

INSPECTION REPORT

HILLSIDE INFANT SCHOOL

Northwood, Middlesex

LEA area: Hillingdon

Unique reference number: 102434

Headteacher: Mr C R A Drake

Lead inspector: Mrs J Hooper

Dates of inspection: 18 – 20 October 2004

Inspection number: 267022

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	211
School address:	Northwood Way Northwood Middlesex
Postcode:	HA6 1RX
Telephone number:	01923 827185
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev David Hoyle
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hillside Infant School serves the local residential area of Northwood in the London Borough of Hillingdon. It is on the same site as the junior school. With 211 pupils on roll, including 77 part-time children in the Nursery, it is about average size for this type of school. Numbers will increase in January when 43 of the older Nursery children will move into the main school to join the other Reception children to make two Reception classes. The Nursery will admit more children to replace them. Pupils come from a wide social mix; when they enter school their attainment overall is broadly average. Very few pupils enter or leave the school other than at the normal times. The school has an increasing number, currently 30 per cent, of pupils whose home language is not English, with 15 per cent at an early stage of acquisition of spoken English language. There is a range of languages spoken but the majority are Portuguese speakers. Eight per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average; one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which proportionally is well below the national norm. The pupils' special needs are mainly related to learning difficulties. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is currently lower than the national average. The school received Achievement Awards in 2002 and 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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19322	Judi Bedawi	Lay inspector	
27240	Tony Hooper	Team inspector	English Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Music English as an additional language
21685	Jenny Catlin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Religious education Pupils' personal, social and health education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is sound. Overall, it provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, with some good features. It gives satisfactory value for money. There is a positive ethos, which strongly supports learning in a safe, warm and friendly environment. The leadership of the school is satisfactory overall, although management and governance are good. Teaching is good overall, enabling pupils to achieve well. The vast majority of pupils behave well, are keen to learn and take full advantage of the broad curriculum enriched by a good range of out-of-school activities.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the time pupils leave school standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science because teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- The pupils have a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is an imbalance in the time allocated to subjects across parallel year groups.
- There are insufficient computers for pupils to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills especially to support their work in other subjects.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.
- The school's ethos promotes very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults in a harmonious environment.
- A team of very effective teaching assistants supports teachers and pupils very well.

Since the last inspection improvements have been satisfactory, overall. Most of the issues raised for improvement at the last inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. However, the curriculum is still not balanced across year groups and the use of information and communication technology to support other areas of the curriculum is still underdeveloped. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science have improved, mainly because teaching, monitoring and assessment procedures are better. The better provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, has led to pupils developing better attitudes and behaviour and the very good relationships. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good. However, attendance is not as good as it was.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	C	B	C	C
Writing	B	A	C	C
Mathematics	A	C	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Overall, pupils achieve well in their learning. Between 2002 and 2004, results in the national tests show that pupils' standards in Year 2 were broadly average in reading and slightly better overall in writing. The results in mathematics were above average in 2002 but dropped in 2003 to average. The school was quick to pick up on this decline in standards and following an in-depth review of teaching strategies, the curriculum and assessment, standards improved greatly in 2004. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was well above the national average in reading

and writing and very high in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science showed that pupils attained above average standards. The school's rate of improvement is above that found nationally.

Achievement of children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Children entered school with broadly average attainment overall. Evidence based on the small number of children currently in Reception shows that most children are likely to reach the expected goals in all areas of learning with a small number exceeding these in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

In Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average, an improvement since last year. In art and design, physical education (gymnastics and games) and religious education, standards are in line with those expected and a significant number of pupils achieve beyond this in all three subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the very effective support they receive. Pupils whose home language is not English achieve well in their acquisition of English language.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. This has a significant impact on the good attitudes pupils have to their work and their good behaviour. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is sound, with some good features.

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is nearly always good or better. Teachers provide very well for those pupils with special educational needs, so that they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The expertise of the teaching assistants is used well to provide very effective support for teachers and pupils. The curriculum is broad and is enhanced by a wide range of out-of-school activities, visits and visitors to the school. However, there is an imbalance between teaching time in many subjects across year groups. There are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to use and develop their information and communication technology skills in other subjects. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory overall. The quality of the care of pupils, their guidance and support is good. There are good links with parents, the community and with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is sound. He has developed a good team spirit in the school so that staff understand the school's priorities and work hard towards achieving them. The role of the subject co-ordinators is developing well.

Management and governance are good. Governors are very supportive and meet their statutory duties. They are well informed about the school and so can take an effective part in its management and have developed a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Control of the school's finances and the day-to-day management of finance are good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents are extremely happy with the education the school provides for their children and are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the approachability of the headteacher and his staff and value the strong multi-cultural nature of the school. Most feel they are well informed about what their children are learning and how they are getting on in their work. Most pupils thoroughly enjoy school and are very keen to participate in all the activities the school provides.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure there is a balance in the time allocated to subjects across year groups.
- Seek ways of providing enough computers for pupils to develop their skills sufficiently and to use information and communication technology skills to support other subjects.
- Improve attendance and punctuality.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils throughout the school achieve well. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A greater than average proportion of pupils achieve the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The vast majority of pupils achieve well because teaching is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well as do those pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (16.3)	16.0 (15.7)
writing	14.7 (17.1)	14.8 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (16.6)	16.4 (16.3)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Standards in the national tests in 2004 showed that pupils in Year 2 attained well above average standards in mathematics and average standards in reading and writing. When compared to similar schools, standards were the same. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was well above the national average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. The trend of improvement is above that nationally. Teacher assessments in science showed that pupils attained above average standards.
2. By the end of Reception children are likely to reach expected standards in all areas of learning with a small number likely to exceed these standards in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Achievement for these young children is good because of the wide variety of learning opportunities offered to them.
3. Overall, pupils in the rest of the school achieve well. The standards attained by the current Year 2 pupils are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The school recognised that standards in mathematics were not as good as it would like in 2003 and so reviewed teaching strategies and the curriculum and improved assessments. The success of this is evident in the much improved results of 2004. Overall, there are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls over time, although in 2004 boys out-performed girls.

