

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LAUNCELOT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bromley, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 100692

Headteacher: Mr C Childs

Lead inspector: Ms R Frith

Dates of inspection: 27 – 29 June 2005

Inspection number: 267190

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	246
School address:	Launcelot Road Downham Bromley Kent
Postcode:	BR1 5EA
Telephone number:	020 86972304
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms P Palmer
Date of previous inspection:	9 June 2003

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Launcelot is a larger than average size community primary school. The school is situated on a large estate with high levels of deprivation, unemployment and cramped housing. The socio-economic status of families is well below average and a well above average percentage of pupils receives free school meals. In general, when children join the school their attainment is well below that usually seen for children of that age and for some children it is low, particularly in the areas of communication, language, literacy, personal and social development. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average and three pupils have a statement of special educational need because they need considerable help with their learning. Those receiving additional support mainly have social, emotional, behavioural, physical, speech, communication, autistic or specific learning difficulties. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and 36 per cent have English as an additional language. Approximately 15 per cent are at the early stages of English language acquisition. One child is in public care and one comes from the Traveller community. Pupil mobility is high and only 50 per cent of the current Year 6 have had all their education in Launcelot. Teacher mobility has also been high over the last few years but has recently become more settled. The school received the Healthy Schools Award and Clean and Green Award in 2004. The school is involved in the following initiatives: Excellence in Cities, Sure Start, the local Education Action Zone and the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Science Geography History
9457	Gillian Bindoff	Lay inspector	
32136	Lesley Brookes	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Religious education
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Personal, social and health education Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Launcelot Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education.** Staff are successful in creating a supportive environment where pupils enjoy learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but recent good teaching is helping standards to rise. Leadership and management of the school are good and the day-to-day running of the school is effective. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership by the headteacher is good.
- Recent developments in the way the school monitors and evaluates its work are effectively steering improvements.
- Standards are improving in English, mathematics and science but are not as high as they could be.
- Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. This helps younger pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' personal qualities are developed well and this leads to good attitudes, relationships and behaviour.
- Work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs.
- Curriculum developments in the nursery, reception and Year 1 classes have brought about significant improvements in provision.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their communication and literacy skills across subjects.
- Pupils are not always clear about how they can improve their work.
- Links with parents and the community are good.

Overall, the school has shown good improvement since the last inspection and is no longer judged to have serious weaknesses in its provision. The headteacher has been successful in appointing a team of teachers and teaching assistants who share his vision for the school and have brought stability. They have addressed the main issues identified in the last report and their work is beginning to impact positively on pupils' achievement. They have also been successful in improving the curriculum, and strategies are now in place to raise standards further.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

**Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory**, but as a result of recent improvements many pupils are beginning to achieve well, particularly from the nursery to Year 2. Many children have well below average standards when they first start school and because of this, they are not likely to reach all the goals set nationally for children at the end of reception, despite the good quality teaching they receive. Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are still working at well below average levels in English and science because improvements are relatively recent and insufficient time has passed for them to fully impact on attainment. Mathematics standards are well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. There is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs who are not able to reach the standards expected for their age, despite sometimes achieving well.

Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at average levels in information and communication technology and religious education. In some lessons, insufficient support is given to pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language but once pupils become fluent, they frequently attain standards that are higher than pupils whose first language is English.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good overall.** Children quickly settle in the nursery and reception classes and develop good attitudes to learning which are generally sustained throughout the school. Because pupils are interested in what they are doing, they usually behave well. However, pupils in Year 6, in particular, have experienced significant disruption to their education over time and some find it difficult to motivate themselves and sustain good attitudes to their work. Despite the very good work done by staff to encourage good levels of attendance, a significant number of pupils do not attend school regularly or arrive on time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.** This inconsistency results in satisfactory achievement overall even though in some lessons pupils achieve well and make good progress. Throughout the school, good teaching is characterised by high expectations and good subject knowledge which teachers use well to encourage pupils to learn. Work is challenging and maintains the interest of the pupils. Staff insist on high standards of behaviour and this creates a good climate for learning. The curriculum, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. Pupils' personal and social needs are quickly identified and good support given, some of which is of a particularly high quality. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for them to get across their views and ideas and this is helping them to become involved in school developments. Staff have good links with parents and the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall.** Leadership by the headteacher is good and a key factor in the school's recent improvement. His clarity of vision and sense of purpose are being used well to evaluate the school's work and identify strengths and areas for development. The headteacher and governors have successfully addressed issues, such as weaknesses in teaching and learning and pupils' unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour, which previously acted as barriers to achievement. Not all statutory requirements are met.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Most parents have positive views about the school and believe that improvements in leadership have resulted in good teaching. They think their children are now making good progress. Most pupils like school. They trust adults and think there is always someone to turn to. They believe they are listened to and supported well.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Plan work that is more closely matched to pupils' particular learning needs.
- Plan more opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their communication and literacy skills.
- Through better marking and more frequent reference to their learning targets, ensure pupils are clear about how they can improve their work.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that issues in relation to child protection and risk assessment are fully addressed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Over time, pupils have achieved satisfactorily, but due to a more settled learning environment, in nearly three-quarters of the lessons seen they achieved well. Children in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 are achieving well. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are achieving satisfactorily overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are beginning to rise due to recent improvements in teaching.
- Changes to the curriculum in the nursery, reception and Year 1 classes are helping to raise standards.
- The oldest pupils have been more affected by the serious weaknesses in past provision and consequently have not achieved over time as well as they should.
- Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at average levels in information and communication technology and religious education and have frequently achieved well.
- Fluent, bilingual speakers frequently attain higher levels than their peers.

### Commentary

1. On entry to school, attainment is well below that seen for children of the same age nationally. For many children, communication, language, literacy, personal and social development are the weaker areas. Each year a few pupils join the school speaking little or no English or have special educational needs. Due to significant developments in the nursery and reception, children are receiving a better curriculum and are achieving well. Staff focus on developing their personal and social skills and their speech and range of vocabulary. However, because standards on entry are so low, many children are not likely to reach the levels expected nationally for pupils at the end of reception in several areas of learning, particularly in relation to their reading, writing and number work.
2. Attainment in the 2004 national tests and assessments for pupils in Year 2 was well below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science when compared with pupils in all schools. Nevertheless these results showed an improvement in standards compared to the previous year. When compared with schools who had a similar number of pupils receiving free school meals, pupils attained below average standards in reading and science, average standards in writing and well below average standards in mathematics. The results in science were lower than in the other subjects because no pupils gained a level higher than that expected for their age, indicating a lack of challenge. These results continue a rate of improvement which over the last five years has been below the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.6 (11.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.0 (11.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	13.9 (13.0)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Evidence from the inspection and unpublished results of the 2005 national tests indicate that standards have risen in reading, writing, mathematics and science even though overall results remain well below those expected for pupils of this age. Higher attainers have been challenged more appropriately particularly in mathematics, when compared to last year.

