

INSPECTION REPORT

Highbury Quadrant Primary School

Highbury, London

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100431

Headteacher: Mr Simon Dormand

Lead inspector: Mr Anthony Painter

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th December 2004

Inspection number: 267012

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: 394

School address: Highbury New Park
London
Postcode: N5 2DP

Telephone number: 020 7226 6531
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Mrs Margaret Mann
governors:

Date of previous 3rd December 2002
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large urban community primary school has very high proportions of pupils leaving and joining during the year, often from refugee families. Around a third of the pupils are from white backgrounds, although less than half of these are of British origin. Other pupils have a very wide range of cultural origins, with the largest other group being from Black African backgrounds. Over half of pupils have home languages other than English, with 24 at an early stage of learning English (mainly Turkish, Somali and Bengali speakers). Most pupils live in housing close to the school which has many elements of severe deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 56.7 per cent, is well above the national average. Many children joining the school have restricted experiences and language skills and they have well below average overall attainment for their age. Currently, 73 pupils (18 per cent, around the national average) have identified special educational needs. Four pupils, 1.0 per cent, have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is below the national average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** school that provides satisfactory value for money. Effective teamwork is helping to improve pupils' achievements and raise standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Strong leadership from the headteacher has steered good strategic management.
- The school has a very strong commitment to support all pupils and their families.
- Good teaching ensures pupils achieve well overall, although achievement is weaker in Years R to 2 and standards of attainment by Year 6 are still below average.
- A consistent and effective approach to discipline is improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- Subject co-ordinators have an insufficient overview of standards and provision in their subjects.
- Pupils' learning opportunities are enriched by a very good range of additional activities.
- Teachers do not use assessment information enough when planning lessons.
- Despite the school's very good efforts to improve attendance, it remains well below average.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection in all identified issues. Teachers use the school's behaviour management structure well to improve teaching, and standards are rising. Better provision for subjects beyond English and mathematics has been developed and ICT has been substantially improved. However, attendance remains unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

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

Most National Curriculum test results in Years 2 and 6 have been very low in recent years, in the bottom 5 per cent of the country. Past results have not compared well with those of similar schools, although improved teaching has begun to show a clear positive trend. More detailed tracking information shows how standards are continuing to rise.

Pupils' overall achievement is **good** from their well below average attainment when starting school. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, which ensures they learn effectively with the other pupils. Those pupils who have English as an additional language quickly gain confidence and achieve well.

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good overall, although progress in the nursery is better than in the reception classes. However, most children are still well below the goals

children are expected to reach by the time they start Year 1. Progress through Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, although attainment by Year 2 is well below average, restricted by pupils' limited skills, particularly in language. In Years 3 to 6, good progress is leading to rising standards which can be seen in the improving comparisons with similar schools. Current Year 6 pupils are below average in English, mathematics and science and the improving attainment of younger pupils suggests that standards should continue to rise.

The school provides pupils with **good** spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with strengths in their social and moral development. This leads to pupils' positive attitudes and relationships, which are helping them to learn. Consistently high behaviour expectations are leading to satisfactory behaviour in all parts of the school and improvements in all aspects of pupils' personal development. Attendance levels are well below average and punctuality is weak, despite the school's good efforts.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall **good** teaching and learning ensure that pupils of all backgrounds get a **good** education, enriched by a very good range of activities outside lessons. Teachers motivate pupils to learn well with good explanations and use of resources. They pay good attention to developing vocabulary and language through discussion, of particular help to the pupils who are new to English. They use their good knowledge of pupils to plan work for different abilities but do not use assessment information well enough to ensure the best possible match of tasks. Additionally, learning in Years R to 2 is weakened because teachers make less effective use of time and use the school's behaviour strategies less consistently.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership, management and governance are **good**.

The headteacher's very good leadership has established a clear framework and direction for improvements, which has been the foundation of the successful teamwork through the school. Senior managers are also clear of what needs to be improved and how to proceed. Although co-ordinators share this understanding, they do not all have enough knowledge of standards and teaching in their subjects.

Good management has focused correctly on developments to raise standards. Good self-evaluation has identified the most important issues and these are supported by good financial planning and professional development for staff.

Supportive governors have good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have good views of the school, particularly the quality of teaching. Pupils are very positive about their strong relationships with teachers and other adults.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to raise pupils' standards of attainment;
- improve the consistency of good teaching, particularly in Years R to 2;
- extend and improve the co-ordinators' role;

- use assessment information more precisely to match lesson tasks to pupils' abilities;
- improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' standards of attainment are **below average** by the time they leave the school. They achieve **well** through the school from a well below average starting point, although achievement in Years R to 2 could be greater.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall good teaching ensures all pupils achieve well through the school and is raising standards.
- Good achievement is not consistently maintained in Years R to 2.
- Pupils' standards in ICT have improved considerably and are now average.

Commentary

1. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of abilities but many are in the first stages of learning English as an additional language. This has a significant impact on overall standards, especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, children's standards are well below average when they start school, although standards in physical development are average. Most children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, especially in the nursery where teaching and learning are consistently good. Achievement in the reception class is satisfactory overall, and children continue to move steadily along the identified stepping stones of learning towards the standards expected at the end of Reception (the early learning goals). By the time they start Year 1, most children have attained the standards expected in their personal and social development and physical development. Standards in their communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world remain below average because of the weaknesses in their use and knowledge of English.
2. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The additional requirements of the National Curriculum for these pupils are particularly demanding because so many have very limited language skills. Pupils' limited skills, therefore, restrict their overall attainment. The school's relative standards are also depressed by a significant number of pupils who leave the school at this point to attend schools elsewhere. Often these are higher attaining pupils and the overall standards for those who remain are consequently lower. Current overall attainment in Year 2 is well below that found nationally. The school's results in national tests at the end of Year 2 have generally been very low, although recent results are a little higher. This is now leading to a trend of results above the national trend, although the 2004 results remain below those in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.1 (14.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	10.5 (12.2)	14.6 (14.6)

mathematics	14.3 (15.3)	16.2 (16.3)
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There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good because overall good teaching builds well on the foundation of pupils' earlier learning. The school's Year 6 national test results have improved over the last three years, as can be seen in the comparisons with similar schools. These show clear improvements to the current results which are average in this group of schools. However, uncharacteristically strong results in 2001 have led to an overall falling trend of results when compared nationally. The overall 2004 results were well below the national average, as they were in mathematics and science. Results in English, however, were very low, reflecting the pupils' continuing language disadvantages. Results continue to be weakened by substantial mobility and numbers of pupils with little English who have joined the school close to the tests. Inspection evidence and the increasingly detailed school records show that pupils are now making better than expected progress. Current Year 6 pupils are attaining at below average levels overall, representing further improvement in the school's standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.4 (24.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.1 (25.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.8 (25.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Throughout the school pupils are reaching standards in ICT that are in line with those expected for their age. This is a significant improvement on the standards reported in the last inspection report. It represents good achievement from pupils' limited standards and experiences when they enter the school. New resources are being used to greater effect in teaching the subject. Further training is helping teachers to have greater confidence and ensure a better range of work for pupils to improve standards.
- The attainment level of pupils who have special educational needs is very low. However, these pupils make good progress overall and achieve well, given their starting points. Regularly reviewed individual education plans highlight individual strengths and needs and targets reflect the progress made. The school has invested a lot of its resources to support pupils on the stage known as 'school action plus'. As a result, these pupils make very good progress and achieve very well. This is also true of the group of pupils with particular behaviour needs. This is a distinct improvement on the previous inspection.
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and those from different ethnic minorities including refugees achieve well against their prior attainment. This is due to the effective monitoring of pupils' progress and the use of data to focus support in all aspects of their school life. A good range of intervention strategies, including those used by the inclusion team, have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are **good** and their behaviour is **satisfactory** overall. Their personal development is **good**. Pupils' attendance is **poor** and punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils' good behaviour is very effective.
- The school deals very effectively with any form of bullying or harassment.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are good.
- Pupils build good relationships with other pupils and the adults in the school.
- The development of pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good.
- Despite the school's good efforts, many pupils miss a substantial amount of learning because of high levels of absence and late arrival at the beginning of the school day.