4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers and make good progress in lessons as they receive very good support from the experienced teaching assistants. They are identified appropriately and make good progress in terms of the targets contained in their Individual Education Plans. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their acquisition of English through effective support and achieve well.
5. Pupils' standards in art and design, physical education (gymnastics and games) and religious education are in line with expectations, with a significant number of pupils achieving beyond these in all three subjects. In religious education pupils' knowledge and understanding of facts is particularly good. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards in information and communication technology. Literacy and numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in the support of other subjects, but pupils' use of their information and communication technology skills to support other subjects is underdeveloped. Due to timetable restrictions there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on achievement and standards in all other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils like school and take a full part in the varied range of activities on offer. Pupils consistently behave well in and around the school. Good relationships are nurtured amongst pupils. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for social, moral and cultural development is good, and this contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and to their achievement. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory, declining since the last inspection. School strategies to improve attendance are not effective enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes towards school.
- The school enables pupils to grow in self-esteem and maturity.
- The school has introduced the procedure of telephoning parents on the first day of their child's absence and awarding certificates for good attendance.
- Authorised absences are too high and too many pupils arrive late.
- Good attendance is not promoted strongly enough.

Commentary

6. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes towards school; they are keen to come to school and say that they are happy there. Pupils take an active interest in what they are being taught and are keen to show what they can do.
7. Behaviour is good overall and behaviour in assemblies and in the dining room is very good. No incidents of poor behaviour were observed during the inspection. Pupils move safely and sensibly through the corridors and when they go outside, they do so in an orderly fashion. In the playground, they respond well to routines at the end of playtime and they quickly come to order when it is time to come in. They are polite to each other and to adults and visitors. The calm approach taken by members of staff is reflected in the pupils, including those who have experienced difficulties in the past. Pupils with behavioural difficulties make good progress as a result of appropriate planning to provide consistently for their needs. Adults in the school are very good role models. The school ensures that all staff apply the school's agreed behaviour policy consistently and this aspect of the school's work has improved since the last inspection.
8. Pupils are friendly and welcoming; they are encouraged to develop a sense of self-esteem and responsibility for themselves. They are offered good opportunities to carry out duties in and around the school. The good classroom organisation means pupils help those with special educational needs. Pupils demonstrate maturity in their respect for each other's feelings and beliefs. Pupils are aware of the school rules on bullying and respond to them well. Pupils relate

well with one another and parents say that pupils get on well together. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and the school keeps a close eye on this. It would quickly deal with any incidents if they did occur.

9. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy the interesting assemblies, which give opportunities for prayer and celebration. The requirements for collective worship are met, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils realise that their opinions and ideas will be taken seriously, discussed and valued. This is especially so in their personal, social and health education lessons. Throughout the school, pupils have a good awareness of their community and understand the importance of their own culture, as well as having a good sense of the wider world. They have a good understanding of a range of faiths and beliefs. The school pays a great deal of attention to ensuring pupils understand the difference between right and wrong from an early age, and pupils demonstrate this very well. Through fostering positive relationships between pupils, welcoming a number of visitors into school and taking pupils on visits outside school, the school promotes pupils' social development well.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.2	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

10. Although pupils enjoy school, attendance is unsatisfactory. Declining since the last inspection, attendance is now below most other primary schools nationally. This is due to high levels of authorised absence, including term time holidays.
11. Attendance is not promoted strongly enough, particularly with parents. However the school has recently introduced the good practice of telephoning parents on the first day of their child's absence to seek reasons for non-attendance. The school wants to reduce term time holidays and authorised absences. However, the current attendance policy is unsatisfactory because it offers no guidance on the policy objective to reduce holidays, nor is there any information about punctuality procedures. The threshold for monitoring individual pupils' attendance and lateness is too low. The school is aware of the need for a policy review.
12. The onus is on parents to tell the school about term time holidays. Reminders about attendance and punctuality are not routinely included in newsletters. Few identified strategies are established to ensure that parents understand how good attendance and punctuality affects their children's progress, learning and achievements.

Exclusions

In the last full school year no pupils were excluded. However, there has been one very recent fixed term exclusion this autumn. Proper procedures are followed.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is sound overall, with some good features. The good range of out-of-school activities, school visits and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum but pupils in parallel classes do not receive an equal amount of teaching in subjects. The quality of teaching and learning

is good overall. The school provides a caring learning environment. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are catered for very well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are catered for well. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school. The school has developed good links with parents and with the community and has good links with other schools; these have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment procedures are effective and manageable and used well to track pupils' attainment, achievement and progress especially in English and mathematics, and are developing satisfactorily in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and impart it well.
- Teachers in the Reception classes clearly understand the needs of the children.
- The school has thorough assessment procedures in place in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' capacity to work independently and collaboratively is well developed.
- Learning support assistants are used very effectively to support pupils' learning, especially those with learning difficulties.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	14	9	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. During the inspection the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan work well to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been adapted well to suit the school's needs.
14. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception are consistently good and, as a result, children are achieving very well in their personal, social and emotional development and achievement is good in all other areas of learning. There is very good teamwork between all adults and this ensures effective support for children's learning. Lesson planning is detailed and provides effective learning opportunities the range of children's abilities. Good assessment practices mean that all adults keep detailed records of children's development in each area of learning that provide secure information for the next steps. The smaller steps for learning outlined in the curriculum guidance for this age range are highlighted in the day-to-day lesson planning, which enables adults to record progress against them throughout the year. The leadership and management are very good and ensure that these young children are given a very good start to their education.
15. The teaching and learning of English and of mathematics is good. Throughout the school, areas for development have been carefully identified and focused upon. Key skills of reading and writing are taught progressively and are built on systematically as pupils move through the school so that they make good progress. In mathematics, teachers are careful to ensure that pupils' learning is based upon sound mathematical understanding. Teachers frequently use good questioning techniques to challenge pupils' thinking and direct their questions skilfully to challenge pupils of different abilities.
16. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and the mutual respect that exists between the teachers and their pupils creates a keen and fruitful learning environment. Due to the school's very positive approach to promoting pupils' personal, social and health education as they move through the school, they develop the confidence to work independently and