Pupils are currently working at average levels in information and communication technology and religious education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (24.2)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.2 (24.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	27.0 (26.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6 was below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. These results showed an improvement in all three subjects when compared with the previous year and helped to maintain an overall rate of improvement which has been in line with the national trend. The percentage of pupils gaining a level higher than that expected for their age in mathematics was near to the national percentage and indicates that higher attaining pupils were appropriately challenged. When compared with pupils who attained similarly in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils attained above average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. There were some differences in the targets the school had set and in the results of the 2004 tests which were mainly due to the high level of pupil mobility.
5. Evidence from this inspection and from the information provided by the school indicates that pupils in the current Year 6 are achieving well below average standards in English and science and below average standards in mathematics. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are broadly average. Factors which continue to affect pupils' achievement and the standards attained are unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality and the disruption to learning which these older pupils experienced over a significant period of time, either through high pupil mobility or frequent changes in teaching staff.
6. Staff have worked hard to remove the barriers to learning and currently several factors are instrumental in helping pupils to succeed. Some of these have only been evident in the last year so have had no bearing yet on overall standards. The school's good ethos is effective in helping pupils to gain confidence and develop their ability to tackle new tasks. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved overall so less time is lost settling pupils to work. Much of the teaching was good and this had a direct influence on the rate of pupils' learning. Also, pupils' attendance has improved overall.
7. No significant difference was noted in the achievement between boys and girls during the inspection although there have been some differences in the national test results. The school has improved its provision for higher attaining pupils and is at the early stages of developing provision for those that are gifted and talented. In some lessons, these pupils are not achieving as well as they might because they are doing work which is insufficiently challenging.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to their peers when taking account of their prior knowledge. They frequently make good progress towards the targets identified for them in their individual education plans when receiving additional specialist support, particularly those pupils in the nursery to Year 2. However, achievement sometimes falls to just satisfactory in lessons when the work is not well matched to their capabilities, or insufficient notice is taken of their specific learning needs.

9. From the information provided by the school and through observation and discussion with pupils, no significant underachievement of pupils from specific minority ethnic groups was evident. All pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum which meets their needs and helps them to achieve at least satisfactorily. However, in some lessons, pupils who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language are not adequately supported so are not achieving as well as they could. However, when compared with their peers, fluent bilingual speakers frequently achieve better and reach higher standards.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils like school, they enjoy learning and their behaviour is good. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development and this helps pupils to develop responsible attitudes. Attendance is improving but is still unsatisfactory and there are too many pupils who do not arrive on time in the morning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils respond well to the school's very good strategies for promoting good behaviour.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are good and create a good environment for learning.
- The school's strong emphasis on promoting social and moral values contributes effectively to pupils' personal development.
- Good provision for pupils' cultural development contributes to the very harmonious relationships between pupils of diverse ethnic backgrounds.
- Punctuality is unsatisfactory. Pupils arriving late disrupt the start of the school day.
- Some pupils in Year 6 have negative attitudes to school which impact on their learning and the learning of other pupils in the class.

### **Commentary**

10. Parents say that their children are happy at school and enjoy learning. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute well to the good environment for learning and to their achievement. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard, and in most lessons they listen well, sustain their concentration, are keen to participate and work well independently and in pairs. When learning is fun and their interest is stimulated they respond with enthusiasm as in a debate about fair trade and when making music with a visiting specialist teacher. When teaching is less well matched to their needs their attention declines and they are less motivated to learn. Children in the nursery and reception are very keen to engage in the activities provided for them and are beginning to develop their speaking and listening skills, to work independently and to develop social relationships. Many make very good progress in this area of learning and are likely to achieve the expected levels in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year.
11. Pupils' behaviour is good overall because it is managed effectively by staff and pupils know what is expected. Good arrangements have been made to improve behaviour in the playground and these are having a good effect. Parents say that behaviour has improved significantly under the leadership of the headteacher. There is a sociable, friendly atmosphere within the school with pupils getting on well together and good relationships between pupils and the adults in the school. There are several pupils in the school who have difficulty managing their own behaviour and they have very effective support which helps them to cope with school life and to make progress in their learning. The school excludes pupils for fixed periods when their behaviour is not manageable and this policy is bringing about improvement. The number of pupils who have been excluded is reducing significantly and is expected to meet the local education authority average by next year. The school deals well with incidents of bullying and racism when they occur.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	148	17	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	12	5	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	22	8	0

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

- Pupils in Year 6 have experienced considerable disruption to their education during the primary phase and have not had the opportunity to develop mature and responsible attitudes. Some pupils find it hard to concentrate and to apply themselves to their work and their behaviour is often distracting and intrusive in their lessons. Their achievement is satisfactory but has been affected by their attitudes and behaviour.
- The school's provision for pupils' personal development has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Pupils make good progress in their personal qualities because the school gives them good opportunities to develop social relationships, to understand moral issues and to adopt the values which contribute to a positive society. Good use is made of the school's cultural diversity to promote respect for different cultures and faiths and this is woven into many aspects of the school's work. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory but opportunities are lost in assemblies to enable pupils to reflect on spiritual aspects of their lives.

## Attendance

The school has good strategies for improving attendance. Although attendance is still very low compared to most schools, it is steadily improving and the school expects to achieve a satisfactory level within two years. The school has made some good efforts to improve punctuality which was identified as an area for improvement in the previous inspection. However, strategies have not been rigorous enough to sustain improvement and too many parents bring their children to school a few minutes late. This disruption delays the start of lessons and reduces the opportunity for all pupils to start the day well.

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	2.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The curriculum, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Some high quality support is provided for pupils experiencing particular difficulties but there are some weaknesses in provision for child protection and for health and safety. Staff value pupils' views and are beginning to take these into account when making school improvements. Links with parents and the community are good and links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching, learning and assessment are good for children in the reception year and in Years 1 and 2. Overall, they are satisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6 with good features in many lessons seen.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory overall.
- Recent developments in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 have helped to ensure that teaching is more relevant to the children's needs.
- There are inconsistencies in the way staff use the information gained from assessing pupils' work to plan for their next stages in learning.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and pupils respond well. This helps to create a good ethos for learning.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their communication and literacy skills across other subjects.
- Teachers do not always clearly indicate how pupils can improve their work.
- Support for pupils at the early stages of English as an additional language is not always effective.