Commentary

7. The provision for improving the behaviour of pupils is very good and has had a marked impact on pupils' attitudes and the overall atmosphere in the school. The need to break through the barriers that prevented pupils' learning was seen as a priority for the school and has resulted in the development of clear strategies for motivating pupils' positive reactions. The 'Behavioural Plan' that was introduced to pupils and parents has a clear structure of rewards and sanctions that would result from pupils' behaviour. The success of the plan has been the result of the staff's commitment to these strategies and their consistent application. Senior staff have provided strong support and this has resulted in clear improvement in pupils' attitudes to each other and to their life in school. Minor confrontations still occur but most pupils behave well. They respond well to the strong praise they receive for trying hard. The weekly assembly that celebrates those pupils who have 'Done the Best I Can' is part of the school's positive ethos that rewards good actions and attitudes.
8. Most pupils throughout the school behave well both in the classrooms, when moving around the school and at play. There are a small minority of pupils who have emotional and behavioural special needs and who have great difficulty in controlling their moods and reactions to life around them. These pupils are given great support and guidance but their behaviour has on some occasions caused them to be temporarily excluded from school. The senior staff have made it quite clear that bullying will not be tolerated. The strong and effective structure of clearly defined sanctions linked to inappropriate behaviour has resulted in an increase in exclusions over the last year. However, the consistent response from staff is having a positive effect and the need for such measures is reducing as pupils' attitudes and behaviour improve.

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	60	3	0
White – Irish	4	0	0
White – any other White background	72	1	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	29	8	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	2	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	12	5	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	35	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	33	0	0
Black or Black British – African	63	7	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	1	0
Chinese	6	0	0

Any other ethnic group	31	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	8	0	0

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

9. From their earliest days in the nursery children start to develop good attitudes to the school and the tasks provided for them. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy school and part from their parents and carers without fuss, greeting their friends with pleasure. Children in both the reception and nursery classes settle to their daily activities well and share the resources and toys sensibly. These good attitudes continue throughout the school. In the most effective lessons, where activities are well matched to pupils' abilities and interests, pupils' attention and concentration are often very good. They enjoy the challenges given to them and persevere with the tasks provided. The out-of-class clubs and additional activities provided for the pupils are well attended. Some activities were originally planned with specific pupils in mind to meet their personal and learning needs and so build their self-esteem. These clubs have been successful in further motivating the pupils so they are more prepared to meet the challenges they face in their daily lessons.

10. Pupils develop good relationships with other pupils and the adults in the school. Consistent, positive praise has created a school atmosphere in which pupils' self-esteem is beginning to blossom. Pupils are consequently more positive about each other and develop good relationships across all gender, cultural and ethnic groups. The staff are good role models for the pupils and nurture their abilities to share and cooperate with one another. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds are keen to participate in activities and are well integrated. The school's focus on pupils' personal and social development contributes well to their sense of well being and predisposition to learn. Pupils with special educational needs now have good attitudes to their learning, improved from the last report. They are developing a positive self-image as they are enabled to achieve success in their work. Their behaviour is mostly as good as that of their peers. Teachers and assistants encourage the pupils to concentrate well and to tackle challenging tasks with determination.

11. Positive attitudes and relationships are a result of the school's good provision for pupils' personal, social, moral and cultural development. Through their 'circle time' discussions, pupils explore what makes a good friend and how they can work together to make a happy school. They discuss their similarities and differences and develop understanding and respect for one another. The school celebrates the cultures, beliefs and traditions of the pupils so that all feel a strong part of the school community. This helps to eliminate the prejudice that comes from ignorance. Opportunities to explore the art and music of cultures around the world through lessons and through demonstrations by visitors to the school also stimulate an interest in the diversity of their community. Pupils are developing a good sense of working together as they take on various class responsibilities. Older pupils are given the opportunity to work as mentors, supporting and helping other pupils when they are unhappy or distressed. There is no structure at present for pupils to influence the life of the school through a pupils' council but most classes do have regular discussions about how pupils can have an impact on the life of the class. From their earliest days in school they develop their appreciation of what is fair and unfair, what is right and what is wrong. The class discussions help pupils develop strategies to cope with conflict and peer group pressure so they feel able to make their own moral decisions.

12. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactorily promoted. Their sense of individuality and the development of what is important to them is successfully developed through class discussions. Opportunities to reflect on their own ideas and beliefs are also effectively stimulated in religious education lessons, but the opportunities to reflect on the ideas presented in assemblies are not as well stimulated. Time constraints limit the effectiveness of such moments and music, poetry or other stimuli are insufficiently used to promote pupils' reflective skills.
13. The attendance of the pupils is well below the national average, with very high amounts of unauthorised absence. However, the school is not complacent and has identified the raising of attendance levels as a top priority. It is working very methodically and effectively to make significant improvements. Over the last years the attendance rate has risen from 90 per cent to 92.6 per cent. Although this is still not good enough, the signs that parents are beginning to understand the need for their children to have regular education are evident. The concentration of support and advice to parents of the younger children is paying dividends in improved attendance in the reception class. Overall, the low levels of attendance militate against better achievement for many pupils.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.0	School data:	3.4
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.

14. Too many pupils are late for school in the morning. The school is taking a strong stand in promoting better time keeping by always asking for an explanation when the pupil and parent are late. However, many families lack sufficient structure to their day and find it difficult to bring their children to school punctually. The good work with the parents of the younger pupils means punctuality is improving in the Foundation Stage. Pupils who arrive late not only feel uncomfortable but also miss an important part of the first lesson of the day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides **good** quality education through good teaching and learning. The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by very good extra-curricular activities.

Teaching and learning

Good teaching enables pupils to learn well through the school, although learning is strongest in the nursery and Years 3 to 6. Teachers have good personal knowledge of pupils but make **satisfactory** use of developing assessment systems.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-established routines and high behaviour expectations encourage good behaviour and hard work.
- Teachers' good explanations and use of resources motivate pupils to learn.
- Pupils' learning is aided by good opportunities to use new vocabulary in discussions.

