vision is key to the work of all the staff and this is reflected in the way everyone is involved in planning the school development strategy. This vision is shared by all staff and governors. Governors are beginning to support and challenge the school appropriately. They are well informed and are beginning to have a focus to their visits to the school. The school improvement plan is appropriate and is a very useful document for driving improvements successfully. Following a thorough self-review exercise, carried out by senior staff, some detailed subject action plans, for example, in mathematics, are supporting improvements in key areas of learning. Adequate financial resources have been made available through a bidding system. This ensure that all necessary resources are purchased to support the raising of standards. The school has good approaches to financial management and staff have developed a contingency plan to ensure that current provision will be maintained when they no longer receive the transition grant. Finances are managed efficiently and effectively, with best value principles applied well when considering financial expenditure. The governing body ensures that financial resources, including specific grants and additional funding, are used well. Overall, the school provides good value for money because standards are rising and pupils achieve well, and the ethos for learning, the quality of provision and teaching are all good.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,623,558	Balance from previous year	4,126
Total expenditure	1,552,724	Balance carried forward to the next	74,960
Expenditure per pupil	3,145		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection, particularly in the reception classes so that current practice generally reflects national guidance well. Good leadership and management encourage good liaison between the nursery and reception, ensuring a continuity of teaching and learning in line with the age and experience of the children. Planning is good and ensures that appropriate time is spent on both adult led and child initiated activities. Information gained from assessing children is used systematically to provide a planned curriculum to ensure good, consistent learning across all areas. All staff assess the children's learning on a day-to-day basis through careful observations and use this information successfully to build up an individual profile of learning for each child.

Staff make the most of the resources outside but it is difficult for reception teachers, as the play area is away from the classrooms. Reception teachers, however, have developed the large indoor area well. There is a good range of interesting activities where children develop their confidence to try things out and co-operate well with others. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good overall. Teachers and support staff form a good team and use their good knowledge of how young children learn to provide activities which stimulate learning in all areas. Teaching is generally good but the school recognises the need to provide further training in the nursery to ensure greater consistency of good quality interaction with children. In both the nursery and the reception classes, provision for pupils with special educational needs is generally good. This results in these children making good progress and achieving well. Children for whom English is an additional language also achieve well because their needs are recognised, and good support is given to extend their language and ensure that they fully understand what is said to them and what they are expected to do.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good, enabling children to achieve well.
- Most children are on course to meet the expected standard by the time they reach Year 1.
- Links with parents are good and almost all children start school confidently.
- Children are encouraged to develop good behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Commentary

34. Many children enter the nursery with personal and social behaviour which is well below that usually seen for children of this age. However, due to good support and teaching, by the end of the reception year children have developed good attitudes to learning and good behaviour which help them to settle to their work and play and to concentrate well. Teachers and support staff remind children of the importance of sharing and taking turns, and provide activities which promote these skills. A good induction programme ensures that children generally settle quickly in both the nursery and reception classes and the early involvement of parents encourages the development of good parental support. Children develop very good attitudes to learning because they are interested in what they are doing. They are encouraged to persevere and to complete activities before moving on, and levels of concentration are often good. Children co-operate well as they share equipment and record what they have seen, for example, when acting out the role of the police and trying to find the *bad mice* following the reading of Beatrix Potter's books. There are good opportunities for

children to make choices and to develop confidence and independence. Relationships are good. Children respond well to the staff because they are confident that adults will listen to them and treat them fairly.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and this helps children to achieve well.
- Children receive good support from the teaching assistants and specialist teacher.
- A few children are unlikely to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Letter sounds are taught thoroughly, which gives children a good foundation for learning to read and write.