- collaboratively as the situation arises. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and use this effectively to support learning.
17. Teachers plan their lessons well and frequently involve pupils in their own learning by telling them what they are going to learn at the beginning of the lesson. Although, in the best cases, teachers challenge pupils at the end of the lesson to demonstrate that they have achieved this learning, this plenary session is not often used to good effect. Marking is generally satisfactory. Most teachers make supportive comments in their marking and in the best cases they give pupils a further focus for improving their work.
 18. The school has good assessment procedures in English and mathematics and these are applied consistently by all teachers. Information from tests taken by different year groups, together with an analysis of the Year 2 national assessment test results, is used to identify areas for development and to set whole-school targets. Assessment books of half-termly tasks mainly in English and mathematics are used in Years 1 and 2 and give a good indication of progress in the subjects. Although assessments are made in other subjects, in general, these are not recorded formally and the school realises this needs to be developed.
 19. Teachers use the information gained from evaluations and formal and informal assessments of the pupils' learning effectively to guide their planning and to target the work of groups and individual pupils. However, this varies between subjects. The information is used to group the pupils according to attainment in English and mathematics lessons as well as to focus on those pupils who need additional help. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the needs of the pupils and in the best lessons work is matched to individual as well as group needs, so that all pupils experience success, achieve well and make good gains in their learning.
 20. One of the main reasons why the quality of teaching is so good is the high level of support teachers have from teaching assistants. Most are very experienced and know the pupils well. They are skilful at managing pupils who have behaviour problems so that lessons move smoothly and there are very few disruptions.
 21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good for individuals and small groups supported by experienced teaching assistants. The careful analysis of test results ensures that pupils with special educational needs are easily identified and that their progress, alongside that of all pupils, is carefully tracked. The teaching assistants perform a monitoring role for the teacher, by feeding back assessments on how these pupils have responded to particular tasks and any problems that have arisen. In lessons seen, pupils with special educational needs were being supported well so that they completed tasks successfully alongside other pupils. A similar use of assessment information is used to identify gifted and talented pupils and to devise strategies to meet their needs.
 22. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support. Many of these pupils have Portuguese as their first language and the school provides a Portuguese teacher who supports them well. She also acts as an interpreter when needed and translates school documents as necessary. Most of her work is with younger pupils, but she also supports older pupils who are new arrivals. There is also good support by teaching assistants for pupils from all linguistic backgrounds. These assistants have had recent training, which enables them to carry out this role effectively. Teachers' planning identifies these pupils and is modified where necessary to meet their needs.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. A good range of out-of-school activities enriches it. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they achieve well.

- Pupils in parallel classes do not receive an equal amount of teaching in National Curriculum subjects.
- Good professional development of teaching assistants increases their effectiveness in working with pupils.
- The very good programme of visits and visitors to the school makes a valuable contribution to the educational experience of the pupils.
- There are far fewer computers than would normally be seen in a school of this size and so pupils do not have sufficient time to use their ICT skills to support other subjects.

Commentary

23. There is a good curriculum for the Foundation Stage. It is well planned to deliver all of the areas of learning. Throughout the rest of the school there is a broad and relevant curriculum that covers all subjects of the National Curriculum. Linking work in different subjects develops pupils' learning. However, the amount of time spent on subjects in parallel classes differs. Some pupils only receive half as much teaching in certain subjects as others in the same year group do, for example in religious education in Year 2. In art in Year 2, there was 30 minutes' difference in teaching time each week, which, over an academic year, constitutes 19 hours of teaching time. In some classes the amount of time spent on teaching certain subjects is well below that expected in schools nationally. For example, in one Year 2 class 20 minutes a week was allocated for religious education, which is less than two per cent of the taught week; in most schools the allocation is four to five per cent. This weakness was mentioned in the last inspection report and has not been addressed. There is also some time wasted. For example, a physical education lesson for Year 2 pupils was timetabled in the hall for 20 minutes after dinner, but there was no activity planned for those 20 minutes while the hall was being cleared and swept.
24. Religious education is appropriately planned to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and there is an effective programme of personal, social and health education. This helps pupils to make informed decisions about their personal lives. The school has good links with the junior school, so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their schooling. There are also good procedures to ensure that the transition from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is smooth and effective.
25. The good extra curricular activities and the many places of interest that pupils visit broaden and enhance the curriculum. Pupils participate in an appropriate range of out-of-school clubs, including football and French. The school runs well-attended breakfast and after-school clubs. The Christmas and end-of-year productions develop pupils' interest in the performing arts, as do the visits by theatrical and musical groups.
26. At the time of the last inspection, the provision for pupils with special educational needs was good. This has improved significantly since then and provision for these pupils is now very good. Pupils with special educational needs are now very effectively supported and the practice of teachers and other adults meeting regularly to discuss in detail the progress of individual pupils is a significant strength. The school has identified its gifted and talented pupils and devised a policy setting out how it intends to meet their learning needs. This provides effective guidance to teachers on how to identify gifted and talented pupils, what strategies they might adopt or the resources available nationally and through the Internet for use in curriculum planning for these pupils. There is also good support for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
27. Staff have good qualifications and experience and the school is successful at recruiting and retaining teachers and support staff. There is a good programme for developing the skills of all staff through in-service training. This helps to create an effective team in which all understand their own roles and the roles of others. The accommodation of the school is adequate for teaching the National Curriculum. There is an attractive outside area for the children in the Foundation Stage, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has rather

small grounds, and the site means that much of it is sloping and this limits its usefulness. The contours of the site also make wheelchair access very difficult, as there are steps to many areas of the school. Currently, there is no access plan to address this. There is no grassed area for outside activities, although the school does have access to the junior school field in the summer. Resources in most subjects are at least satisfactory and sometimes good as they are for English, and this helps in the effective teaching of most areas of the National Curriculum. However, the ratio of computers to pupils is markedly below that recommended and this means that pupils have limited opportunities to develop and use their skills in information and communication technology.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare and protection are good. Early identification of children's needs in the Nursery and Reception classes is a strength. Procedures for monitoring academic progress and personal development are good overall. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Arrangements for seeking pupils' views are satisfactory. Health and safety is satisfactory. The induction of pupils is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are cared for well, with prompt intervention to support individual needs.
- The very good relationships between adults and pupils enhance learning.
- Academic monitoring in English and mathematics is well established, but not yet fully embedded in other subjects.
- Pupils settle easily into school life.