- Teachers' good personal knowledge of pupils enables pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to make good progress.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to plan tasks that consistently challenge pupils to achieve higher levels of attainment.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 71 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	12 (17%)	32 (45%)	25 (35%)	2 (3%)	0	0

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

- The overall quality of teaching has improved from that seen in the last inspection. The proportion of lessons graded as good and better has improved and there were fewer unsatisfactory lessons. This reflects the good quality of professional development undertaken within the school. Despite substantial changes in staff in recent years, teachers are establishing much greater consistency of approach. For example, many teachers share planning and organisation to improve their work and this team approach contributes to the stability of the school. Parents and pupils are positive about the good standard of teaching.
- A particular improvement is the school's new approach to behaviour management. Teachers use this well to set clear and consistent expectations of pupils' required behaviour standards. Pupils largely seek to reach these expectations and this has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the success of lessons. This is also reflected in better attitudes and higher achievement for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities. There is a high degree of consistency of approach through the school, although lessons with weaker use of the systems are often the least successful. This factor contributes to the relatively weaker teaching in Years R to 2, which is satisfactory but often lacks the pace of learning elsewhere in the school. Additionally in these classes, teachers do not always plan tasks to make full use of the time available for lessons. This leads to some activities that lack sufficient purpose and do not extend pupils' learning enough.
- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good overall with the most effective teaching occurring in the nursery. Staff work well together and provide an effective team that promotes children's learning well. Procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. In the nursery, regular discussions about all the children ensure that their needs are known by all staff. Regular observations of what children know and can do build into a clear record of their learning. This information is passed to the reception class teacher so that further assessments build effectively into the required Early Years portfolio of attainment at the end of the reception year. Teachers and the nursery nurses in both the reception and nursery classes have a good understanding of children's personal needs and respond to them well. However, they do not identify the levels of attainment being achieved so that staff can set targets for further learning in the next activity.
- The very good relationships created by teachers and other staff throughout the school ensure a very positive atmosphere for learning. This motivates pupils well and

encourages them to try hard. Good classroom organisation and lesson management ensure that little time is lost. Pupils respond well to teachers' well-established routines and this contributes to their achievement. Teachers' high behaviour expectations are clearly stated and most pupils are keen to meet these, thus improving their learning. As a result, pupils gain confidence and enthusiasm as they engage in all activities.

19. Teachers give clear explanations that capture pupils' attention well. A significant contribution to many very good presentations is the teachers' effective use of resources. In particular, the new interactive whiteboards are often used confidently to aid explanations and activities. In many lessons, teachers are aided by planning that clearly identifies what pupils will learn. This also contributes to the quality of teachers' questioning because they focus carefully on ensuring that pupils understand the main points of the lesson. In some summary sessions at the end of lessons, this questioning makes a good contribution to teachers' and pupils' abilities to assess the success of the learning. However, in a few lessons seen in the inspection, the teachers did not pace the different sections well enough. For example, too much time spent on the initial explanations left too little time for pupils to undertake the practical or individual tasks. In some lessons, too much time was used in revising earlier learning, again placing time pressures on subsequent sections of the lesson.
20. Many lessons are enhanced by increasing opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. Teachers usually identify specific vocabulary that will be used in the lessons in their planning. In the most successful lessons this is used consistently and is required of pupils in their answers. Teachers successfully use a good range of discussion strategies to help pupils to think and speak. For example, quickly talking with partners before giving answers clarifies ideas and gives pupils greater confidence. It often also contributes to the good pace of the lesson. In some lessons, very good use was made of role-play activities to help pupils to consider the thoughts and feelings of others. Pupils showed great enjoyment and involved themselves very well, enhancing their learning considerably. This emphasis on speaking is particularly effective in aiding the learning of pupils with English as an additional language.
21. Most teachers make good use of their personal knowledge of pupils to set secure levels of challenge. For example, teachers pitch questions at different levels to make pupils think hard about their answers. Teachers make and record increasingly detailed formal assessments that they use to steer their planning. However, there is less consistent use of this information to raise the level of challenge to build on pupils' prior attainment. For example, although tasks are pitched at different levels, they do not consistently challenge pupils to perform at their very best. This is particularly important in raising the attainment of the higher-attaining pupils to reach standards above the national average by the time they leave the school.
22. The quality of support for pupils with English as an additional language and those from different ethnic backgrounds is good. The targeting of pupils is based on a clear analysis of the pupils' individual needs. Hence, more attention is focused on those at an early stage of learning English or who have recently joined the school. The quality of partnership between support staff and class teachers is very good and ensures that learning is as accessible as possible. In the best teaching, strategies for supporting pupils are spelled out in teachers' planning. The support staff successfully assist pupils, both during the whole class introduction and when pupils work in groups. This was amply demonstrated in two literacy lessons where the EAL specialist and the class teacher worked collaboratively and demonstrated the skills to be learned. The

interactive whiteboard and mini whiteboards helped to focus pupils' learning and to provide them with opportunities to use the language both orally and in writing.

23. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. Teachers set appropriate tasks usually closely matched to the pupils' abilities, but nonetheless suitably challenging. Close teamwork between class teachers and support assistants enables them to help pupils quietly and effectively. One feature that has improved since the previous inspection is the way that support staff help pupils learn from the start of a lesson right through to the end. Staff use assessment well to monitor the pupils' progress and adjust their planning as targets are achieved.

The curriculum

The school provides **satisfactory** opportunities for pupils' learning and a **very good** range of activities for enrichment. The school has **good** accommodation and resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range and quality of activities to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning is very good.
- The curriculum is inclusive and provides well for pupils with EAL and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Commentary

24. The curriculum is well planned, meets statutory requirements and is relevant to pupils' needs. The school has appropriately invested time and effort into improving standards in literacy and numeracy and is now well positioned to improve provision in other subjects. It importantly and effectively focuses on the development of personal and social skills, encouraging pupils to develop good skills and make appropriate choices.
25. All pupils, whatever their background, have access to the full curriculum, including activities organised outside the school day. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in most activities on offer. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from different ethnic backgrounds are fully involved in all activities and, in the majority of cases, their teachers support them well in their learning. The school has a positive inclusive ethos and robust procedures for monitoring pupils' access to all activities provided. This is amply reflected in the current focus on Turkish pupils and the plans to enhance provision for African, Caribbean and Somali pupils as the next phase of development. The school has made great efforts to draw on pupils' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, especially with respect to Turkish pupils, for instance through family learning and GCSE accreditation.
26. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. Teachers put a lot of thought into the individual learning plans they write for these pupils. Although the learning strategies are well selected and followed carefully by the teachers and support staff, the targets in some of the plans are of a quite general nature. They do not all set an agenda where progress against very specific learning steps can be measured over identified time-scales.
27. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has much improved, with activities in the reception class now better matched to the age of the children. The nursery provides a wide range of interesting activities that promotes children's learning well

and is extended appropriately into the reception class. Activities are effectively planned across the six areas of learning¹ for children of this age.

28. There have been good improvements in accommodation. Since the last inspection the school has built a very well appointed library and ICT suite, which are having a positive impact on pupils' literacy and their understanding of computers. The corridors and classrooms are now much better used for high quality display that stimulates interest and celebrates the good work of the pupils. The playground is bleak and uninspiring, particularly for the older pupils, and does not encourage productive play. However, the outside area for the nursery and reception children has been well developed to be a very useful resource for learning.
29. The school offers pupils many activities to extend their learning both during and after the school day. A range of clubs for drama, sport, guitar and homework are well attended. Funding from the Education Action Zone is effectively used to extend pupils' learning through a wide range of activities, visits and visitors to the school. These activities, together with the annual residential journey, add to the rich diversity of opportunities open to pupils to develop their personal and social skills and to learn new things.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are **satisfactory**. The school provides **very good** support, advice and guidance based on monitoring. The involvement of pupils in the work and development of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school gives high quality pastoral support to individual pupils to underpin their good achievement.
- Very clear and consistently applied rules ensure pupils behave sensibly and safely.
- Pupils feel that they are well looked after and that adults will listen to them if they have worries and concerns.
- The training of staff in the latest child protection procedures is not sufficiently up to date with the latest guidance.
- The recording of the administration of medicines is not rigorous enough to give accurate information in the event of an emergency.

Commentary

30. Pupils are safe and secure while at school. The headteacher and governors ensure the school is free of hazards because they have well-established procedures to assess the site for potential risks. Most minor bumps and grazes are recorded competently in the central accident book, but it is difficult to monitor accidents accurately because notes on scraps of paper are stapled into the booklet. The school is careful to ask for parental permission when pupils need to take medicines. However, it does not keep a proper record of the amount of medication and time of administration should referral be needed in an emergency. Child protection procedures have recently been reviewed to bring them in line with the latest guidance. Nevertheless, neither the senior staff designated to liaise with social services nor the

¹ The six areas of learning are personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and children's physical and creative development.

first aid staff have had recent refresher training. In practice, all staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse and to react very quickly for the good of the children concerned.