Commentary

35. Most pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and many reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. A few are unlikely to reach this standard because a significant number of children have well below average standards on entry to school and some children are learning English as an additional language. Most staff adopt a satisfactory range of strategies in the nursery to encourage the development of the children's oracy and literacy skills. However, more training is needed to ensure that all staff are able to recognise when to intervene, extend the use of vocabulary and encourage children to speak more. Some children in the nursery do not readily talk with each other unless prompted. The specialist teacher is very effective in encouraging children learning English as an additional language. In the reception classes, children were encouraged to speak clearly when looking at pictures and trying to distinguish between old and new objects. Most reception children have the confidence to speak with adults and each other. Children's speaking skills are also systematically developed through the provision of specific activities, such as in the imaginative play areas in nursery and reception. Children respond well to stories, as they are encouraged to listen and put forward their views. Children benefit from specific sessions when they learn the sounds that letters make and use this knowledge when trying to sound out unfamiliar words. On entry to the nursery, children develop their writing skills by learning how to hold the pencil correctly, recognising and writing their own names and sending postcards. This is extended in the reception classes when children write for a variety of purposes.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and help children to achieve well.
- Many children are likely to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- A good range of activities reinforces the children's learning.

Commentary

36. The children's mathematical skills and understanding are taught during specific sessions, and consolidated through daily play activities. In the nursery, the children's number recognition was developing well as the teacher worked with a group using the story of *Little Miss Muffet* to identify numbers and count to ten. In the reception classes, children have daily numeracy lessons which help to prepare them for work in Year 1. In a good lesson observed, children's counting skills were reinforced and the concepts of 'more' or 'less' developed as the teacher used a range of different toy fruit in baskets and careful questioning to encourage the correct use of the terms. Children later consolidated their learning by playing in the well-resourced shop and acting out the roles of shopkeeper and customer. This also developed their speaking skills well. Because these activities were interesting, children sustained good levels of concentration and behaved very well. Support staff work well with children who experience difficulty with their learning and encourage them to try hard.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well.
- Most children in the current reception year are likely to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Many children are confident when using the computers.

Commentary

37. It was only possible to observe a limited number of activities during the inspection, but teachers' planning and classroom observations show that children enjoy a good range of experiences over time. In the nursery, children have opportunities to develop an understanding of transport through playing outside in a marked area where they are encouraged to fill their vehicles with petrol, follow the marked routes and park correctly. They also develop their understanding of family life through imaginative play when they interact by cleaning the house or making meals for each other. In a good reception lesson, children achieved well as they developed an understanding of the meaning of old and new and differences between the past and the present. This was achieved through good teaching which focused on children looking at pictures. This developed their observational skills well. Comments from the children showed that they had listened well and clearly understood. Children in reception also developed their early science skills well when looking for minibeasts and a good display encouraged interest in this activity following their visit to an environmental centre. This type of opportunity widens their experiences and is effective in developing their use of language. Due to effective teaching, children are confident and keen to use the computers.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children reach standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- The outdoor area for the children is good but reception children do not have the same opportunity to benefit from this all of the time as their classes are not adjacent to it.
- Children develop their physical skills well by, for example, playing with small equipment, riding bicycles and having formal physical education sessions.

Commentary

38. Teaching, learning and achievement are good overall. Teachers and support staff in the nursery provide outdoor activities which develop the children's skills well and planning indicates how skills are to be developed over time. Younger pupils in the nursery have a satisfactory awareness of space, avoiding collisions as they work. All children follow instructions well. The area outside is well developed and provides good opportunities for children to balance, run and climb. In addition, short sessions provide the children with opportunities to take part in action rhymes and songs. Children in reception have weekly formal lessons which are planned to develop their skills systematically over time and get them used to working within the National Curriculum. Activities are provided which encourage children to practise their manipulative skills, such as using scissors and construction materials. In the reception classes, many of the daily activities include an element of manual dexterity, for example using scissors and painting. Adults encourage independence and promote confidence by praising effort.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception classes enjoy their creative work and achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are good and children are likely to reach the standards set nationally for children of their age at the end of the reception year.
- Good links are made with other areas of learning.