Commentary

28. All staff are sensitive to the needs and understanding of infant pupils. Their gentle attention enables pupils to develop basic learning skills well and so gain in confidence and independence. In the Nursery and Reception, early identification of children's learning and personal needs is astutely assessed, with very good support swiftly provided so that rapid steps in learning are made. Throughout the school, teachers work very closely with Nursery and teaching assistants so that pupils of different abilities and those with special needs and home languages other than English progress well. The welfare of pupils is well addressed by many qualified first aiders. Health and safety is soundly maintained. Child protection awareness is good. Staff have had recent updated training. Very helpful informal advice is available from the child protection service. Any sensitive records are kept securely. Procedures for pupils in public care are being instigated. The child protection policy requires review to include the latest requirements.
29. Relationships between pupils and adults in the school are very good, having a positive impact on the school community. There is strong mutual trust and respect. Pupils talk easily to staff, including the headteacher, who finds time to enjoy a chat with them. The staff are ready to listen and sort out any difficulties that pupils may have. This allows pupils to concentrate fully on work and to enjoy learning.
30. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are good overall. They are well established in English and mathematics. Pupils have learning targets to help them progress and gain understanding of how to do even better. Work for specific groups including gifted and talented pupils and those with special needs or with a home language other than English is identified and very well supported by using trained teaching assistants. In other subjects academic monitoring and assessment procedures are largely informal and not yet firmly embedded. Teachers' knowledge of their pupils' personal development is good but not always recorded. Individual plans are prepared for pupils having specific learning and behaviour difficulties and

these are shared with parents. Teachers and support staff keep careful records of the progress made by pupils for whom English is an additional language.

31. Arrangements to settle pupils into school are good. Carefully planned visits and meetings with parents and children enable the exchange and sharing of information. Children spend time in the Nursery or Reception class before attending regularly, so that they get used to their surroundings and the staff. Parents can stay with their children until they settle. Older pupils are equally well supported and welcomed. If possible, pupils with home languages other than English are introduced to other pupils or staff who speak the same language so that pupils find learning easier. New pupils are helped to make friends quickly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with its parents and carers. This has improved since the last inspection when partnership was satisfactory. Pupils' reports are good and detailed. Links with the community and with other schools are good. Parents are highly satisfied with the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school values the support, interest and involvement of parents.
- Pupils' reports are good, with very informative reports for children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Community and school links are good with arrangements for pupils' transfer to the junior school well established.
- Parents are very pleased with the way that the school works with their children.

Commentary

32. The school is successfully encouraging parental interest and involvement in school life. The 'open door' policy offers a warm welcome from friendly office staff. There is good access to staff including the headteacher. Around 20 parents regularly help in class or listen to pupils reading. Many more offer support for visits and trips or are involved in the hard working HPSA (Hillside parents' school association). This fundraising provides commendable additional finance of around £15,000 per year, which is shared equally with the junior school. The infant school has recently received audio resources and books, through funds raised in events such as the Summer Fayre, discos and quiz nights.
33. The quality of information that parents receive, including the annual reports, is good. The reports of children in the Nursery and those for pupils with special needs are very detailed and extremely informative, giving a very good 'big picture' of children's progress. The pupils' reports in Years 1 and 2 are good. Specific academic targets are provided in English and mathematics but are not always given for other subjects. Reports are individual to the pupil concerned and contain all required information. Homework provision is satisfactory. There is an appropriate policy that clearly outlines the amount and type of homework that is set. It is largely focused on reading, spellings and mathematics. There are weekly joint newsletters from the junior and infant schools. Curriculum, topic and homework information is clearly displayed on classroom windows. The prospectus and the annual governors' report meet statutory requirements.
34. The bilingual Portuguese teacher provides good support for parents. She has acted as an interpreter at parents' evenings and has also helped Portuguese parents to complete documentation. The local authority's ethnic minority achievement service can call upon speakers of other languages as necessary.
35. Links with other schools and the community are good. The school has a good reputation in the area. Local parents particularly value the good 'wrap around' care provided by the breakfast and after school clubs. This extends to a holiday club that is open to pupils from many different schools, also providing an ongoing source of income for Hillside. Links with local churches are long-standing, with clergy sometimes leading assemblies. There is church

sponsorship for concerts and creative arts events. Elderly members of the community volunteer their time to help in school. The local authority is setting up a school/community consultation group to investigate Safe Routes to school. There are good links with the local NATO base. Transfer to the junior school is seamless because there is a good programme of visits for pupils. Individual transfer plans are put in place for pupils who need them. This is good practice that leads to pupils feeling secure about moving on.

36. Parents express a very good level of satisfaction with the school. They know their children are happy and learning well. They like the approachability of the headteacher and his staff and value the strong multi-cultural nature of the school. A small minority of parents expressed some concern about the quality of information and homework. The inspection team found that these concerns were unfounded.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory, overall. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory. He has developed a good team spirit in the school so that staff understand the school's priorities and work hard towards achieving them. The management and governance of the school are good. Governors are very supportive and meet their statutory duties.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has ensured there are good established management procedures in place and that the school has a caring and generally inclusive ethos.
- Not all issues for improvement raised at the last inspection have been fully addressed.
- There is a spirit of good teamwork between all staff.
- Governors are supportive, and have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The management of special educational needs is very good.
- The school finances are managed efficiently.

Commentary

37. The headteacher's leadership is satisfactory, as at the last inspection. However, the management and governance of the school have improved and are now good. The headteacher has successfully created within the staff a good team spirit which fosters a caring atmosphere in which there is the intention that all pupils have an equal opportunity to do their best. However, important issues have not been addressed from the last inspection; for example, there are still significant fluctuations of time allocated to the subjects in parallel classes. As a result, the pupils in these classes do not have equal access to the curriculum. Monitoring reports show that until about two years ago time allocations were being monitored but since then this monitoring has lapsed. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who speak English as an additional language take a full part in all school activities. However, initiatives for developing information and communication technology skills as an integral part of the curriculum, although slightly better than at the last inspection, have not been developed sufficiently. This is mainly because pupils do not have access to enough computers to develop and use their skills.
38. The headteacher provides an atmosphere in which staff work together as a fully committed and enthusiastic team and ensures that the aims of the school are clear and the staff work hard to achieve them. The deputy headteacher provides sound support for the headteacher. The role of the subject co-ordinator is developing satisfactorily and co-ordinators have a good knowledge of the strengths in their subjects and have developed action plans to address any weaknesses.