31. The school caters particularly well for the pastoral and personal needs of the pupils. It has a very committed 'inclusion team' of staff who ensure that pupils who are not achieving as well as they should are helped to overcome barriers to their learning. The team has very well established systems to track pupils' personal development, particularly in behaviour and attendance. Staff who lead on different aspects of support communicate very well to match the right support to each pupil causing concern. Their good outside links via the Education Action Zone enable them to call upon a wide range of agencies and organisations to complement the school's work. By working closely with the families of needy pupils, the 'inclusion team' provides a service, often beyond education, which has a very positive effect in school on the confidence and achievement of the pupils themselves.
32. There are effective procedures for identifying pupils who need extra support and guidance. These procedures enable pupils of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds to participate in lessons and be involved in school life. Pupils with special educational needs, those from different ethnic backgrounds and those who do not speak English at home are given good care and support. The school draws well on the expertise of specialist services for more detailed diagnostic testing and support. This has resulted in the use of more precise forms of assessment for pupils who have more intense needs. The school has very good links with the specialist agencies, which contribute to the pupils' good progress. The school has made a good start in setting up useful systems to monitor the academic performance of the pupils. However, the accurate support of the different educational needs of each pupil in the classroom is not always as effective as it should be because teachers do not all use this assessment data to best effect.
33. Discipline is a high priority in the school. The headteacher and his senior management team are very keen to ensure that all pupils can get on with their learning safely and without fear of harassment. Not only are school rules simple, understandable and regularly revisited but staff are also consistent in applying the agreed sanctions and rewards. The school has zero tolerance of dangerous or bullying behaviour. In consequence, pupils are gradually learning to be more self-disciplined and to be aware of how their actions might affect others. The exclusion rate has fallen dramatically since last term and the school is now a much calmer, safer and more pleasant place in which to learn and work.
34. Pupils are positive about their time at Highbury Quadrant because they feel that staff look after them well and that adults will listen to them if they are sad or worried. Young children in the nursery are settled in very well and are soon confident to cope with the routines of school life. Older pupils know they can turn to their teacher for advice and a significant number mention that they would go to the peer mentors in Years 5 and 6 for help. However, the involvement of pupils in the development of the school is at an early stage. The older pupils are chosen to be monitors or 'peer mentors' but there is no school council for pupils to extend their understanding of citizenship and democracy. The regular inclusion of pupils' views has recently been initiated with the survey of their views on the development of the playground.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **good**. The school provides **very good** extended services and educational support programmes. Links with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school liaises very well with a wide range of outside organisations to provide families with well matched learning opportunities and social support.
- The school is working very effectively with particular groups of parents to involve them more in school life and their children's learning.
- The views and concerns of parents are followed up very carefully.
- Annual reports do not give parents a sufficiently clear message about how their children have progressed in each subject over the year.

Commentary

35. The school is making very good use of its involvement in the Education Action Zone to provide appropriate programmes to extend family learning. Staff are knowledgeable on the socio-economic and language needs of families and match courses well to their needs. The 'inclusion team' works very effectively to find the right support for families who have domestic or social troubles at home, with the result that parents feel more at ease with the education system and their children achieve better. If the school cannot provide the right advice to parents and guardians, it refers them to a number of specialist services with which it has close ties. For example, the attached advice centre, incorporating the Islington People's Rights Project and a law centre, is a valuable resource for needy families. The provision of the breakfast club and a good range of after-school clubs give families welcome help with child care and encourage better time keeping in the morning. Managers are keeping a close eye on how well these extra services are benefiting pupils and their families. The result is a much better inclusion of families who were previously barred from fuller involvement in education through disillusion or language difficulties.
36. There is a strong commitment to involving parents as much as possible in their children's education. The school keeps parents well informed about events and activities. In particular, the headteacher's newsletter gives a very good flavour of school life. Teachers are approachable and very willing to let parents know how their children are getting on. However, annual written reports do not give enough information about progress or what the pupil needs to do to improve. The parents of children who have special educational needs feel they are well involved in the process from the very start. They regularly have quality feedback on their children's progress. They particularly appreciate the school's open door policy and they and their children appreciate the effort put in to help them.
37. The home/school liaison officer is very sensitive to domestic problems and keeps up close links with parents who are finding it difficult to bring their children to school regularly. There has been some particularly successful work by the learning mentors with Turkish families to encourage an interest in the education system. However, similar supportive work with other ethnic groups, such as the Somali, Afro-Caribbean and Black African families, is not as well established. The school has taken a very sensible and worthwhile decision to target new parents who are starting their children

in the nursery and reception classes in order to set high expectations of attendance and parental involvement.

38. Relationships with parents of Foundation Stage children are good. The induction arrangements provide good opportunities for parents to visit the school and share information about their child with the teachers. Daily opportunities to chat at the start and end of the school sessions ensure that concerns are shared and children's good progress is celebrated. Parents are always made welcome in school and are encouraged to share in their children's education, either at home or in the classroom. The school values this partnership between home and school. Parents are kept fully informed should any concerns arise.
39. The school values the views and ideas of parents. Surveys of parents have been regular occurrences for many years and the governors carefully consider the results. For example, uniform was introduced after questionnaires revealed that a substantial number of parents favoured its use. If parents have individual concerns about their children's education the headteacher is quick to arrange a meeting, settle the matter or refer it to a more appropriate person. Parents feel they have ownership in the school and, consequently, reciprocate positively by increasing their support for the school.
40. Links with the community and local organisations continue to be used well to enliven the curriculum and provide specialist support for the pupils. Through Education Action Zone funding, pupils have a rich variety of visits and visitors to promote their personal development and give them experiences they might otherwise not have. The 'inclusion team' maintains productive links with a wide range of support services to help it in its mission to include more pupils and families in effective learning and good achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher's **very good** leadership is a major factor in the school's successful development. The leadership of other key staff, the management and the governance of the school are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's strategic planning and vision have ensured that there is a strong sense of direction in school.
- Very good team building, induction and staff development in the past two years are improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the way forward.
- Good use is made of the school improvement plan as a focus for school development, although many co-ordinators have insufficient skills in monitoring and evaluating to contribute to this.
- Systems of performance management need further improvements in order for standards to continue to rise.

Commentary

41. The headteacher has a very clear understanding of what the school needs to do to develop further. There has been a clear focus on the need to improve standards of

behaviour, teaching and learning in order to raise pupil's levels of attainment. This is shared and appreciated by other members of the senior management team. Teachers and pupils are very clear about what is expected of them. The associate headteacher, inclusion manager, deputy headteacher and ethnic minority achievement service teacher give a good lead in school. This has ensured that children with special needs and English as a second language make good progress. Through very good strategic planning, the headteacher and other members of the senior management team have overcome a severe recruitment problem and established a stable teaching team, which has led to a gradual rise in standards of attainment.