Commentary

39. In the nursery, children are introduced to a satisfactory range of activities which helps them to develop their creative skills. In some instances, greater involvement with adults would develop their skills more readily. Children enjoy painting and talk about their work, explaining what they have painted and the colours they have chosen. They also like to use the range of resources offered and give reasons for their choice of materials. Their work on display enhances the learning environment and encourages their self-esteem through the valuing of their work. In the reception classes, children's making skills are developed well as they create mice out of clay. This work links very well with their literacy work and their creative skills are very well developed because teaching is so good. The teacher encourages the correct use of tools so that children mould the clay well and attach materials to elaborate the facial features. Teaching was also particularly good when children worked hard to make a house and furniture for their mice. Children dress up and use the imaginative play areas well and this encourages their social development. Children also receive formal music sessions. In one seen with reception children the teacher was effective in encouraging children to understand the term 'pitch' by linking this to the story of the Three Bears and using different voices for the characters. They thoroughly enjoyed this and responded very well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, and as a result pupils achieve well.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Recent developments are helping to raise standards and achievement.
- Spoken language skills are below average.

Commentary

40. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards in reading and writing are average. The school has worked hard to stem the recent decline in standards. Initiatives put into place by the school, particularly in reading, are proving effective. Although pupils are attentive and listen well, standards of spoken English are below average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well due to the carefully focused support each receives. In Years 3 to 6, a significant proportion of pupils move into and out of the school, but good achievement is nevertheless maintained by the careful use of assessment to identify starting points for future learning. There has been some disruption to staffing and to leadership and management since the last inspection. Taking this and recent developments into account, there has been good improvement since that time.
41. During the inspection, observed standards in speaking were overall below average. This is a weaker area that the school has identified for development. Questioning and discussion in lessons was not always sufficiently focused or rigorous enough to promote the development and fuller understanding of vocabulary and spoken language. A wide and enriched curriculum is helping to compensate for poorer language skills.
42. The school has paid particular attention to raising reading standards. Guided reading sessions provide good opportunities for pupils to develop comprehension and other reading skills. New sets of books, often with accompanying computerised comprehension work, have been introduced, especially with regard to boys' interest and reading preferences. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home. Phonic skills (where pupils match the sound to individual letters or groups of letters) are now carefully and consistently taught and were particularly evident when Year 2 pupils tackled new words in their reading. 'Catch up' programmes have helped older pupils improve their reading skills. The school gives some encouragement to older pupils to widen their reading experiences and range of authors, for example through book clubs. However, the cramped classroom accommodation leaves little space for attractive book corners to promote interest in reading.
43. Samples of work show that the skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught consistently and appropriately. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the use of these skills through their individual and group targets. By Year 6, pupils are starting to set their work out in paragraphs, but their sentences at times lack interest and description, due to their narrower knowledge and experience of language. Handwriting skills are now taught, but this is not yet fully evident in pupils' written work, with some older pupils, still using only an unjoined script.
44. In the lessons observed, teaching and learning were good overall and sometimes very good. These stronger lessons were very well prepared so that a good pace to learning was maintained, with little time wasted. They provided good opportunities for speaking and listening. Teaching assistants worked well with their groups, checking pupils' understanding through further group questioning and discussion before starting activities. Activities were challenging. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils had to develop similes to describe different seasons. Although the activity was very well introduced and developed, some lack of language and life experiences, despite very good teaching, restricted the progress made.
45. All lessons were well managed. Teachers have good relationships with their classes and value all pupils' responses. As a result their confidence is built up and they are generally keen to work. Lessons are mostly well planned within year groups, with a sharing of teacher expertise

and experience. They have clear learning intentions that are shared with pupils, so that they know the purpose of lessons and what is expected of them in their learning. Marking is mostly constructive and often refers to these objectives, along with individual targets, when making comments for success and improvement.