### Commentary

14. A major focus for improvement identified by the headteacher was the need to bring about consistency to teaching and learning through the appointment of staff who were keen to stay in the school for a few years. His success in this area has been a major feature in the overall improvement of the school. The chart below gives an outline of the quality of lessons seen during the inspection and reflects the emphasis placed on improving teaching and learning. The identification of good teaching practice through the monitoring of lessons and the sharing of good practice during the current year is beginning to impact positively on the rate of pupils' learning and achievement. However, this has not been in place long enough to have significantly raised overall standards in the tests at the end of the infants and juniors.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1(2%)	8 (19%)	23 (53%)	11(26%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

15. Care has been taken to ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and also support the headteacher's vision for school improvement. The current staff team are working very well to establish a strong ethos for learning and this is having a positive effect on how pupils learn. Expectations are generally high, with staff taking time to engage the interest of their pupils and encouraging them to succeed. This has helped to raise the standard of behaviour across the school. However, a small minority of pupils, particularly in Year 6, find it difficult to motivate themselves, or behave well and this affects their learning and sometimes the learning of others. New teachers have quickly gained the confidence of pupils, and support staff, some of who have been in school for longer periods, have provided a 'familiar face' during a period of change. The expertise of support staff was seen being used well when developing the younger pupils' communication skills. However, overall, insufficient opportunities are given to pupils further up the school to develop these skills or use their literacy skills across a range of subjects.
16. Recent developments in the organisation and philosophy of practice in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 are beginning to bear fruit. Teaching focuses more on developing children's knowledge, skills and understanding through play and investigation and this meets the children's needs well. Early indications are that children in Year 1 have better attitudes to learning because they are interested in what they are doing and feel able to succeed.

Teaching in Year 2 continues to focus on meeting the needs of the wide range of pupils in the class. This is reflected in the unpublished national test results where pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language generally achieve well. Overall teaching and learning are good.

17. Although many good lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning over time is only satisfactory. Relative weaknesses are related to a mismatch of work to pupils' capabilities which is evident in some lessons and in some of the pupils' work books. Although improvements have been made in the way that teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress, evidence gained is not always used well to plan work which systematically builds on prior learning. For example, some pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are not adequately supported and some higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Also, the marking of pupils' work is not consistent so some pupils do not clearly understand how they can improve. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work.
18. Staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and those from a range of different faiths and backgrounds. All are well supported, so that they are included in class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their capabilities. The diversity within the school is valued. Fluent, bilingual learners are usually confident in class and keen to participate. Consequently, they frequently achieve well.
19. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures to support and guide pupils with special educational needs. In the early years of schooling they are good. Assessment procedures for those with special educational needs are good. Pupils with specific needs are identified early and the targets in their individual education plans monitored regularly. A number of commercial schemes have been introduced, specifically to support and develop speaking and listening skills, and they are used to good effect by skilled teaching assistants. Teachers know the pupils well and have good support from the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs. Good use is made of additional services such as the local authority learning support services and there is appropriate involvement with the parents and with the children themselves. All these aspects support the pupils' learning overall.

## **The curriculum**

Overall, curriculum provision is satisfactory. There is a suitable range of opportunities for pupils to learn, and consistent approaches to planning for them. Opportunities for enrichment are satisfactory. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- An innovative curriculum, experimentally combining the Foundation Stage and Year 1 in early years' provision, is helping to raise standards.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum and accommodation are a strength.
- Support for those in the early years of schooling, who have special educational needs, is a strength.
- There are innovative developments in art and design, and in music.
- Access for those with a physical disability is poor.
- There is no school library.

## **Commentary**

20. The school keeps its curriculum under constant review and implements changes appropriately. Curriculum planning and schemes of work have been systematically developed to ensure full access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Each subject is given an appropriate amount of time. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to monitor teachers' planning and scrutinise pupils' work regularly. They plan to model and observe lessons and this has already taken place in some subjects. A recent innovation has been the inclusion of

Year 1 in the Foundation Stage curriculum organisation and planning. This has been of great benefit to pupils who need the support this regime offers for learning through structured play. The art curriculum is benefiting from the presence of an artist in residence who is raising the profile of art in the school. A music specialist has been working with the children in recent weeks which is helping to improve the overall music curriculum.

21. The range of visits and visitors gives pupils extra chances to learn but the range of extra-curricular activities is limited. Educational visits are regularly planned and enhance the quality of learning. Pupils in Year 6 had recently spent a day in London with visits to Tate Modern and St Paul's Cathedral which had developed their interest in art and architecture. Each year group has at least one visit further afield each year and older pupils have residential visits. Visitors are invited to talk with pupils and share their knowledge and expertise. Three weekly clubs for sport, one for each age range, benefit from coaching from outside experts. There are currently limited opportunities for pupils to take part in team sports and no opportunities to compete against other schools in different leagues. There are plans to extend the range of clubs in the next year, initially with an arts club for gifted and talented pupils.
22. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. Infant and junior departments are in separate buildings joined by a covered way. Apart from one ramp, there is no access for those with a disability and the junior department is on two floors. Although the building is old there are positive attempts to make the surroundings more attractive and displays significantly enhance the environment and place value on pupils' and teachers' work. The school has a dedicated computer suite which is used well, although it has no air-conditioning. There is no central school library, which adversely affects pupils' opportunities for independent research using books. This is compensated for, to a certain extent, by book collections within each classroom and pupils' ability to research using the Internet. Teachers are appropriately qualified and skilled and receive good support from the team of dedicated and enthusiastic teaching assistants who support speaking and listening skills in the early years particularly well.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school's provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils is satisfactory overall. Satisfactory support and guidance contribute to pupils' achievement and to their good personal development. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to express their views about the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Procedures for child protection do not fully comply with requirements.
- Caring and supportive attitudes of staff promote trusting relationships between pupils and adults.
- Good induction arrangements for children entering the nursery and good support and guidance for children in the Foundation Stage help them to achieve well.
- Excellent support for individual pupils by learning mentors helps pupils to overcome barriers to learning.
- Risk assessments are not fully in place.
- The school is not sufficiently inclusive because it is not accessible to pupils and adults with physical disabilities.