39. The headteacher is well organised and ensures that all systems and routines run efficiently and effectively and that the school operates as a well-ordered community. He has been keen to maintain the higher than average standards, especially in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection and has put good monitoring and assessment procedures in place to do this. Where the results of the national assessment tests have not been as good as expected, thorough analysis of the results have been made and adjustments to teaching and the curriculum put in place. The much improved results in the 2004 mathematics tests over those in 2003 are a good example of this.
40. The co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed and meets statutory requirements. Meticulous records are kept, so that the co-ordinator is very well informed about the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator and support staff attend a very wide range of courses on a regular basis and the co-ordinator has developed very good contacts with outside agencies. There are good and secure systems for regular review and consultation with parents.
41. The leadership and management of pupils who speak English as an additional language are good. There is effective liaison between the school and the local authority service. Funding is available through the ethnic minority achievement grant, although, as with the special educational need funding, the school adds to this to pay for the extra help that these pupils need. The level and quality of support are good and ensure that these pupils achieve as well as the rest of the pupils.
42. The school improvement plan is a clear document detailed for a year with an outline plan for future developments. It highlights the most important areas for development and demonstrates a clear vision for raising standards, especially in English, mathematics and science. Achievable goals have been set, timescales are realistic and funding has been allocated appropriately. However, not all issues mentioned in the school's own evaluation for improvement are part of this improvement plan; for example, the school recognises that attendance is an important area for improvement but there is no plan for doing this. The professional development of staff is linked appropriately to school developments as well as their personal development, identified through well-established performance management involving all staff.
43. Governors meet their statutory duties fully and work hard to support the school. Within the governing body there is a very good balance between newly appointed and experienced governors and they work together as a good team. There is a good level of expertise between them, which is used to good effect, and they have set up an effective committee structure, which enables them to work efficiently. Many governors, including the Chair of Governors, are regular visitors to the school in their monitoring role. The school has appropriate self-evaluation procedures which inform all school improvements and through this governors have gained a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They fulfil their role well in holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	674,407
Total expenditure	665,096
Expenditure per pupil	3,276

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	30,737
Balance carried forward to the next	40,048

44. Control of the school's finances and the day-to-day management of finance continue to be good, as at the last inspection. Detailed analysis of spending is carried out regularly. Best value is sought by the governors at all times when considering the purchasing of goods or services. Financial planning is related through the school improvement plan to the school's educational priorities. Governors are aware of the high level of support needed for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils who speak English as an additional language to achieve well. As a result, they are committed to providing a good number of well-trained teaching assistants to ensure this level of support and commit the appropriate funding to this.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children enter the Nursery in either the September or January before their fourth birthday. Only a very few, dependent on the availability of space, enter at the beginning of the summer term. Consequently, the majority of children receive three terms of Nursery education and a minority have four terms. Children move into the Reception class in either the September or January before their fifth birthday. As a result, some children have less than one year in the Reception class. The children who experience a full year in Reception achieve better than those who do not because of the small size of the class and the high level of teacher support they receive.

In all areas of learning the teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good. As a result, most children in the current Reception class are likely to reach the expected goals in all areas of learning with a small number exceeding these in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

The Nursery assistants and teaching assistant make a very good contribution to the children's learning. Good opportunities are provided for the children to develop independence and to take responsibility for their activities. There is a very good balance between activities that are directed by the adults and those where children can choose what to do. The staff assess and monitor the children's learning and progress very well.

The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the needs of children of this age and promotes this well through good example. There are good arrangements in place for introducing children to the school which include meetings with parents and a questionnaire for parents and through these staff gain a good indication of what individual children can do. This is very much appreciated by parents because it makes starting school a positive experience for each new intake.

The school has developed the outside area, particularly for the Reception age children, so that they have improved access to outdoor activities and a wider range of activities available to them. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high priority given to children's development in this area.
- Children behave very well, relate well with one another and concentrate on the work they are given to do.

Commentary

45. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is a high priority for staff, and they ensure that all children feel happy and secure in class. Children are learning that good behaviour is a fundamental requirement in the classroom and are quickly grasping school routines. Their behaviour is very good because this aspect of their development is continually promoted and expectations are high. They are learning to put up their hands and pay attention to adults and to one another. They have quickly come to trust the adults who work with them and it is obvious that they feel secure. Children relate well with one another and play happily together and there is no evidence of any unkindness between children. They have been quick to settle in, aided by effective induction procedures. Almost all children concentrate on the

tasks that have been set for them and try to succeed. Girls tend to be more focused than boys when engaging in optional activities; a minority of boys sometimes tend to flit between activities.

46. The environment in the classrooms is effectively controlled, which has the positive effects described above, and, when optional activities are provided, children choose from activities in which their own decision-making and opportunities for improvisation are well developed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have very good opportunities to develop their listening skills and already follow instructions well.
- There are some good interactions between the teaching assistants and individual children; opportunities for more imaginative play could be improved to foster language development.
- Children show interest in books and handle them with respect; parents have good opportunities to share books with their children.

Commentary

47. Children's listening skills are being developed well. Even at this early stage in the academic year, the youngest children listen well to stories and pay careful attention to detail. As a result, they are able to answer questions about what happened in a story and in doing so it is evident that some have taken in a lot of detail.
48. When small groups of children work with adults, they engage in conversations with children that develop their vocabulary and give them an opportunity to express their likes and dislikes and to talk about their experiences. Many children are able to explain what they are doing and are confident in communicating with one another. They are able to negotiate when making decisions about what they should do when they work together. Activities, and the way they develop, are on occasions overly controlled and therefore children do not always improvise in their play in a way that could lead to acquiring new language as a result of discovery and exploration.
49. The work of last year's Reception children shows that by the time they leave Reception most reach expected standards and higher-attaining children exceed these expectations. All children understand that print is used to convey meaning and are able to write or suggest a comment to accompany their drawings. Higher-attaining children describe what is happening in their drawing with one or two sentences that include some correct use of capital letters and full stops. Lower-attaining children show some confusion in the formation of letters.
50. Children are making good progress in learning letter sounds and some already have a clear awareness of the letter and sound at the beginning of common words. The teachers' expectations are high in this area and this is enabling children to make rapid progress with their early reading skills. They show interest in books and handle them with respect; parents have good opportunities to share books with their children through the system for taking books home.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and the teachers have high expectations for children's learning.
- There is good use of opportunities to reinforce children's learning.