46. The two co-ordinators have a clear picture of the provision for English throughout the school. Through monitoring of planning, lessons and pupils' work, areas both for individual teacher and whole-school development are being identified and addressed. For example, demonstration lessons have been given and staff meetings held on planning. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress have been introduced, allowing areas of underachievement particularly to be identified and supported through programmes such as Early and Additional Literacy Support.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. The development of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Attempts are made to ensure that pupils are offered opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills through subjects. However, these do not always take sufficient account of the levels at which individual pupils are working. More needs to be done on developing the spoken language and vocabulary related to subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as a result of the good teaching.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and work well in lessons.
- Extra classes for those who need more help and for those who are gifted prepare pupils well for national tests and for the next stage in their education.
- Teaching assistants give good support to pupils' learning.
- An analysis of pupils' work shows an over dependence on worksheets in some classes, and the structure of some lessons does not allow sufficient time for pupils to work independently and to complete a sufficient amount of work.
- The design of the accommodation limits opportunities for practical activities.

Commentary

48. At the time of the last inspection, pupils in Year 2 attained above average standards while pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were below average. Inspection evidence shows that standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are close to the national average. Standards in Year 6 vary year-on-year and are impeded by the significant number of higher attaining pupils who leave the school and the number of lower attaining pupils who replace them. Despite this, the school works hard to help all pupils achieve well during their time in the school and pupils now achieve better than they did when the school was last inspected. Improvement is directly due to the very good leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinators are very good role models and have improved the quality of teaching through close monitoring so as to achieve consistency of practice. They ensure that the programme of work is covered thoroughly and systematically. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress and of targets set for their improvement, as well as a thorough analysis of test results, help the co-ordinators and teachers to quickly identify areas of weakness in pupils' learning and within the curriculum. As a result, the school has identified the need to further develop data handling skills in meaningful ways in other subjects, including information and communication technology. All other aspects of the subject are given due attention.

49. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good. Teaching assistants are effective at all stages of lessons. In a very good lesson, less able pupils in Year 6 achieved highly when using their knowledge of place value to partition and add numbers such as 621 and 389. By the end of the lesson many discovered that the answer 1010 could be verified by calculating $1010 - 621$ to get 389. Pupils with special educational needs were very well supported, worked hard and achieved as well as other pupils. There was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Teachers are good at challenging all pupils to answer questions and ensure that girls and boys work together at all levels of attainment. Setting arrangements in Years 3 to 6, based on very good use of assessment, are effective in providing for pupils at different stages of learning. Classes for those who need extra support and 'Master Classes' at the local secondary school, are well used to raise standards and to help pupils prepare for secondary transfer.
50. Teaching and learning in lessons observed were invariably good or better. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and plan their lessons well in year groups. They have a good understanding of what they want pupils to learn. They share these learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons so that they are aware of what they are to learn, and, at the end of lessons, ask pupils how well they think they have done. Most teachers structure their lessons well, and use a good range of interesting teaching methods, which result in pupils working hard at all stages. In the very good lessons, all pupils benefit from a high proportion of direct teaching during all parts of the lesson and a very good pace to learning is maintained. Achievement in these lessons is very high. In a highly structured Year 2 lesson on sequences of odd and even numbers, for example, because of the balance between direct teaching and independent learning, pupils achieved highly to answer questions such as 'What three odd numbers come *before* 97?' 'What two even numbers come *after* 36?' In those lessons that are otherwise good, the pace of learning is not so high because teachers give extended explanations to the whole class rather than quietly teaching and challenging pupils at different levels as they work on group or individual tasks. An over-dependence on worksheets in Year 3 deprives pupils of opportunities to present their work in a methodical, organised way or to see the progress they are making. However, in all lessons the work is stimulating and interesting. This motivates pupils and they respond by working hard and showing good levels of enjoyment. Many report that mathematics is their favourite subject. The very good relationships established by adults within their classes, and their positive use of praise encourage pupils to succeed. Teachers throughout the school regularly mark pupils' work and written comments are well used to show pupils how they can improve. There is a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. The accommodation restricts opportunities for active learning in the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. Pupils are given increasing opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects and consequently develop an appreciation of the practical uses of the subject. Good examples were seen of Year 4 pupils applying their data handling skills when investigating friction in science and of Year 2 pupils measuring and identifying shapes when making houses in design and technology. Year 5 pupils were seen working on spreadsheets as part of their information and communication technology work. The co-ordinators' action plan identifies how the use of mathematics in other subjects is to be further developed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are currently satisfactory and rising due to the recent improvements.
- Subject leaders provide satisfactory, but rapidly improving leadership and management.
- Resources and displays are good.
- The most capable pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