### **Commentary**

23. Parents say that their children feel safe and secure at school and most pupils say that there is an adult they would go to if they had worries at school. These views reflect the friendly environment in the school where adults value children and build trusting relationships with them. Pupils gain confidence at school because they are cared for, receive praise and encouragement and are able to celebrate their successes.
24. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to be healthy and to keep safe. All classes meet together each week to discuss issues pertinent to pupils' lives and pupils are

helped to learn how to make sensible choices. Pupils' progress in developing personal qualities is recorded and tracked effectively. Satisfactory procedures are in place to make sure that pupils are safe when they go on educational visits away from school but the governors do not have a full range of risk assessments in place to cover all school activities. Some hazards associated with the premises have been identified and assessed but the governors have more to do to ensure that everyone who uses the school is as safe as possible. In particular, the governors' accessibility plan makes no provision for people with physical disabilities.

25. Vulnerable pupils are given excellent support by learning mentors which helps them to gain self-esteem, to improve the management of their own behaviour and to develop social relationships. The support they receive enables them to remain in school and some pupils overcome their difficulties and make good progress in their learning. Although the school is very experienced in dealing with issues related to child protection the staff with management responsibilities for child protection do not ensure that all required procedures are followed correctly.
26. Children in their early years at school settle in well because good links are quickly established between home and school. Children rapidly become familiar with routines and they are offered interesting and exciting things to do. They are supported well when they transfer to the reception year and make good progress in their learning to the end of Year 2. Good practice in monitoring the children's progress and moving their learning forward at the right time helps them to achieve well and they develop good attitudes to school. Guidance for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 is satisfactory but there are inconsistencies in the ways teachers use their assessment of pupils' progress to decide what pupils need to do next. Also, there are weaknesses in the marking of pupils' work which does not clearly tell them how to improve.
27. The school council provides pupils with an effective system for discussing their views about the school and for contributing to decisions about future development. Pupils say that their ideas are listened to but a culture of pupil involvement in decision making is not yet well established in the school.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school fosters good links with parents and with the community which contribute to pupils' learning. Links with other schools are satisfactory and there are good professional links with local colleges.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A very good partnership between the nursery and Sure Start promotes good relationships with parents.
- Good links between home and school in the nursery, reception and Year 1 help children to achieve well.
- Target setting meetings between parents and teachers give parents good information about what their child needs to do to improve.
- Visitors to the school contribute well to pupils' learning.
- Annual written reports on pupils' learning do not give parents enough information about how their children are getting on.
- There are not enough opportunities for parents to contribute their views on the future direction of the school.

## **Commentary**

28. Parents have positive views of the school and value the improvement brought about by the headteacher. The partnership with parents is good because parents feel welcome in the school and have good informal contact with class teachers. They find it easy to talk to teachers if they have a problem. They have good information about the day-to-day life of the school and some parents contribute to school life as volunteer helpers. Parents can contribute to their child's learning because they receive newsletters at the beginning of each term giving information about the work to be done and some guidance about how they can help at home. The meetings between teachers and parents to set and review learning targets for pupils are effective because parents know what their child must do to improve. Inspectors agree with parents that end of year written reports do not give enough detailed information about what pupils know, understand and can do and how they have progressed over the year. More explanation of national standards is required for parents to understand how their child is getting on in relation to these. There is no provision for consulting parents about their views of the school. This limits the effectiveness of the partnership with parents because parents do not contribute to decisions about school improvement.
29. The close partnership with the Sure Start team contributes very well to initial contact with parents when their children first start school. Parents have good information about the nursery and how to support their child and are encouraged to be fully involved with nursery staff in helping their child to learn. Informal coffee mornings encourage parents to become familiar with the school and provide a supportive environment for parents to gain confidence in themselves as co-educators of their children. These strategies are successful in engaging parents with their child's learning and their interest and support contribute to children's good achievement through their early years in school to the end of Year 2.
30. A strength of the school's links with the community is the good range of visitors who come to work with the pupils. Visitors contribute to pupils' learning very well in sport, art, music, drama and in their personal development, especially in learning how to keep safe. The artist in residence has worked with pupils and teachers and their work is very well displayed around the school which enhances the school's environment. Pupils have some good opportunities to contribute to the life of the community, especially through their involvement in the local arts festival. The school's partnership with Sure Start is very effective.
31. Links with other schools are mainly on a professional level. Pupils rarely share activities with pupils from other schools and there have been no inter-school sports matches in the current year. Good partnerships are well established with local secondary schools and colleges and the school provides good support for trainee teachers and work placement students. Effective links are also in place with South Bank College through the Qualified Teacher Status accreditation scheme which has been undertaken successfully by several teachers in the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the school by the head teacher is good; planned improvements are beginning to have an impact on standards in the classroom. The leadership of other members of staff with responsibilities is satisfactory overall. The governing body fulfils its duties satisfactorily. Management of the school is sound. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The head teacher has high expectations as to what the school needs to do to improve.
- A more stable and effective teaching force has been established.
- The governing body is aware of the challenging tasks that lie ahead, and is now more informed and able to contribute to the development of the school.

- The school improvement plan identifies the areas for development in teaching and learning, curriculum and assessment. The school is tackling these areas well.
- New management procedures are in place and beginning to have an impact on standards in the classroom.
- Some statutory requirements are not fully met.

### **Commentary**

32. In their responses and questionnaires, parents readily confirm the significant and recent improvements brought about by the head teacher. He has a clear vision of what the school needs to do to further improve. Planning to achieve this vision and to raise standards and achievement, through detailed monitoring, is good, and is successfully addressing the weaknesses highlighted at the last inspection. The school improvement plan is comprehensive and is successful in identifying the most important things the school needs to do. In most subjects, where there are co-ordinators, action plans have been prepared that show improvements linked to raising standards and achievement. The senior management team's work to develop the school's different key stages has been particularly successful in the nursery, reception and the lower part of the school. This planning shows the school's drive to develop the role of co-ordinators and to create an effective working team that shares the headteacher's vision. The headteacher is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and has rightly identified continuing professional development to address any issues.
33. The school has established effectively a positive climate for learning. Behaviour has improved over the last two years and inspection evidence confirms that pupils are keen to learn. Planned developments, particularly in English and mathematics, are now linked to the careful tracking of pupils' progress and the standards attained. There are indications that these developments are beginning to bear fruit, although further monitoring is required to evaluate their ongoing effectiveness, particularly in relation to the more careful planning of classroom activities to cater for different learning needs and abilities.
34. In the recent past, the recruitment and retention of staff have been difficult and have slowed the rate of improvement. A more positive picture is now emerging. Good links with initial teacher training institutions have helped with the recruitment of new teachers who understand the school's particular situation and its needs. Good procedures for the induction of new staff, along with performance management targets based on monitoring and linked both to school and to professional development, are helping to establish a more effective teaching force.
35. Governance is satisfactory overall. Fairly new governors, including the chairperson, are aware of what needs to be done to raise standards and achievement, and are supporting the school in its endeavours. They are encouraged to review the work of the school and so to contribute to its development. With this information, governors now know the challenges the school is facing, and can offer their individual and corporate support and expertise. Clear improvements have been made since the last inspection when governance was an area of concern. However, the school is not yet fully meeting all statutory requirements, with some omissions in child protection and risk assessment.
36. The school's finances are now being soundly managed. There has been a deficit budget in recent years, which the school is steadily working to reduce through careful yet necessary measures. Overall the school now provides a satisfactory quality of education and gives satisfactory value for money.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	944,370
Total expenditure	975,580
Expenditure per pupil	3,364