42. Leadership of other key staff is good overall and has been well supported by the contribution of the associate and deputy headteachers. Very good leadership by members of the senior management team has led to a strong sense of team spirit amongst the relatively new teaching team. They are working together well for the benefit of the children. Training needs of teachers have been met and this has improved the quality of teaching and learning. In order for this development to continue systems of performance management need further development and formal processes for formulating targets for teaching improvements need to be established. Leadership of curriculum subjects is satisfactory. Many subject co-ordinators are relatively new to their posts and do not have sufficient skills in monitoring and evaluation. They are in the process of developing their knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This means that they have not yet had an impact on standards of teaching and learning in their subjects.
43. It has taken very good leadership of special needs provision to bring about the sense of commitment and teamwork that is evident in the staff. The deputy headteacher, as co-ordinator, has developed a coherent provision based on very good communication, raising expertise and closely monitoring all aspects and trends. Careful timetabling of the support assistants enables their contribution to run smoothly and resources are used well.
44. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) is targeted well to provide specialist teaching and to enhance provision for those pupils with English as an additional language and those from ethnic minorities. The co-ordinator has very good knowledge of the issues involved and uses this well to influence practice and to maximise learning for those pupils being supported. Good monitoring of the progress of different groups is used to identify those who are at risk of underachieving and to target support. Good resources reflect cultural diversity and convey a clear message about the values and the ideals of the school.
45. The headteacher, in conjunction with the associate and deputy headteachers, has established good management systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and providing accurate feedback. Through these, positive teaching qualities have been identified as well as weaknesses and individual teachers have been helped to improve their skills. This is particularly apparent when considering the large numbers of unqualified teachers who have been assisted to full qualified status. These measures have had an impact on raising standards and continue to focus attention on necessary further improvements and form a strong foundation for further training. The school is making good use of self-evaluation procedures to identify areas for improvement in the school improvement plan. This plan clearly identifies the areas the school needs to focus on in order to raise standards. Subject co-ordinators make greater contributions to this process as their own leadership and management skills increase.

46. Governance has continued to improve since the last inspection. Governors have attended Saturday morning training sessions in order to be able to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Governors have a good, shared understanding of what the school needs to do to raise standards. They share the headteacher's strategic intentions and give the school good support in order to achieve its goals. Governors make visits to school and have individual responsibility for subjects and areas of the school improvement plan. This means that they are beginning to question and challenge the senior management team in order to support the school more effectively.
47. Financial procedures are clearly established and suitable financial systems are in place. Funding to support pupils' learning in English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is suitably deployed. The school is committed to achieving the principles of best value in its purchases. Having regard to costs and standards achieved, the school's value for money is satisfactory.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

<i>Income and expenditure (£)</i>		<i>Balances (£)</i>	
Total income	1,638,995	Balance from previous year	10,663
Total expenditure	1,640,948	Balance carried forward to the next	8,710
Expenditure per pupil	3,843		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

48. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of abilities although overall standards are well below average. A high proportion of children are in the first stages of learning English as an additional language, which has a significant impact on their overall standards. Good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage result in children achieving well. The best progress is made in the nursery where teaching and learning are consistently good. Achievement in the reception class is satisfactory overall as a result of less consistently good teaching. Children continue to move steadily towards the standards expected by the time they begin Year 1.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because staff are very sensitive to their needs and respond positively to all children, who develop good relationships and confidence.
- Inconsistent behaviour management weakens learning in the reception class.

Commentary

49. Many children start in the nursery unused to playing with other children or sharing. They take a little time to settle and apply themselves. Very quickly, however, children become more confident and part from their parents or carers with increasing confidence. All adults are very good role models in welcoming each child as they arrive. Good teaching enables most children to attain the expected standards in the early learning goals by the time they transfer into Year 1.
50. Children achieve well because all staff are very sensitive to their needs and respond in a calm and positive manner to all children. In the nursery, teaching is good and staff are consistent in their expectations, support and praise. Children develop secure and trusting relationships with all the adults and confidently ask for help when they need it. Children who are in the early stages of learning English are still slow to speak but respond well to the adults' support and encouragement. Children are well motivated to learn because they are interested in the stimulating activities provided and staff pose questions and suggestions that engage their curiosity. Most children make their own positive choices about what they want to do next and staff praise this ability to consider their next activity.
51. Reception class children also settle well into the new routines of their class. Their confidence and self-esteem are nurtured by the consistent positive response of all adults. Children learn new skills and consolidate old ones through freely chosen play and all children quickly choose their first activity. However, opportunities to improve their skills of independent learning are missed when there is no requirement for them to organise themselves or their time. Children usually behave well in whole-class sessions and their concentration is good. When they move to individual activities,

behaviour often slips and children become very noisy. The class teacher maintains effective control during teacher-directed sessions, but there are not enough reminders of what is expected as they move from one activity to the next. As a result, some children become over excited. Children's self-discipline is not being sufficiently nurtured through consistent reminders of what is appropriate and what is unacceptable at these times.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because good teaching provides a language-rich environment.
- Stories are used well to develop children's awareness of reading and writing.
- Children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are well supported and achieve well.

Commentary

52. Teaching is good and children achieve well, but most do not attain the expected standards in the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1 because many start from a low level of attainment. Children make good progress because teachers focus on increasing vocabulary and understanding. Nursery and reception classes provide language-rich environments with many opportunities for children to enjoy books and to write. Adults promote children's spoken language by engaging them in discussions and asking questions that require the children to answer in more extended phrases and sentences.
53. Teachers use stories well to develop the early stages of both reading and writing. Children enjoy the stories, show interest in the pictures and characters and enjoy retelling known stories using puppets. Nursery children recall details and enjoy saying the repeated phrases. Higher attaining children in the nursery successfully identified the main differences in two versions of the story of Goldilocks. Reception class children are gradually prepared for work in Year 1. They continue to enjoy stories and become more aware of key words and initial letter sounds. The skills of letter and number formation are weaker elements for a significant number.
54. Children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language also achieve well because they are very well supported. They develop a satisfactory understanding of the language they hear, responding to instructions and questions appropriately. Although their spoken language is still developing, many in the reception class have the confidence to respond in whole-class sessions. Others still talk quietly to the teacher or assistant in small groups.
55. Assessments of what children know and can do are satisfactorily recorded and build a clear picture of their progress in the nursery. In the reception class, children's work is also monitored and recorded. However, this is not systematically used to set targets or identify learning needs to be used in planning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of opportunities extends children's learning.
- Reception class children are effectively equipped for work in Year 1.
- Levels of attainment being achieved are not always sufficiently identified, with the result that targets for the next stage of their learning are not recorded to ensure best progress.

Commentary

56. Children make good progress from a below average start because of good teaching. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to consolidate their knowledge and further develop their understanding of numbers, shape and space. Adults effectively encourage learning through good resources that support children's understanding and develop their vocabulary. The use of stories and rhymes to reinforce number relationships supports the good learning of all groups, especially those with English as an additional language. Children with special educational needs are also supported well.
57. Reception class children are gradually introduced to parts of the numeracy hour to prepare them for work in Year 1. These well-planned sessions provide a good range of activities that most children are able to understand and enjoy. Freely-chosen activities satisfactorily support these sessions but there are not enough well-structured tasks to enable children to consolidate their learning. Satisfactory use is made of assessment information in both classes to plan the next steps for learning. However, the levels of attainment being achieved are not always accurately recorded or used to identify targets for the next stage of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff successfully promote achievement through all the areas of learning.
- There is good use of the outdoor area.
- Teachers do not plan activities to extend children's basic computer skills.
- Children have a good experience of other cultures and beliefs.

Commentary

58. Teaching is good and children achieve well from a well below average start. Despite good efforts, however, standards remain below average when children begin Year 1. Children's learning benefits from the way that staff plan the work throughout all the areas of learning. The beginnings of science, history, geography, ICT and design and technology are introduced within this aspect of learning. There is strong attention given to developing children's interest and investigations. However, many nursery children's limited attention means that they tend to drift to different activities and are not always aware of the links that are being promoted. Teachers encourage children to respond and support them well in their efforts through praise and encouragement.
59. Computers in the nursery and reception classes are always available for free-choice activities. When the children are supervised and overseen they show good basic skills for using them. Children have good control of the mouse, as shown when they work by choice on a variety of computer programs. However, teachers do not make sufficient use of the computers nor do they plan enough activities to fully develop children's basic skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good use of the well designed outdoor area.
- Some indoor provision is upstairs and this limits accessibility.
- Good links are made to social development.
- Expectations for children's good attention are not always sufficiently strong in physical education lessons.