Commentary

52. Standards seen during the inspection were satisfactory but in the past have been unsatisfactory. Insufficient time has passed for the recent improvements and new initiatives to take full effect and impact on the standards, particularly of the oldest pupils. Expectations in the past have been too low and pupils, particularly the most capable, have not been fully challenged. There is more recent evidence of practical work being undertaken, which the pupils enjoy but until this is fully embedded into practice, standards in science over time are likely to remain an issue. There are some examples of pupils predicting the results of

experiments but this is not common practice. Also, there is not an agreed form of recording investigations, which would help to ensure that pupils are developing a systematic approach to their scientific enquiries.

53. Subject leadership is improving; the co-ordinators are enthusiastic in their role and they have a clear understanding of what now needs to be accomplished in order to raise standards. The action plan for science is appropriate and the co-ordinators are also ensuring that the curriculum reflects national guidance. The monitoring of medium-term planning is under way but not short-term planning to ensure that the work set matches the differing abilities in the class and that more meaningful work is provided, especially for the more able pupils. There is too much emphasis on the amount of work undertaken, instead of the work being matched to individual pupils' different needs. Booster classes are provided for those needing extra support.

54. Following an audit and recent purchases, resources are now good. These resources have been linked to different elements of the subject and are now being used well by enthusiastic pupils. Displays in the classrooms are a good aid to learning and include key words to be learned. Work is not kept from previous years to help the older pupils to revise or to see how they have improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- There have been very good improvements in resources since the last inspection.
- Time in the suite is well used so that a good pace to learning is maintained.
- There is a good scheme of work to support teaching and learning.
- There is an increasing use of computers to support learning in other subjects.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

55. Standards attained by pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially when one considers that national expectations of what pupils can do have increased significantly since then. The school uses the local authority's scheme of work, which is closely linked to national

guidance. This ensures that all pupils gain the required skills and knowledge. Examples of pupils' work and teachers' planning as well as discussions, show that pupils are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet and data handling. Classes run with help from the local education authority successfully support the pupils' understanding of how computers may be used to control, monitor and model events.

56. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well. The subject is well led and managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides good advice and training for other members of staff. As a result, teachers are able to give clear explanations and demonstrations, using the recently purchased SMARTboards. These interactive whiteboards are well used by teachers to introduce lessons across a range of subjects. In lessons seen, the good use of this resource together with good direct teaching and good questioning as pupils worked on computers, maximised pupils' involvement and ensured a brisk pace to learning. This meant that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieved well. Teachers' planning correctly identifies the skills to be developed in lessons and is well supported by the scheme of work. However, because of recent improvements in provision, planning does not take sufficient account of the pupils' different stages of learning. Potentially higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now ready to move on at a faster rate and teachers need to reflect this in their planning. The co-ordinator is aware of this and has plans to keep a check on the use of the recently introduced assessment procedures, as well as the use of ICT in other subjects.
57. Pupils' enthusiasm, good behaviour and willingness to help each other, make a significant contribution to their learning. Computer clubs for those without access to a computer at home and for those with a special gift for the subject, also contribute well to pupils' learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. Good examples were seen of pupils using the computers in the suite to support learning in literacy, history, geography and mathematics. The school has correctly recognised the need to update and make more regular use of classroom computers so that pupils can consolidate the skills taught in the suite to further support their learning across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