Commentary

51. Children achieve well in mathematics, due to the good teaching that they receive. Their skills in this area are often used as an integral part of activities inside and outside the classroom. Adults make good use of opportunities to reinforce learning in mathematics, such as producing symmetrical patterns. Many children can count to five and a few are familiar with larger numbers up to 12 in their everyday lives. Children learn to sort equipment according to criteria, such as colour, and begin to explore concepts of capacity and measures when they use sand and water to fill containers of various sizes. They are familiar with rhymes that reinforce their knowledge and understanding of number. Most children are likely to reach the expected standards for their age by the time they enter Year 1. However, a few can already count beyond ten and others are making good progress in counting. Planning for mathematical development shows that the teachers' expectations are high and the range of activities closely reflects national guidance for these children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good questioning skills develop children's knowledge and understanding.
- Well-planned activities extend children's knowledge of the world around them.

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching is good and all adults use effective questioning skills to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world and to ensure that they achieve well. Most children show curiosity about their surroundings and need little encouragement to explore, investigate and ask questions. The curriculum offers them a wide range of experiences to expand their knowledge of the world around them and will enable many to reach the expected standards for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1. Activities are well planned to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion forms an important part of their work and children are encouraged to be observant and describe what they see. Some are confident users of computers. For example, they operate a mouse successfully when choosing the colours for their pictures and they also, with support, successfully print out the patterns they create using a paint program.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good development of children's physical skills, such as body control and co-ordination.
- There are good links with mathematical development.

Commentary

53. Children learn to use a wide range of tools correctly. They use scissors safely and hold pens and pencils correctly. Staff work with small groups of children in order to make sure that these skills are developed appropriately. There are good opportunities for the children to use a variety of large equipment. The outside play area is imaginative and used well. There are an appropriate number of wheeled toys and large climbing apparatus that make a good contribution to children's developing skills. Lesson planning supports a good range of activities that promote the larger-scale movements of the children, who move with improved confidence in the Reception class and make good use of the available space. Children have a growing awareness of how to move over, under and through large apparatus, making a good contribution to their mathematical development. Most children are likely to reach, and a few will exceed, the expected standards for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to learn songs, which are incorporated appropriately into literacy and numeracy sessions.
- Role-play activities are well developed.

Commentary

54. Children are learning a range of songs within literacy and numeracy sessions, which support their learning in these areas. Most children join in with well-known songs and many enjoy copying the teacher's movements when enacting a song. They show a good awareness of music when given the opportunity to dance.
55. The artistic activity within a creative development session seen provided good opportunities for children to make choices in the materials and techniques they used. Children have opportunities to paint, where there is no adult-determined starting point, and painting is well organised within an imaginative context to ensure the children gain the most they can from the experience. Children in the previous Reception class produced some lively drawings, however, to illustrate written work. Planning for creative development is good and children have produced imaginative products in the past.
56. Role-play areas both inside and out have provided a rich source of learning, with helpful prompts and good resources. All adults provide effective support to groups of pupils which develop their understanding.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good enabling pupils to achieve above average standards in reading and writing.
- There is very good support that enables pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.
- Many pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have neat joined handwriting.
- Pupils make little use of computers to draft and redraft their writing.
- Marking and the amount of work set varies between classes in the same year group.

Commentary

57. During the inspection the standards seen in Year 2 were above the national average, an improvement since the last inspection. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well as a result of the high quality support that the school provides. Last year the school found that girls did not attain the same standards as boys in writing. However, the school has been successful in addressing this and during the inspection there was no significant difference in the standards that boys and girls attain.
58. It is evident from both lessons and written work that teaching is good. Pupils concentrate well and work hard in most lessons. Teachers use questions well to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening. As a result of the good development of these skills, pupils talk confidently to visitors and can explain their work in other subjects clearly. In a good lesson in Year 2 in a discussion on the characters in a story, pupils were encouraged to think about how the characters felt. This made a good contribution to their moral and social development. The teacher used an interactive whiteboard effectively and this helped her to maintain a lively pace. All pupils, including the more able, were suitably challenged. Pupils worked productively, and turned out work that they were proud of. In the lessons seen, pupils co-operated well in small groups and pairs.
59. The standards in reading in Year 2 are above average. All the pupils who were heard to read, read fluently. Teachers provide good models for pupils. They all take care to speak clearly and read with expression. This emphasis on clear speech helps the progress of pupils who speak other languages at home. Most pupils in this age group use their knowledge of letter combinations and recognition of simple words to help them read. Higher-attaining pupils name authors that they enjoy and say what they like about their reading books.
60. Standards in writing are above average. The written work covers all the areas required by the National Curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to be imaginative in their use of language and pupils in Year 2 produced some good sentences, for example, 'There, straight ahead of me stood something white and furry.' The proportion of pupils in Years 1 and 2 who use joined handwriting is higher than usual as a result of the school's emphasis on this from an early age. Most form their letters neatly, although this is better when pupils have lines to guide their writing.
61. There are displays to celebrate pupils' work in classrooms and other areas of the school. However, there is much less word-processed work in displays and books than is usually seen in schools like this. Assessment procedures are good and the achievement of pupils is tracked thoroughly as they move through the school. Teachers sometimes give useful advice in their marking that helps pupils improve their work, and pupils are given individual targets to guide their progress. However, the good marking is not consistent. There is also a marked variation in the amount of written work in the books of the two classes in Year 2.
62. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over this responsibility and, although she is managing the subject well, she has not yet had time to make an impact on the subject. Resources for the subject are of good quality and there are enough of them to teach the subject effectively. The library is centrally situated and has a suitable stock of books in good condition, which is better than at the last inspection. The school has maintained good standards and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The use of language and literacy to support other subjects is satisfactory. In some classes and subject areas this is happening as a matter of course; for example, pupils write factual booklets in science and narrative accounts in religious education. However, the school

recognises that there are other areas that can be developed and is working to build on the foundations already established.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well and gain above average standards because of the good teaching.
- The co-ordinator has used analysis of the national tests effectively to improve standards.
- Marking does not always make it clear what pupils should do to improve their work.