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	13,370
Balance carried forward to the next	- 17,840

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection both in the nursery and reception classes. These have ensured that the quality of provision overall is now good and that current practice reflects national guidance. One of the most significant changes is the good induction arrangement for children on entry to school and the relationships developed with their parents through links with the Sure Start programme. Also, through the Early Years Transition Project, progression and continuity of learning from reception to Year 1 have developed well. This means that the philosophy and practices developed in the Foundation Stage have been adopted in Year 1 to develop happy, confident learners who have good attitudes to learning before they tackle more formal work. A significant investment has been made in developing resources and accommodation and in increasing staffing. Developments for the outside curriculum have been particularly good. Leadership and management have been good as significant improvements can be seen in the children's attitudes to learning and achievement.

One of the most significant changes has been the reorganisation of the teaching areas, both inside and out, which now ensure that children have easy access to all areas of learning. Old and inappropriate resources have been thrown away and some new resources purchased. Planning has improved and is now good so that appropriate time is spent on adult-led and child-initiated activities. Information gained from assessing children is being used well to provide a planned curriculum to ensure good, consistent learning across all areas. Staff work hard to ensure that children with special educational needs or those with little or no English are well supported. The help given to these children is of a good quality and helps them to settle well to their learning. Good support is given to extend their English language and ensure that they fully understand what is said to them and what they are expected to do. Staff assess the children's learning on a day-to-day basis through careful observations and use this information to build up an individual profile of learning for each child.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching is at least good and sometimes very good, enabling children to achieve well.
- Many children are on course to meet the expected standard by the time they reach Year 1.
- Good practice is helping to form effective links with parents.
- Children are encouraged to develop good behaviour and attitudes to learning.

#### **Commentary**

37. Many children enter the nursery with personal and social behaviour which is well below that usually seen for children of this age. Due to good support and teaching, by the end of the reception year children have developed good attitudes to learning and good behaviour which help them to settle to their work. This can be seen by many children in Year 1. Good relationships are forged between home and school and this helps children to separate from their parents. Through the Sure Start programme, parents are encouraged to support their children's learning. Relationships between adults and children are good. Children generally respond well to the staff because they are confident that adults will listen to them and treat them fairly. Teachers and support staff remind children of the importance of sharing and taking turns, and provide activities which promote these skills, such as a shopping game.

Many children develop good behaviour in the nursery because they are interested in what they

are doing. This is further developed in reception when they are encouraged to persevere and to complete activities before moving on.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and this is now helping children to achieve well.
- Children receive good support from the teaching assistants.
- There is a good focus on developing children's communication skills.
- Children's communication skills are sometimes poor.

### **Commentary**

38. Although many pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and some reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1, a significant number are unlikely to reach this standard. This is because they have well below average standards on entry to school and some children are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language or have particular learning difficulties. Staff adopt a good range of strategies in the nursery to encourage the development of the children's oracy and literacy skills but some children do not readily talk with each other unless prompted. In the reception class, teachers successfully build on the nursery's good work by encouraging children to respond and speak confidently, for example, when developing their reading skills. Many reception children have the confidence to speak with adults and each other but use a restricted range of vocabulary and do not speak clearly. Children's speaking skills are systematically developed through the provision of specific activities, such as in the imaginative play areas in nursery and reception. Most children respond well to stories as they are encouraged to listen and put forward their views but a few find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time. Children benefit from specific sessions when they learn the sounds that letters make and use this knowledge when trying to sound out unfamiliar words. On entry to the nursery, children develop their writing skills by learning how to hold the pencil correctly, recognising and writing their own names. This is extended in the reception classes when children write for a variety of purposes.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and are helping children to achieve well.
- Some children are likely to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1 but a significant number are not.
- Children's number skills are developed well through a range of practical activities.

### **Commentary**

39. The children's mathematical skills and understanding are taught during specific sessions, and consolidated through daily play activities. In the nursery, children are encouraged to count regularly and to recognise numbers on display and in their work. They learn about shape, colour, pattern and size through many activities, for example, when decorating butterflies. Staff take opportunities to develop learning through, for example, playing with malleable material as they encourage children to remember shapes and develop an understanding of height and length when using building blocks. In reception, children have daily numeracy lessons which help to prepare them for work in Year 1. In a good lesson observed, children's understanding of money and counting skills were developed as they acted out the roles of

shopkeeper and customer in the greengrocers. Children were seen confidently using dice when playing games whilst others enjoyed singing number rhymes and songs.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well.
- Not all children are likely to reach the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Good links are made with other areas of learning.
- Children experience a good range of activities.

### **Commentary**

40. It was only possible to observe a limited number of activities during the inspection, but teachers' planning and classroom observations show that children receive a good range of experiences over time. In the nursery, children showed a good understanding of how butterflies develop from caterpillars because effective links have been made between areas of learning. For example, children have read stories about caterpillars and created their own through using a wide range of resources. In reception, the children's early scientific skills are further developed as they learn how materials change, when melting chocolate and coating pieces of fruit before putting them in the refrigerator. Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their ideas through playing with small toys and acting out family roles. Children have regular opportunities to use the computers and other forms of information and communication technology, for example, by using programs to compose music and learning about technology in the home. Children begin to learn about several religions and celebrate a range of festivals.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children reach standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Teaching, learning and achievement are good overall.
- The outdoor areas for the children, particularly in the nursery, are much improved due to recent hard work by staff.
- Children develop their physical skills well through formal physical education sessions and through daily play activities.