Commentary

60. Children achieve satisfactorily in physical development. They enter the nursery with a broadly average range of skills and are likely to meet the early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1. Staff carefully plan a wide range of imaginatively organised activities to extend children's physical development as part of their learning across the whole curriculum.
61. Learning benefits considerably from the substantially improved outdoor area and equipment. Staff plan extensive use of the facilities to ensure that outdoor activities are an integral part of children's experiences. Good opportunities are provided for children to use wheeled toys and a variety of climbing apparatus. These extend children's control, balance and co-ordination. As a result, they have good control and mobility when they push, pull, pedal or steer the wide range of good quality wheeled toys. They develop a satisfactory awareness of space when they use the climbing frame and develop good social skills as they share activities with their friends.
62. Teaching is satisfactory and uses lots of praise and encouragement to give children confidence to join in activities. Children learn to use tools such as scissors and pencils and equipment such as beanbags with increasing skill and accuracy. This is of particular benefit to reception children whose manipulative skills in using simple tools and writing implements are below average. Children in the reception class have regular opportunities to participate in physical education lessons in the hall. They are developing the skills of using and manipulating small apparatus but sometimes the teacher's expectations for the children's attention is not high enough and insufficient focus is given to improving and extending these skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of resources provides stimulus for children's creative play.
- Children's skills are not sufficiently identified and the next stage of development is not planned well enough.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their imagination through stories.

Commentary

63. Teaching and learning are good overall but are often strongest in the nursery. Children achieve well and, by the time they enter Year 1, most reach the expected standards. The aspect of creative development that is not as well developed is children's use of

language to express their ideas because many children are still in the early stages of learning English.

64. Children have good opportunities to develop their imagination through the use of role-play areas, particularly in the nursery. Here, adults play with the children to stimulate appropriate language for their roles and help them maintain the play. This promotes lots of chatter, sometimes in children's home language, as they play alongside other children.
65. Stories stimulate children to experience new roles and the creative use of language, such as when actively retelling the 'Gingerbread Man' using puppets. In Reception, a good range of resources acted as 'props' as the class retold the story of 'Peace at Last'. These activities are especially useful to those children with English as an additional language. Daily opportunities for children to paint and draw and create objects are available in the nursery and reception class for children's own-choice play. The bright and cheery pictures on the classroom walls are testimony to teacher-focused activities that introduce the children to mixing paint so that a required colour is made. Regular music sessions introduce children to different instruments and help to them to recognise different rhythms and high and low sound. They enjoy singing, especially when accompanying their songs with actions.
66. Teaching and learning are at their best when teachers have clear expectations for what children are to learn in the activity. However, planning does not always show clearly what new skills or experiences children are to acquire. In these sessions, particularly in the reception class, the planning and teaching reflect what is to be done and not sufficiently what is to be learned.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management have identified successful ways to raise pupils' achievement.
- Teachers' good planning includes clear and specific learning objectives which are clearly explained to pupils and used to evaluate their achievement.
- Partnership teaching is used well to enhance pupils' learning, especially of those pupils with English as an additional language (EAL).
- Classroom computers are not systematically used to enhance learning in the subject.

Commentary

67. Although overall standards in English are below average, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language (EAL) and those from ethnic minority backgrounds, make good progress through the school. A good range of useful strategies improve pupils' achievement, including targeted support for EAL, additional literacy support and the use of additional resources from the Education Action Zone.

68. Many pupils' speaking is constrained by a limited vocabulary but they try hard and are willing to take part when responding to teachers' questions. Speaking and listening are promoted well, for instance through the use of partner talk, and this particularly helps those pupils new to learning English. Good opportunities to practise speaking are planned and used in a number of subjects. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for instance, pupils impersonated characters from the story they were reading during the week and used this well to create a role play, using good intonation. From a low starting point, pupils achieve well in their reading. Many develop strategies for reading unfamiliar words and use the context to guess meaning. More able pupils express clear preferences and justify their choice of books or authors. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to develop library and research skills and to extend their learning through independent study. Guided reading is used well and is effectively assessed against clear objectives, with good diagnostic information being used to set targets for improvement. From a similarly low start, pupils make good progress in writing by Year 6. This is due largely to the effective planning where writing skills are demonstrated by teachers and rehearsed during the week, with pupils drawing on what they have learned and building on it. Spelling and handwriting are practised regularly and are well taught.
69. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good lessons. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of English, often reflected in the wide and effective range of methods used. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and used well to focus learning during and at the end of lessons. Good emphasis on speaking and listening enables pupils to practise and develop thinking and language skills in meaningful contexts including collaboration with partners. In the best teaching, lessons are well structured. Teachers quickly capture pupils' attention, often through good use of the interactive whiteboards. Pupils gradually move to tasks where they apply skills learned in the introduction, having practised ideas with their partners. Pupils' learning is often supported very well by additional staff in lessons, including specialist teachers and support assistants. For example, lessons with support from teachers with specialist knowledge of pupils with English as an additional language are particularly successful in developing pupils' confidence and language skills. Assessment of pupils' written work is carried out well and is beginning to give pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve. Where teaching was less effective, this was mainly due to the teacher failing to ensure that pupils fully understood some of the vocabulary used in questions and answers.
70. The subject is well led and managed. Careful monitoring of pupils' progress leads to well-targeted interventions to raise achievement. However, opportunities to use classroom computers in lessons are not systematically planned, with some missed opportunities for pupils to practise skills for redrafting work. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. Pupils' literacy skills are satisfactorily promoted with some good examples of language development through role play in history and geography lessons. Speaking in all subjects is actively encouraged through the use of partner talk and modelling by teachers. There is good attention to developing and using specialist vocabulary in ICT and science but this is not a strong feature in all subjects, despite teachers often listing the relevant vocabulary in their daily planning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below national averages.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in Year 6.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Assessment information is not used consistently to inform lesson planning and to support individual children.
- Good support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language helps them learn well.

Commentary

72. Results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, these were below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. There has been a good degree of improvement since the last inspection and the quality of teaching and learning has improved, especially in Years 3 to 6. The inspection finds that pupils throughout the school achieve well. Standards are gradually rising, although they are still below average. Pupils with English as an additional language and pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. This is due to the additional support provided by teaching assistants in the classroom.
73. Teaching and learning are good, with very good teaching in Year 6. Lessons are well structured and delivered at a swift pace. Resources to support learning in mathematics lessons are good, with particularly good use made of the interactive whiteboards. There is a good emphasis on getting pupils to explain how they work out calculations, which contributes to pupils' language development. Teachers make clear to the pupils what they will learn and question them well to help them sort out ideas and take their thinking forward. Teachers use the end part of lessons effectively to check on what pupils have learned.
74. Teachers' planning is satisfactory, with improving use of assessment information to meet pupils' needs in lessons. However, the use of detailed information is inconsistent and some teachers do not ensure that all tasks are sufficiently challenging. Marking is satisfactory. Teachers are good at celebrating pupils' successes but do not give pupils enough advice about how they can improve their work. Where teaching was very good, homework was clearly an important part of pupils' learning.
75. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in most mathematics lessons are good. This is due to the support that pupils are given by teaching assistants and the school inclusion team. Teaching assistants demonstrate a high degree of skill in forming relationships and supporting pupils, which ensure that pupils are able to make good progress in lessons.
76. The good quality of leadership and management is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The subject leader has a good understanding of the subject and has identified strengths and weaknesses in provision. She uses good strategies to check how well mathematics is taught and learned. She uses the findings effectively to provide information and guidance to other teachers, leading to improving practice.