59. Inspectors observed five history lessons and three religious education lessons. No geography lessons were being taught during the inspection period. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and spoke with staff and pupils. It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in geography.
60. The **geography** policy has recently been updated and reflects the school's aims and provision well. Good monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement by the co-ordinator has ensured that strengths and areas for development have been clearly identified and addressed. For example, the action plan includes a greater focus on the use of ICT, particularly interactive whiteboards. Links with literacy are developed as pupils write postcards imagining they are in Zimbabwe and pupils use their data handling skills when creating charts to record their use of leisure and recreation time. Pupils become increasingly aware of their surroundings and environmental issues as they move through the school, for example, by addressing issues of water wastage. Visits to local places of interest, such as the Thames Barrier, are effective in enhancing pupils' experiences and encouraging their knowledge and understanding of rivers.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and are helping pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy the subject and this helps them to concentrate.
- Leadership and management are good and are helping to ensure that pupils receive an interesting curriculum.
- Regular visits to places of local interest are particularly popular with the pupils and help them to maintain their enthusiasm for the subject.

Commentary

61. Standards were broadly average in the work seen and in lessons. Most pupils are interested in the subject and keen to find out about the past. Teachers work hard to bring history 'alive' by using a range of teaching methods but sometimes these are restricted by the accommodation and lack of space. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils discovered what Victorian schooling was like as their teacher acted in role and they responded as Victorian children. The use of a video also developed their interest and helped them to play their part. This led to them understanding how things change over time. In another good lesson, Year 2 pupils compared buildings of long ago with now, following a visit to a castle. This visit had stimulated their interest and developed their understanding of how we can find out about the past from a variety of sources. Effective support from teaching assistants in both these lessons ensured that pupils with special educational needs achieved well.
62. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen in the junior part of the school were satisfactory overall, with some strengths. Pupils' literacy skills were developed well in Year 6 when pupils wrote letters home in the role of evacuees. In Year 4, pupils' knowledge and understanding of portraiture were developed as they studied Henry VIII and began to hypothesise about his character and why he acted as he did.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are generally good and help to ensure that pupils reach average standards. Good monitoring of teaching and learning ensures that the curriculum and associated activities are relevant to the pupils' needs and matches their abilities.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have mature attitudes to learning.
- The range of faiths studied is not visited frequently enough to allow pupils to remember facts learnt or to identify links between religions.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to research the subject for themselves and record their work, in order to help them remember facts about the range of faiths studied.

Commentary

64. Standards of attainment for pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards at the time of the last inspection were above those expected. The school explains that teachers are working hard to come to terms with the recently adopted local agreed syllabus.

65. Three lessons were seen during the inspection, two of which were good and one satisfactory. Discussions with pupils and an analysis of completed work show that the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Discussions with pupils show that they are given a sound understanding of the nature of religious belief. Visits to local churches and to other places of worship, and assemblies support pupils' learning in this respect. Many pupils in Year 6 have the maturity to think deeply and to respond imaginatively to religious ideas. This was seen in a well prepared lesson where pupils were considering the differences between religious and non religious preparations for Christmas. They confidently and sensibly discussed the Christian meaning of Christmas and the commercialism which surrounds the festival.
66. The organisation of the way in which the curriculum is delivered means that the range of faiths studied is not visited frequently enough to allow pupils to identify similarities and differences between the teachings of different religions. Teaching of religions alongside each other would further help pupils to learn *through* religion as well as *about* religion. In discussion with pupils, it was evident that they forget facts about the religions studied as they progress through the school. There is no themed approach to the teaching of religious education to help pupils to research, recognise and remember a wide range of features common to a number of religions; for example, festivals and other key events, as well as distinctive features of the religions studied, such as views on prayer and fasting. There is scope for improvement in the quality of displays of pupils' work and artefacts, to stimulate pupils' interest and remind them of religious beliefs and practices of the different faiths represented in Britain today.
67. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator does not have enough time to evaluate the curriculum or provision through observing teaching. Assessment procedures are in place but these need to be used more rigorously to ensure that skills and knowledge are taught at levels appropriate to pupils' abilities.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. No lessons were seen in art and design, two each in design and technology and music and four in physical education. Inspectors also spoke to staff, analysed the school's curriculum provision and evaluated pupils' work from the previous year and displays around the school. It was only possible to make an overall judgement on physical education.
69. The **art and design** policy has recently been reviewed and a new scheme of work introduced, based on national guidelines. Displays around the school show that the uses of different media are consistently developed and that pupils look at the work of famous artists as a stimulus for learning. An after school art club enriches the curricular provision.
70. The **design and technology** policy has recently been reviewed and a new scheme of work introduced, based on national guidelines. This is helping to ensure that all aspects of the subject are appropriately covered. The lessons seen were both well planned and prepared. In one lesson, pupils investigated levers and slide mechanisms; in the other lesson pupils looked at packaging and found out that boxes are based on two-dimensional nets. Both lessons gave a good introduction to future design and construction activities. Pupils enjoyed the activities and made good progress as a result of good management.
71. The **music** lessons seen were both taught by a specialist teacher. They were well prepared, demonstrated good subject knowledge and were effectively introduced. Good use was made of an interactive whiteboard. The standards achieved by Year 5 pupils were overall below average and showed some lack of understanding and use of basic terminology. Expectations