### **Commentary**

41. Staff in the nursery provide outdoor activities which develop the children's skills well. They become very involved in the children's learning through, for example, playing football, encouraging them to swing and interacting with them to develop play when using wheeled toys. Children have a satisfactory awareness of space and avoid collisions as they work and play. Most children follow instructions well. The area outside also provides good opportunities for children to balance, run and climb. In addition, short sessions provide the children with opportunities to take part in action rhymes and songs. Children in reception have formal lessons which are planned to develop their skills systematically over time and get them used to work in the National Curriculum. Also, they have opportunities to share the nursery area as well as having their own smaller outside areas. In all classes, many of the daily activities include an element of manual dexterity, for example using scissors, painting

and pasting. Adults encourage independence by providing a good range of resources and focus on developing the children's confidence by praising effort.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

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

### **Commentary**

42. In the nursery, children are regularly encouraged to take part in a good range of activities which helps them to develop their creative skills. They quickly become confident and particularly enjoy painting and collage work. They like to use the range of resources offered and give reasons for their choice of materials. Links between their art work and literacy are encouraged when, for example, they created pictures of owls after reading *The Owl Babies*. In reception, children develop their skills further in cutting, folding, sticking, painting and printing and explore colour, texture, shape and form through a variety of activities. The display throughout the Foundation Stage indicates the high value that staff place on the children's work. It enhances the learning environment and encourages children's self-esteem. Regular music sessions take place and children develop their confidence in singing and playing musical instruments. Children dress up and use the imaginative play areas and this encourages their social development.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are currently well below average but there are indications that they are starting to rise.
- Initiatives have been introduced to raise standards.
- Communication and literacy skills are not effectively applied across other areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils' attitudes are good.
- The school does not have a library.

### **Commentary**

43. While there are indications that standards are improving, they currently remain well below average when compared with schools nationally. Unpublished national test results in 2005 for pupils at the end of Year 2 indicate that standards show signs of improvement, although remain well below average. Contributory factors are the high number of pupils with special educational needs and at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
44. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are well below average. Few are articulate and this is demonstrated in their responses to questions as well as in many occasions when they are putting their thoughts, ideas and opinions forward. However, most teachers ensure that pupils learn specific subject vocabulary and encourage them to make comments and lead discussions. There are increasing opportunities for role-

play and Year 5 pupils showed that they are improving their speaking skills when they presented arguments for and against designer clothes for children. Pupils generally listen politely to each other and work collaboratively and supportively during group activities. Their attitudes to their work are good and they are generally well behaved.

45. Very few pupils are fluent or expressive in their reading. They can generally locate information in the small class libraries, which are supplemented by borrowed collections of books to support specific topics. The lack of a central school library means that there are very limited opportunities for pupils to carry out their own independent research. In class, pupils are encouraged to read aloud, often as a whole class. In a Year 4 lesson they made valiant efforts to join in with 'Herb, the vegetarian dragon' but only a handful managed to sustain the effort. The local mobile library visits the school once a month to supplement book collections. The school has a good range of reading books from commercial schemes.
46. All ages of pupils use punctuation and grammar to an extent but spelling is weak, even among more able pupils. The improvement of writing standards is a current focus across the school. Good initiatives have been introduced to promote and extend various forms of writing, and creative work in Years 5 shows a marked improvement. Standards are starting to rise. The complexity of sentence construction is improving, as is the use of a broader vocabulary. In some classes there is insufficient emphasis on presentation of work. A scrutiny of work from Year 6 pupils showed that very few use joined-up writing and that pupils continue to work in pencil.
47. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and is matched by satisfactory learning. In infant classes, and some of the junior classes, the standard of teaching is good. Planning does not always cater well for individual needs and work is not sufficiently differentiated to match ability. Pupils with special educational needs, or English as a second language, are generally supported well, particularly in infant classes. However, in some lessons pupils at the early stages of learning English are not supported adequately and so make a slow start to their learning. Both categories of pupils generally make appropriate progress in line with their peers, and this is matched by their achievement. Where learning assistants are available, they support pupils effectively. A particular strength is the support that the youngest pupils receive with their speaking and listening. A range of commercial schemes has been introduced to support early skills and these are taught effectively. Marking is not always consistent across the school, but where it is good it is constructive and developmental and makes it clear where pupils can improve. While pupils have set targets, they do not receive constant reminders, nor does marking refer to these targets. Opportunities for self-evaluation are under-developed.
48. The co-ordinator is new in the post and provides satisfactory leadership and management. Her enthusiasm has already had an impact on plans to raise standards. She collaborates well with colleagues to make improvements based on a well-focused action plan. She monitors teaching and learning closely and has ensured that systems for tracking pupils' progress are thorough. Teachers in the infant classes make good use of on-going, and more formal, assessment to meet pupils' individual needs. This is less developed in some junior classes. 'Writing Progress' books illustrate pupils' progress as they move through the school. Many improvements are relatively recent and have not yet had their full impact on learning and progress but overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Opportunities for pupils to use their developing skills in a range of subjects are underdeveloped. Scrutiny of work shows that opportunities for independent writing are not used sufficiently in subjects such as religious education, geography, history and science. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good, and pupils are now making better progress.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information when planning work for pupils.
- Pupils are not sufficiently aware of how well they are doing.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to talk about their work.
- Monitoring is helping to raise the quality of teaching and learning.

### Commentary

50. By Year 2 standards are well below average. Pupils' learning was interrupted by instability of teaching in previous years, but they are now making good progress due to more effective and consistent teaching. Standards by Year 2 show some improvement on the previous year, with some pupils achieving a higher level. By Year 6 standards are below average. Pupils in Year 6 have achieved satisfactorily. Their progress and attainment have recently been boosted by a programme of revision carried out in two ability sets formed for the purpose. In previous years their progress has suffered from too many changes of teacher.
51. Pupils are now regularly assessed and the information gained is used to set targets for them to work towards and to keep a careful check on how well they are doing. However, lesson planning does not yet take full enough account of the range of ability levels in a class. In better lessons, the work is matched more carefully to the learning needs of all pupils and the progress they are making day by day. This enables them to achieve well. In other classes, however, where work is not planned as well, there is often insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, at times find the work too hard. This is partly borne out by some work in books being muddled and incomplete.
52. Pupils are now set targets for improvement, based on identified areas for development, such as competence in particular times tables or telling the time to the half hour. However, they are not sufficiently aware of these. This is not helped by the fact that they are not clearly displayed or available, and marking seldom refers to these targets to give pupils an indication of their success in meeting them. Lessons have clear learning objectives that are generally shared at the start of lessons. The conclusions to lessons, however, do not provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to discuss their learning and how well they have met these objectives. The marking in some books, particularly of younger pupils, gives comments to show that progress in meeting objectives has been assessed. Nevertheless, too often comments are merely congratulatory or critical and give little indication to pupils of how they could improve.
53. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 it is good. Lessons are generally well prepared and pupils are managed effectively. As a result pupils are fully engaged in learning. Where teaching is stronger, activities are planned more fully for the learning needs of pupils so that they can achieve well; teaching assistants are used more fully in their work with groups, talking with pupils to check their understanding and to develop their speaking and listening skills. This was evident in a good Year 1 lesson where the teaching assistant worked confidently with a group throughout the lesson to develop the