Commentary

64. Improvement has been good because at the last inspection when standards in mathematics were average, in the current Year 2, standards are above average. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching. This includes pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, who are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Boys and girls are currently making similar progress, although last year boys out-performed girls.
65. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn to recognise number patterns. They are confident about explaining how they use their knowledge of addition, subtraction, etc. to solve word problems. Pupils sometimes used computers in classrooms during the inspection to practise their skills with programs that linked well to the lesson focus. However, the use of information and communication technology in mathematics is underdeveloped
66. There is a strong emphasis on developing numeracy. Pupils in Year 1 practised ordering numbers and developed an awareness of the patterns that combinations of numbers created. In Year 2 quick-fire practice developed mental calculation effectively. Teachers are careful to use correct mathematical vocabulary, for example, 'sequence', 'digit', etc., and this develops pupils' literacy effectively.
67. During the inspection there were some good lessons and the overall standard of teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully and tell pupils what they are about to learn and in the best lessons, through good questioning, they check whether the pupils have achieved this learning. In some lessons teachers used interactive whiteboards and data projectors very effectively. This stimulates the interest of pupils and helps teachers to maintain a lively pace. Teaching assistants play an important role in lessons. They have a good grasp of the focus of the lesson and support individuals and groups, especially pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
68. The National Numeracy Strategy is the basis for planning in the subject. It is supplemented by other materials and adapted as appropriate. Good planning ensures that all areas of numeracy are fully covered. Some marking is good and suggests how pupils could improve their work. However, this is not always the case. The system of assessment tracks the achievement of individuals in the long and short term thoroughly. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. After the dip in results in 2003, the co-ordinator's analysis of where pupils did well and less well helped teachers to improve pupils' grasp of all areas. This was reflected in the higher standards in the 2004 national tests. Resources are good and help teachers to teach numeracy effectively.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Pupils often use mathematics in other subjects and develop an appreciation of its practical use. In science pupils record data and create graphs. Numeracy skills are also developed in other lessons, for example, measurement in design and technology. Teachers also develop

numeracy in everyday ways such as during registrations. However, much of this is unplanned, rather than being part of a focused strategy for developing pupils' number skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils achieve well and standards are above average.
- Teaching is good.
- Learning through investigation is a strength of the teaching.

Commentary

70. Due to timetable restrictions only one lesson was observed during the inspection. This, together with evidence from pupils' work in books and on display and discussions with pupils, indicates that standards are above average and have improved since the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, the more able and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
71. In the one lesson observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory. However, other evidence, especially the good progress and achievement pupils make, suggests that teaching is good overall. Teachers plan carefully to cover all aspects of the science curriculum, with particular emphasis on life and living things. Pupils make gains in their learning because a high priority is placed on practical work throughout the school. Teachers use an approach that enables pupils to investigate and experiment so that they develop good observational skills and an understanding of how to carry out experiments. A good example of this was when pupils in Year 1 planned an investigation to find out if 'the oldest child is the tallest'.
72. Teachers often make good links between subjects. For example, in the lesson observed, the pupils were learning about looking after themselves and keeping healthy and in particular the good and bad effects of medicines; this made a significant contribution to the pupils' personal, social and health education. During this lesson the welfare assistant made a particularly well informed and sensitive contribution. She encouraged pupils to ask questions and through her own skilled questioning techniques she encouraged them to think for themselves and, in many cases, answer their own questions. There were many examples in the scrutiny of pupils' work which showed that pupils use their literacy skills well to support science, for example, labelling diagrams and making lists.
73. Leadership and management of science are good. The systems used to monitor and evaluate the subject are good. The scheme of work encourages an emphasis on investigative activities throughout the school. However, there is a discrepancy in the amount of time spent on the subject across year groups. Assessment procedures are in general satisfactory but are not recorded formally as in English and mathematics. Teaching assistants are well involved in on-going day-to-day assessments. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good. Teachers make good use of the school grounds to investigate plants and how they grow, pond and bird life, and how to care for the environment. Recently, the co-ordinator organised a highly successful 'Science Week' and a display of photographs shows that it provided a wide range of exciting activities for the pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

74. During the period of the inspection, only one short lesson was on the timetable to be observed, so no judgement has been made about the provision for information and communication technology.

75. As the school does not have a computer suite, the teaching of ICT skills is done in classrooms. Most classes only have two computers available, so pupils have very little opportunity to practise their skills and use these skills as a tool to support other subjects. The ratio of pupils to computers is well below current government guidelines. Pupils have access to the Internet and there are suitable safeguards to prevent them being exposed to unsuitable material. There are CD-ROMs available and pupils occasionally use these for research. The school uses a government recommended scheme of work and this covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a system of recording how well pupils have understood units of the scheme of work. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. The use of information and communication technology to support other areas of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. During the inspection information and communication technology was used in some classes to support pupils' learning in mathematics and English. There are programs available for other subjects, for example, art and religious education, and pupils demonstrated them during the inspection. However, there is no consistency of the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

77. **History and geography** were not a focus for the inspection so no overall judgements can be made about provision or standards. There are schemes of work in place for both subjects that cover the requirements of the National Curriculum effectively. These are regularly reviewed. However, the timetables show that time allocated for teaching is not the same in parallel classes.
78. Resources in each subject are good. In history there is a good stock of books and artefacts. This gives pupils the opportunity to extend their understanding of past eras. Geography also has suitable materials – globes, atlases, etc. – to teach the subject effectively. These subjects use an informal system to see how successfully units of work have been understood. The emphasis on class discussion in both subjects helps all pupils to develop their skills in speaking and listening.
79. There is a good programme of visits and fieldwork that enables pupils to broaden their knowledge of historical and geographical topics. In geography there are visits to local sites for work on specific projects. These are often used to develop numeracy and literacy. Pupils write about what they have seen and construct graphs to record the survey work that they have done. In history there are also visits to local museums such as the Gunnersbury Museum where pupils have the opportunity to dress as Victorians and experience a 'Victorian Day'. This helps to bring the work done on this period to life. Visitors to the school such as the postman, who has explained the need for addresses to be precise, also enliven the geography syllabus. Both subjects make satisfactory contributions to the development of literacy, but the use of information and communication technology to research and record pupils' written work is underdeveloped.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education promotes pupils' knowledge about the teachings of Jesus by providing opportunities for pupils to relate stories in the Bible to everyday situations.
- There is a shortage of artefacts.