Mathematics across the curriculum

77. Mathematics is used soundly in teaching and learning in other subjects. There were satisfactory examples of pupils using mathematical skills in most subjects of the curriculum. However, these opportunities are not sufficiently clearly planned to ensure that they support pupils' learning in mathematics lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for science has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Although standards are below average, good teaching now ensures that pupils achieve well given their starting points.
- Computer and numeracy skills are used effectively to support investigations.
- Improving assessment does not yet enable teachers to match tasks closely enough to pupils' needs.

Commentary

78. In the 2004 national tests, the school's results for Year 6 were well below the national average, but in line with similar schools. This marks the continuation of a gradual, but nonetheless measurable, upward trend in the school's performance since the previous inspection. Attainment in the present Year 6 is now below average. However, pupils achieve well, given the low starting point on entry and a disturbance in teaching and behaviour in recent years. There are a significant number of pupils in Year 6 who have special educational needs and this makes the expected proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 harder to achieve. The school has established a much more stable working atmosphere in classrooms. With the good support and booster systems in place, further improvement in standards is likely.
79. Teaching is good. The teachers have specifically addressed the points of weakness from the previous report. They have a much more comprehensive overall planning scheme. The lesson planning is much clearer, with objectives for learning and criteria to measure how close the pupils get to reaching them. Many teachers put the lesson in context, explaining how it links with what pupils did before and with what follows. Teachers now plan exciting practical experiments, like the Year 2 ice melting topic. They focus pupils well on the key basic skills of observation and measurement. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to predict outcomes and to state their impressions. In the best lessons they give pupils opportunities to see how their measurements can be converted into a graph or a table. The new interactive whiteboards are a valuable tool in making difficult ideas clear to pupils and teachers use them well.
80. The strategy of letting the pupils who have special educational needs attempt challenging work with the support to enable them to progress well is also effective. These pupils particularly enjoy the practical nature of the lessons where they can achieve success that comes harder in mathematics and English. They are often the first to come up with an accurate answer. Pupils use their literacy skills soundly for writing down their accounts of experiments briefly, in a scientific style. Teachers

always introduce technical vocabulary, but do not regularly insist on pupils using correct terminology in spoken answers. Teachers now enable pupils to sharpen their numeracy skills by timing and measuring carefully, such as when pupils in Year 4 checked that the amount of water poured was exactly 300 ml. In some lessons, the introductory discussion is still too long and limits the amount of practical work possible.

81. The subject leadership is satisfactory. The leader is very recently in post, but has already completed an audit of resources and the monitoring of work in pupils' books. She has introduced a new commercial scheme to underpin teachers' expertise and pupils' books indicate that teachers' subject knowledge has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Assessment in science is regular and informative, but is not as detailed as in English and mathematics. This means that teachers cannot track progress as closely, nor match all aspects of the pupils' tasks to their ability.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership and effective action have continued to improve teaching and raise standards.
- Good use of the ICT suite has contributed to pupils' enthusiasm for the subject and the rise in standards.
- Teachers do not ensure that computers are used systematically in other subjects.
- Assessment information is not consistently used to inform planning.

Commentary

82. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and pupils now reach average standards by Years 2 and 6. The co-ordinator's very good leadership has helped to develop many aspects of the subject into strengths of the school's provision. In particular, the co-ordinator has supported staff in the use of the improved computer resources and a new curriculum framework. Staff confidence and expertise have developed as a result of this training and support and they use the ICT suite well. The new ICT system is well managed and strong technical knowledge support maintains a wide range of high quality software matched to pupils' ages.
83. Pupils throughout the school are reaching average standards for their ages. Although they enter the school with low standards and limited experiences in the subject, they achieve well and quickly gain confidence. Teachers have improving subject knowledge and ensure that a good range of work is provided for pupils. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards that have been installed in the ICT suite and many classes to present information and capture pupils' attention. They are having a positive impact on pupils' learning because the clearer visual effects help their understanding in all subjects. Many lessons are taken or supported by the co-ordinator and this has a very positive influence on the quality of teaching. Lessons are carefully planned and most have a good balance of revision and new learning. A developing monitoring and assessment system is giving increasingly useful information, although this is not used systematically in all classes to plan work that encourages the best progress for all pupils.

84. Pupils show an increasing range of skills in using different forms of software. For example, Year 1 pupils have improving familiarity with the keyboard and move the mouse with increasing accuracy to access software. They learn and use a good range of tools in a painting program. Teachers overcome pupils' limited language knowledge by careful attention to the correct terms, although some pupils are slow to take these up. Lessons in Years 5 and 6 make very good use of the co-ordinator's skills. Very good presentations help Year 5 pupils to gain confidence and skills when framing questions to extract information from databases. Year 6 pupils enter increasingly complex formulae into spreadsheets. Both of these activities make a strong contribution to pupils' numeracy skills. Pupils' past work shows that they can enter and edit text, change the size of the font and use Clip Art to create distinctive and appealing work. Much of this is carefully planned to meet the needs of specific audiences with coherent styles and conventions. For example, they make effective use of software to create presentations of their work on the history topic of Victorian Times.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. The overall use of ICT to promote learning in other subjects is satisfactory. Much work in the computer suite is carefully planned to cover aspects of learning in different subjects. In particular, pupils' mathematical skills are significantly developed and presentations contribute to work in history and geography. Pupils develop good skills with painting programs and often use these to create work in the style of famous artists such as Mondrian and Rothko. However, teachers do not make full use of the computers that are in each of the classrooms to give pupils further opportunities to practise skills and support learning in a wider range of subjects.

HUMANITIES

86. As a result of timetabling arrangements, not enough lessons were seen in **history** and **geography** to make overall judgements on provision. History and geography are often taught alternately and so each class was learning about either history or geography. The newly-appointed co-ordinators lack training for their roles and do not directly monitor teaching and standards. However, the curriculum for both subjects has been improved and a satisfactory start has been made in monitoring and evaluating teachers' planning. Satisfactory assessment procedures are not used enough to adapt planning so that pupils achieve well.
87. In **history**, no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. Pupils gain a satisfactory range of knowledge in Years 3 to 6, although standards at the end of Year 6 are below average. Class teachers use good strategies to stimulate pupils' interest but learning is restricted by pupils' weak literacy skills. Teaching in the lessons seen was good but some pupils' limited concentration reduced their learning to satisfactory overall. Some effective strategies such as role playing gave pupils greater understanding of motives behind events.
88. The **geography** schemes of work and planning indicate that the school covers the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. In a very good Year 5 lesson, the teacher used role-playing very effectively to extend pupils' understanding of the importance of water in countries such as Ghana. Good support for pupils with English as an additional language helped them to play a full and active part in the activities.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' knowledge of their own religions is used effectively to promote understanding of other people's beliefs and festivals.
- Pupils' literacy skills are used and effectively promoted.
- Provision has improved but teachers' inconsistent expectations weaken the overall quality.