language and understanding of shape for pupils, particularly those with a lower knowledge and understanding of English. In other lessons, however, the opportunities for speaking and listening throughout the lesson, to help further understanding and problem solving, and to develop subject vocabulary, were limited. Questioning did not always expect full and reasoned responses and pupils were not expected to contribute orally to the summing up at the end of lessons.

54. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The improvement plan for the subject is clearly focused on boosting the achievement of Year 6 pupils rather than providing a clearer picture for raising standards and achievement throughout the school. Recent monitoring has brought about a greater consistency and improvement to teaching and learning, a weakness at the last inspection. It has also identified the need for more careful planning linked to assessed targets, which along with weak lesson conclusions were also concerns at the last inspection. Standards and achievement show early signs of improvement. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. In science, pupils record and compare the results of their investigations; in history they order chronological events by dates. In information and communication technology pupils bring their skills to data handling, spreadsheet modelling and control technology, but little use of classroom computers to support learning in numeracy lessons was seen.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving.
- Teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and in some lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are usually good and they behave well.
- The curriculum has improved and this is helping to ensure pupils are interested.
- Work is not always well matched to pupils' capabilities.
- There are inconsistencies in the way teachers mark pupils' work.

### **Commentary**

56. Standards seen during the inspection were generally well below average in Years 2 and 6. Although provision and teaching have improved recently, insufficient time has passed for this to have impacted on the overall standards at the end of each key stage. The learning of pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 has been adversely affected by frequent changes in teaching staff and in Year 6 by the high mobility of pupils. Also, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is generally well above average and, in Year 2 in particular, this affects the overall standards achieved. Whilst in Year 2 these pupils are achieving well, many are not reaching the levels expected for their age because they have significant difficulties with their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language usually achieve similarly to their peers but those with very limited English sometimes do not receive adequate support.
57. Due to the absence of the science co-ordinator for pupils in Years 3 to 6, there has been a hiatus in leadership and management here until recently when the co-ordinator for Year 1 and Year 2 took on overall whole school responsibility for the subject. Aspects of good leadership and management can be seen already and significant developments are bringing about improvements in standards.

58. The action plan for science is appropriate and the co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of how to improve provision within her overall drive to raise standards. Results of national tests are analysed and appropriate strategies developed such as booster classes, improved activities and better assessment. Science is also monitored through the review of planning, observation of lessons and pupils' work.
59. Teaching and learning are currently good in Years 1 and 2 and are helping pupils to achieve well. Work in Year 1 is well related to that seen in the Foundation Stage with an emphasis on investigation and discovery and ensures that pupils are working on tasks which match their capabilities. In Year 2, pupils are also well supported, such as when higher attaining pupils were given additional challenges when learning about circuits. In the rest of the school, although some teachers are effective at setting tasks which match pupils' capabilities, others frequently set the same work for all, giving additional support for those with learning difficulties. Differences in work are often by quantity or outcome rather than difficulty and challenge. Although there has been a rise in the percentage of pupils who achieve a level above that expected for their age, there is a continuing need to ensure that all pupils receive work which takes them forward to the next stages of learning. There is also some inconsistency in the way teachers show pupils how they can improve their work either through their marking or the setting of specific targets. Because of this, teaching, learning and assessment are only satisfactory overall.
60. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. The subject has a higher profile across the school and the focus on more practically based science is developing pupils' interests. Because they enjoy what they are doing, most behave well but some of the Year 6 pupils are unable to sustain good levels of concentration or motivate themselves to complete a task. Most teachers have high expectations, as in Years 3 and 4, when they were seen motivating pupils well by the quality of their teaching. Standards of pupils currently in Year 5 are likely to be at a higher level than those in the current Year 6 by the time they leave the school. This is due to the positive developments highlighted above which are beginning to have an effect.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The co-ordinator gives a lead in teaching and learning.
- Assessment is not yet being used to inform planning.
- Areas for improvement have been identified and further cross curricular use of ICT is being developed.

### **Commentary**

61. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards are average in those strands of the subject where there is evidence. Many pupils have achieved well over time. Whole school assessment procedures are now in place that record pupils' achievements for the different units studied each year. In future years the school plans to use these to provide starting points for learning. More challenge and support can then be provided in order to raise overall standards and achievement. Currently, however, little account is taken of the range of ability within classes; more able pupils generally work at standard tasks with insufficient challenge to move them further on in their learning. Achievement is thus restricted.
62. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The lessons seen in Years 3-6 were mostly taken by the subject co-ordinator. There were several positive features to these lessons but achievement was nevertheless hindered by planning that did not take sufficient account of assessment and the range of ability in classes. The latter were managed

effectively and pupils responded well. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils quickly developed skills and understanding with a program to control zebra crossing lights. The pace was brisk and pupils were keen to get on with the activity. However, introductions at times were over-directed by the teacher with insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn through questioning and discussion. The lesson seen in Year 2 showed further that the lack of clear assessment limited the scope of lessons to challenge more able pupils and support less able ones. Some finished the research activity very quickly and had little else to do, whereas some found difficulty in reading the question sheet.

63. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines and covers all strands of the subject. Medium-term planning shows that links are being developed with other subjects to make learning more relevant and purposeful. Resources are being built up to support these developments. The subject has not been a recent priority for development and therefore monitoring has been limited. Teachers' plans are seen and some work is now being checked and levelled. A similar picture on standards and provision was reported at the previous inspection. Improvement since that time has been satisfactory.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

64. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects. All classes have two sessions in the ICT suite weekly. One is for learning new skills and the other is for applying these in other areas of the curriculum. Year 3, for example, have used a data handling program in science to record and compare the lengths of shadows throughout the day; they have entered field names and data for a local survey in geography. Year 6 have created PowerPoint presentations to help with their revision in mathematics. Year 2 pupils have word processed written work, demonstrating basic editing skills. As at the previous inspection, little use was observed of classroom computers being used to support learning.