Commentary

80. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, achieve well. This maintains the standards noted in the previous inspection. Teaching was good overall. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils' showed a satisfactory understanding of the story of Rama and Sita. They understood that this Hindu festival of light celebrates the triumph of good over evil and of hope for a happy future. Pupils listened attentively while the teacher told the story and showed they had a good understanding of the festival. In Year 1, pupils from both classes visited the church to extend their understanding of a Christian baptism. This was very well planned by the teachers and, as a result, all pupils understood the significance of the ceremony and that the water used is special. Additionally, they had a clear understanding of the duties and responsibilities undertaken by god-parents.
81. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. However, the amount of time allocated for the teaching of religious education varies across parallel classes; for example, pupils in one Year 2 class get twice as much teaching time as those in the other. The school promotes religious education through adopting an interactive approach to improve speaking and listening skills as well as developing moral and social skills. The co-ordinator has secure knowledge of the subject and the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. She sets a good example by her own work in the subject and supports others through the development of the curriculum. She has purchased a basic range of artefacts and books; she acknowledges that the range of artefacts needs improving to help pupils to see more clearly the similarities and differences between religions.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

82. No judgements on standards, achievement or provision can be made on design and technology and music as these subjects were only sampled during the inspection. Art and design and physical education were foci for the inspection.
83. No **design and technology** lessons were observed during the inspection. However, planning shows that throughout the school all elements of the subject are planned for through a government recommended scheme of work.
84. Only one **music** lesson was observed during the inspection. Timetables indicate, however, that different amounts of time are allocated to teaching music across year groups. The co-ordinator for the subject has musical qualifications, which gives her the expertise to lead the subject. The scheme of work is based on a commercial scheme that supports teachers who have little or no musical knowledge well. The resources are good and enable the subject to be taught effectively. During the inspection, inspectors visited three morning assemblies. Pupils only sang during one of these, which limits their development of vocal skills. There are Harvest Festival and Christmas events that give pupils opportunities to perform. Visitors to the school, such as a Latin American percussionist and musicians from the local education authority's music service, enrich the curriculum and enhance the pupils' cultural awareness. There is an informal scheme of assessing the work that pupils and class groups do.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils use a wide range of materials in their work.
- Teachers make effective links between art and other subjects, to make pupils' work meaningful.
- The subject is led well.

Commentary

85. Standards in art and design in Year 2 are as expected for their age although there were examples of work of above expected standards. This is similar to the judgement made at the last inspection. In the lessons observed pupils were enjoying their artwork and, as a result, many were achieving and progressing well. In one lesson, the pupils in Years 2 were using various techniques, such as painting using oil pastels and collage to produce pictures of buildings. Many worked painstakingly to produce work of a good quality. The teacher had made a very effective link between the walk pupils had made to Northwood to look at buildings in their geography studies.
86. Planning and work on display show that pupils develop and use their skills appropriately as they move through the school. They use a good range of materials effectively in their work, such as pencil, paint, chalk, pastel and wax crayons, string and other materials for printing, and paper and fabric for collage work. Pupils experiment with colours, mixing and matching them, using colour to show different textures and to produce different tones. In their lesson, Year 1 pupils showed they had a good understanding of 'warm' and 'cold' colours and, using their observations of the portrait work of famous artists, they were mixing colours appropriately to paint 'sad' and 'happy' pictures. In this lesson a group of pupils were modelling human heads in clay and using tools well to create specific effects such as hair.
87. Two art lessons were observed and the quality of teaching in both was good. It is clear from these lessons and work on display that teachers teach skills successfully and build on these systematically as pupils move through the school. Teaching assistants provide very good support and encouragement for pupils who have difficulties with their work.
88. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is well qualified and has a particular interest in art and design. She provides good support for other teachers. The resources are satisfactory overall and specialist needs are being built up as they are required. However, the amount of time allocated for art varies considerably between classes in the same year group. Some classrooms are a little cramped for practical subjects such as art and the shared areas between classrooms are not used effectively for extension of the classrooms for such work. The artwork pupils undertake makes a good contribution to their cultural awareness.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and health development.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to appraise and evaluate their own and others' work so they can improve.
- The school does not have a grassed area to extend the physical education curriculum to activities such as athletics.

Commentary

89. Due to timetable restrictions it is not possible to make judgements on all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Three lessons were observed, two indoor games activities and a gymnastics lesson. In these lessons standards were in line with expectations for the age

groups and there were a significant proportion of pupils exceeding these. From the games lessons observed in Year 2 pupils demonstrated that they had a satisfactory control of their movements. For example, they showed control when running, jumping, skipping and throwing and catching balls, beanbags and quoits. All pupils were fully involved and achieving at a satisfactory level. In these activities some of the pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language were achieving very well.

90. The quality of teaching varies but is satisfactory overall. In the one gymnastics lesson with the Year 1 pupils the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher had high expectations of what the pupils could do and moved the lesson on at a very brisk pace so pupils achieved very well. Her behaviour management was positive and she used praise well and appropriately to encourage pupils. The lesson was very well organised and strict health and safety procedures were in place for pupils when they moved the large apparatus. There were very good relationships and pupils enjoyed their work. Teaching points were made clearly, and there were good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their skills. A particular strength of this lesson was that the teacher had high expectations of what the pupils could do, which was not so evident in other lessons. However, a weakness in all the lessons observed was that there were too few opportunities for pupils to appraise and evaluate their own and others' work so they could improve. Teaching assistants were fully involved in lessons supporting those pupils who needed extra help.
91. The headteacher is co-ordinating the subject satisfactorily on a temporary basis. There is an appropriate curriculum in place based on a commercial scheme which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, there is an inconsistency in the time allocated to physical education across classes in the same year groups. Assessment is at a very early stage of development. Resources are adequate, although there is a lack of storage facilities. The outside hard play area, which is just about adequate for games, is sloping and is not conducive to playing ball games such as football. However, the extra-curricular football club is well supported. The school does not have its own grassed area for extending the physical education curriculum to activities such as athletics and sporting activities normally played on grass. Pupils have a good knowledge of the importance of the warming up and cooling down sessions in physical education lessons. The school's positive approach to the importance of physical education has been part of its success in its work towards the Healthy Schools initiative and makes an important contribution to the pupils' personal, social and health education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

92. This area was sampled during the inspection. However, the school has appropriate arrangements for teaching **personal, social and health education**. The impact of timetabled lessons, and enrichment activities, and the school's involvement with the local community ensure that pupils make good progress in their personal development, learn about health, and know how to function as positive members of society.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	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	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4

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).