for this lesson were at times too high and needed to be based more securely on prior learning. The lesson for Year 1 was challenging and quite ambitious; pupils responded well but spent a little too much time listening and practising different parts rather than all being more fully involved throughout. Year 4 pupils, under a local authority scheme, have had the opportunity to start to play drums, flute or guitar as an introduction to possible future instrumental tuition. Further enrichment is given to the curriculum through a recorder club and choir.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In most of the lessons observed, pupils achieved well.
- Pupils experience a broad curriculum and have access to a good range of enrichment activities.
- A more than average amount of time is spent on swimming.
- Although resources are good overall, the school hall is not conducive to good physical education teaching and learning.

Commentary

72. Most of the teaching seen was good and in one Year 6 lesson, it was very good. This quality helps pupils to generally achieve well. There is, however, an over-dependency on a published scheme of work, which sometimes limits the attainment of the more able pupils. Pupils generally work well together and behave well because they are interested in what they are doing. The time spent on swimming is not reflected in the standards achieved, which remain broadly average. Staff have not recently reviewed the use of this time to see if a reorganisation of lessons would be more effective.
73. There is a broad range of activities in which the pupils can participate and this generates their enthusiasm. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in an interesting and wide range of sporting activities outside of school hours and the school participates in many competitions. Resources are good overall. The outside environment is very good and encourages pupils to be active. The school makes good use of the neighbouring youth club hall for indoor games. The school hall, as a resource for games, is very limited due to its low ceiling and the pillars that obstruct the view. Leadership and management of the subject are good and have helped the school to maintain similar provision to that of the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74. This area of the school's work was sampled through the observation of daily practice and outcomes, and discussions with pupils and staff. Provision is good overall, and links well with the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All classes cover aspects of development relevant to the age of the pupils, within formal lessons such as science, or during personal, social, health education and citizenship lessons. The school places due attention on providing sex and relationship education and drugs awareness. The school's policy is clear and inclusive, and is fully implemented in all lessons and activities.
75. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and gives good guidance and support to staff, either through informal discussions or the provision of training. Through her leadership and the hard work of staff, the school has just received confirmation of achieving Healthy Schools status. This has recently been a key priority for development and pupils are responding well by recognising the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise.

76. Pupils readily take responsibility and develop an understanding of their own role within the school community. This was seen in the way pupils accept a variety of responsibilities in their classrooms, throughout the school, and when acting as mentors and reading partners.
77. Personal and social education is also implicit in all aspects of school life. Pupils talk confidently to adults and know that their ideas are valued. The school council introduces pupils to the concept of democracy, and is giving them the opportunity to suggest changes for the better, such as improvements to the playground. All pupils have very good understanding of the concepts of right and wrong. They conform cheerfully to school and classroom rules, and are very friendly and respectful to their peers and teachers.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

poor (6); very poor (7).