Commentary

89. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards of attainment meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, but pupils have significant difficulties in expressing and recording what they know. This is because many pupils speak English as an additional language and a number have a limited range of vocabulary. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their understanding of the different festivals and artefacts used by the major world religions. They also make satisfactory progress in understanding how religious beliefs have an influence on how people live their lives.
90. Pupils' knowledge of their own religions is used to good advantage when learning about the festivals and traditions used in various world religions. This helps them to see similarities in the worship and traditions of the different religions and to gain an understanding of how some artefacts are used in a similar way. For example, they learn how candles are used in many festivals in Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. By Year 6, pupils recognise the different places of worship used by different religions and understand how religious belief impacts on people's lives. In many classes, pupils learn that religions traditionally promote a moral code of conduct that affects personal choices and behaviour.
91. Teaching and learning in religious education is satisfactory overall but there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations and teaching skills. Where teaching is most effective, pupils' interest is stimulated through good use of resources and challenging questions that require pupils' greater thought and reflection. In a Year 3 lesson following a recent visit to the local church, pupils' experiences were used well to promote their greater understanding of how artefacts are used in Christian worship. Pupils' literacy skills are used effectively and further developed in religious education. Their speaking and listening skills, for example, are effectively used as pupils discuss their knowledge and ideas before sharing them with the rest of the class. In the two unsatisfactory lessons seen, teachers did not ensure that work was correctly matched to pupils' age and abilities in order to promote good progress.
92. The provision for religious education has improved, with a greater focus on teaching and on the breadth and quality of pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed. She has made a good start in leading the newly implemented scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus and has introduced a satisfactory assessment strategy. Overall, she leads and manages the subject satisfactorily but has not had the opportunity to monitor and evaluate teaching or standards and pupils' learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

93. Only two lessons could be seen in **physical education** but school records show that all strands of the subject are covered. Provision for games skills is enhanced through the use of a range of external coaches in games such as football. Other clubs contribute to pupils' skills, including some that are targeted to support gifted and talented pupils. The observed lessons had well-structured planning and teachers used the behaviour strategies well to control and organise pupils. Standards seen in these lessons were around the average expected for the pupils' ages. Year 5 pupils made good progress in selecting and linking gymnastic movements with increasing precision and control.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in lessons with a strong focus on basic skills.
- Good improvement since the previous inspection; pupils now achieve well.
- The teachers flood pupils with experiences during lessons but pupils have a limited awareness of the concept of culture.
- Good links are made with other subjects, but these are not yet systematic.

Commentary

94. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. This represents a good achievement since pupils start school with limited skills. Provision has improved considerably since the previous inspection. With sound leadership, the teachers have constructed a planning scheme that leads to pupils learning basic skills in a more secure sequence of small steps. Teachers give pupils many good opportunities to follow their own ideas by selecting themes, resources and techniques for themselves. Pupils value this independence and use it well. Consequently, they have a very positive attitude to artwork and concentrate well in sometimes crowded conditions.
95. Teaching is satisfactory, although there were many good features of the teaching observed during the inspection. Teachers organise their classes well, give short, clear and interesting lesson introductions and disperse materials efficiently. They have good subject knowledge and prepare relevant resources well. In a very good lesson, for example, Year 6 pupils gained a good insight into how artists handle movement because the teacher had prepared a clear and detailed ICT presentation. The presentation contained and valued pupils' own work from their computer lessons. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to talk through their own ideas before starting work. In a very good Year 3 lesson, the pupils' discussion about their random patterns was one of the best examples of articulate speaking seen during the inspection.
96. Teachers are becoming creative in linking other subjects to art, but these links are not charted in a systematic way. Teachers are particularly good at showing the influences of famous artists and pupils absorb much culture in this way. Pupils do not, however, have a strong grasp of the concept of culture and do not realise that the images, facts and ideas they absorb are things they should try to fix in their memories. The computer features well in many of the art topics, such as the Year 2 work on book illustrations. Teachers link art topics well with numeracy whenever possible, but the links with literacy are not as close. Pupils tend not to read or write much about art. Pupils who have special educational needs particularly benefit from art. They experience success and thereby build up a more positive self-image. Pupils are generous in the help they give to each other. The subject leader has introduced a useful system for assessing pupils' attainment and to begin to track the knowledge of standards in the school. Her action plan includes the monitoring of teaching to bring all teaching up to the level of the best.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good achievement by pupils.
- A good balance of the strands within the curriculum for technology.
- A strong system for specialist teaching is raising staff expertise.

Commentary

97. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, particularly in Year 2 and Year 6. The curriculum is based well on national guidelines and teachers select topics that are relevant to work that the pupils are doing in other subjects. For instance, Year 5 classes are designing and making guitars to link with their science topic on sound. Long-term planning indicates that pupils experience over a year the full range of design topics, including mechanisms, structures and food technology. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well because they are given good support.
98. Teaching is satisfactory overall but was good in the well-planned lessons observed. This is because the school has wisely adopted a programme of specialist team teaching in this subject. Class teachers observe and help the specialist teacher, thereby raising their level of expertise. The pupils respond well to this and listen in rapt attention as they realise the quality of the instruction is going to enable them to produce very successful outcomes. For example, the pupils' behaviour was excellent in one very good Year 5 lesson, both while they listened and while they were measuring and sawing the initial pieces of their guitar project. Without realising it they were applying numeracy skills very effectively. These are very effective learning conditions.
99. Teachers focus well on the basic design process skills. This is a distinct improvement since the previous inspection. They encourage pupils to use their literacy skills in writing information about their design and evaluating the results. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role in this school. However, he has made a quick start to auditing the resources, establishing the planning and introducing a suitable assessment system. His action plan includes developing the monitoring of teaching to see how effectively the teachers are picking up the training. It also involves beginning to let pupils take part in working with the assessment criteria as a boost to their knowledge of their own learning.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An improved range of activities in all parts of the curriculum lead to satisfactory achievement.
- Teachers make good use of the school's behaviour strategies.

Commentary

100. Pupils' attainment in music is average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and their overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school because they are given a range of experiences that cover all aspects of the

curriculum, an improvement from past provision. The new co-ordinator is gaining understanding of the subject and how staff skills can be developed, providing satisfactory leadership. However, there has been little time available to monitor lessons and pupils' attainment.

101. Teaching was satisfactory in lessons seen during the inspection. Strengths lie in the well-established routines based on national guidance and the school scheme. Most lessons are organised and managed securely, making good use of the school's behaviour strategies. In many lessons, teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to present images and music. There are opportunities for pupils to practise singing and use of simple percussion instruments.
102. Pupils' singing skills are further developed in singing assemblies where they sing and play with enthusiasm and apply their growing skills with pleasure. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, show good control as they sing softer and louder, with clear diction. These sessions make a positive contribution to pupils' music skills, although there is not enough time for teaching to focus sufficiently on remedying weaknesses.
103. Provision is enhanced through a good range of clubs and activities, sometimes specifically targeted to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Opportunities to play steel drums, guitar and brass instruments extend pupils' learning and contribute to social development. Visits and visitors also make a positive impact to pupils' cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

104. Few lessons in this area of the school's work could be directly observed, although many elements were strong features of lessons in all subjects. In all lessons, teachers ensured that pupils felt valued, secure and confident. A mainstay of this approach is the new behaviour strategy that is setting clear guidelines to pupils' interactions. Teachers' greater attention to developing pupils' language skills is having a positive impact in this area. For example, teachers made very good use of discussion in pairs and groups to help pupils to gain confidence in expressing their beliefs. Additionally, all classes have regular opportunities for discussion, sometimes through 'circle time'. In some lessons, role-play was used to help pupils to think about others and how their lives must feel. The school has a carefully planned programme for sex education and drugs awareness.
105. Through a strong community atmosphere, all pupils have equal opportunities and status and they show good respect for adults and each other. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to express their ideas and gain responsibilities, although this is not yet sufficiently consistently done. For example, assessment information is increasingly used to set targets for older pupils but they are not always sure of how they need to improve in order to achieve the targets.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
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	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
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).