### **HUMANITIES**

65. Inspectors observed one lesson each in history, geography and religious education. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and spoke with staff and pupils. As geography and history were only sampled, it was not possible to make overall judgements in these subjects.
66. Evidence from this inspection indicates that curriculum coverage for **geography** is satisfactory and there have been some improvements since the last inspection. Discussion with the younger pupils and samples of their work, show that they develop a good understanding of their immediate environment. They benefit from walks where they develop ideas on how they could improve the environment. Posters are then created, such as those encouraging people to put rubbish in the bins. Pupils' mapping skills are systematically developed along with the correct use of directional language. Older pupils show interest in the subject, for example in Year 6, when they became aware of some of the processes behind food production. In a good lesson, pupils were keen to put forward their views when discussing the economic issues behind banana production. Pupils study different countries, such as India and St. Lucia. This helps them to develop an understanding of cultures different from their own. Literacy skills are not developed systematically throughout the geography curriculum.
67. Evidence confirms that the requirements of the National Curriculum for **history** are met. Pupils develop a satisfactory sense of chronology when, in Year one they focus on the home and compare houses and household objects of today with those in the past. Work is linked to geography when in Year 2, pupils identify seaside towns and gain knowledge of holidays years ago. Their understanding is also developed when a visiting drama company encourage them to role play and sing songs related to this period. Pupils' literacy skills are not systematically developed through the history curriculum and, in some cases, there is an over-use of worksheets. However, some teachers are successful in encouraging pupils to write, for example, when in Year 5 pupils create a diary entry about the outbreak of World War II.

Pupils enjoy visits to places of historical interest and show by their comments that these help them to understand things in the past and remember key points of learning.

68. In both geography and history, insufficient notice is taken of pupils' varying capabilities when work is set so some find it difficult and others are not challenged enough. Also, teachers' marking does not always clearly indicate how pupils can improve their work.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good lesson planning ensures a balanced curriculum which conforms to the locally Agreed Syllabus.
- Teaching makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural understanding.

### Commentary

69. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 and they achieve well. Pupils' understanding is demonstrated satisfactorily in question and answer sessions, although the written work seen does not reflect pupils' knowledge. This is due to pupils' poor literacy skills and the over-use of commercial worksheets. There is no difference in the progress of boys and girls, or those with special educational needs, and progress overall is satisfactory. The religious education curriculum is firmly based on the locally agreed syllabus and topics are taught as part of an appropriate cycle. Good planning lays the foundation for balanced coverage and satisfactory standards throughout the school. Most pupils have a satisfactory attitude to the subject, and they benefit from learning about other cultures. Although it is not easy to arrange visits to non-Christian places of worship, good use is made of videos and artefacts to support learning.
70. With only one lesson observed, it was not possible to make an overall judgement about the standard of teaching. The scrutiny of pupils' work suggests that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory overall and sometimes good. In the lesson observed, when a junior class visited a local Roman Catholic church, the teaching was of a good standard. Pupils' interest and attention were fostered well by the parish priest and children spoke with enthusiasm about a recent visit to St Paul's Cathedral. However, their focus was on the material, rather than the spiritual, aspects of their visit. There are ample resources, with collections of materials well organised and stored, for each of the faiths covered in the syllabus. Assemblies reinforce learning in this subject. The co-ordinator is new in post and, while the subject is currently managed satisfactorily, her enthusiasm and commitment mean that the subject has the potential to make marked improvement.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. One lesson was seen each in art and design and design and technology, and two each in music and physical education. Inspectors also spoke to staff and pupils, analysed the school's curriculum provision and looked at pupils' work. As subjects were only sampled, it was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision, teaching, learning, attainment and achievement in these subjects.
72. The raising of standards in **art and design** and **design technology** was a key issue in the previous inspection. Although no overall judgement has been made about standards, work seen suggests that this issue has been addressed successfully. A review of pupils' work on display, and in their workbooks, suggests that standards are frequently at least average in

both subjects. This is reinforced by a review of teachers' planning, and discussions with the relevant subject co-ordinators.

73. Where art and design has been imaginatively taught, for example using the work of Michaelangelo, standards are higher. Pupils have used his work as an inspiration for producing paintings that are displayed on the main staircase. The ceiling has pupils' own interpretation of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. In the two observed lessons, teaching and learning were very good. In addition, the evidence of pupils' past work, teachers' planning and the guidelines used for the range of learning activities provided for the pupils, shows strengths within these subjects. This is particularly true from the evidence seen of the school's use of a broad range of media. The school is currently benefiting from the presence of an artist in residence, who is working with the children on a range of projects. For example Year 1 pupils, with her support, designed and built a life-size sculpture of Sir Lancelot who stands in pride of place in the school's entrance hall. Wall displays contain many examples of collaborative work such as the tapestry based on Aboriginal art that was produced by Year 6 and the nursery pupils.
74. A full **music** curriculum is now in place but the subject has not been a priority for development in recent years. As a result, skills have not been taught consistently and the lesson seen in Year 6 indicates that standards are likely to be below average. Two lessons were seen, taken by a specialist teacher who is working in the school for a fixed period of time. These lessons provided a range of activities including recorder playing and singing with musical accompaniment. Unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes meant that Year 6 pupils did not take full advantage of this opportunity and made little progress. Year 4 pupils, on the other hand, responded well to excellent tuition and made significant gains in their learning. There are missed opportunities for developing musical skills. Assemblies, for example, provide little opportunity for listening to, and appreciating, music or for singing.
75. **Physical education** has not been a priority for development. A full curriculum is in place with opportunities for swimming. The school recognises that teachers' skills in the subject need to be improved and arrangements are in hand to take part in local projects to raise the profile of the subject and improve provision. The school currently uses a coach to work with teachers and pupils. His sessions were well organised and managed although the oldest pupils were at times reluctant to co-operate fully. Year 5 pupils, however, took more advantage of this opportunity and displayed ball skills at an appropriate level.

#### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

76. No direct teaching of **personal, social and health education and citizenship** (PSHE) was seen during the inspection. There is an appropriate amount of time allocated by each class to the teaching of PSHE. The benefits of this can be seen in the improved attitudes, behaviour and values shown by the pupils. Although there is a school council, pupils could be more enterprising and take greater responsibility as an introduction to citizenship.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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