

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY AND ST JOSEPH ROMAN CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hackney, London

LEA area: Hackney

Unique reference number: 100264

Headteacher: Mr S Flood

Lead inspector: Ms R Frith

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 December 2004

Inspection number: 267447

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	222
School address:	Buckingham Road Hackney London
Postcode:	N1 4DG
Telephone number:	020 7254 7353
Fax number:	020 7249 3870
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Toomey
Date of previous inspection:	12 July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average-size school is very popular and receives between 60 and 100 applications each year for its 30 reception places. A changing picture of the school's characteristics is emerging due to the regeneration of some parts of the local area. The school is located in an area of great social deprivation in inner London where there are some of the poorest housing conditions in Britain. The rate of serious crime is very high. Year-on-year there are differences in the socio-economic status of families and of the pupils' attainment on entry. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds but, overall, the socio-economic status of families is average in the infant part of the school and below average in the junior part of the school. The percentage of pupils who receives free school meals is broadly average but some pupils do not take up their entitlement. When children join the school, they bring with them a wide range of experiences and abilities but, overall, their attainment is below that usually seen for children of this age, particularly in their language and personal and social development. However, in some years, pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average and four pupils have a statement of special educational need because they require considerable help with their learning. Those receiving additional support mainly have moderate learning difficulties. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds: more than half from ethnic backgrounds other than white British. Approximately a third come from homes where English is not the first language. This percentage is much higher than that seen in many schools, although few pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Currently, 112 pupils are receiving additional support through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). Pupil mobility is broadly average when compared with the national average but low in relation to the local average. There has been a significant change in teaching staff recently and, at the time of the inspection, four teachers were new to the school in September, two of whom were newly qualified. The school received the Schools Achievement Award in 2002 and Investors in People status in 1999. The school is involved in the Education Action Zone, the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools and the Innovation Fund Hackney Federation.

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
9619	Robert Miller	Lay inspector	
25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Music Physical education
32142	Beryl Richmond	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Mathematics Modern foreign languages
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some very good and excellent features. The headteacher provides very good leadership and, together with senior managers and governors, has created a school where pupils are happy and enjoy their learning. Teaching is good overall and this helps pupils to achieve well. Pupils are respected and encouraged to give of their best so that by the time they leave school they usually reach average or better standards. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are very good.
- The school's ethos is very good. Very good provision is in place to develop pupils' personal qualities and this leads to excellent relationships and good behaviour.
- Pupils are presented with a good curriculum and an excellent range of good quality additional activities which stimulate their learning and meets their needs well.
- Teaching and learning are good overall and pupils achieve well. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, including marking and teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting, which reflect recent changes in teaching staff.
- Very good systems are in place to ensure that pupils are well cared for and that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Staff have developed very good links with parents, other schools, colleges and the community.
- Leadership and management of the school are very good, particularly during this period of change.

Progress since the last inspection has been good. Staff have successfully addressed the issues identified in the last report and demonstrate a strong commitment to continual development and improvement. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception class) is now good. Pupils' personal and social standards and academic achievement are higher because of the improvements in teaching and the development of the curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve well during their time in school. In the nursery and reception class, children make a good start because teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. This ensures that children settle well and quickly develop very good attitudes to learning. By the time they enter Year 1 nearly all of the current reception year are likely to be working at the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in all areas of learning. In the area of personal and social development, standards are likely to be above average. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were achieving satisfactorily but evidence provided by the school indicates that in previous years infants had achieved well when compared with pupils in similar schools. In Years 3

to 6, teachers build well on the work undertaken in the nursery to Year 2 and pupils attain standards in English, mathematics and science which are usually at least average and frequently above when compared with similar schools. In the current Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science and above average in art and design. Throughout the school, the standard of singing is extremely high. Standards are average in information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the effective support provided. Pupils speaking English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils similarly achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy their learning and respect the views, feelings and values of others. This results in pupils behaving well, developing very good attitudes, and having excellent relationships with other children and adults. Pupils enjoy going to school and attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school and the quality of teaching are good overall. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils and encourage and support them well. This helps pupils to become confident, happy learners. Learning is also enhanced by the effective support staff who work hard to meet the children's needs. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory as learning slows a little. Here, teachers are new to their responsibilities. Currently, four teachers are new to the school and two are new to teaching. Senior managers are supporting these staff well so that the good quality of teaching is maintained and reflects that of previous years. This will also ensure that teachers' expectations are consistent, for example, in relation to the marking of pupils' work.

Staff have developed very good links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges. The curriculum is good overall with particular strengths in the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Opportunities for enrichment are excellent and accommodation and resources very good. Staff ensure that pupils are all included, very well cared for and feel supported. Pupils' views are taken into account well and their ideas acted upon.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are very good. The headteacher's clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high expectations are key features of the school's success. The deputy headteacher makes a very good contribution to the development of the school, particularly the curriculum. Senior managers and governors have a clear vision of how the school should improve and are successful in creating a team with a shared sense of purpose. All are totally committed to running a school where pupils are fully included and helped to develop well, both academically and socially. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views about the school and are pleased with the quality of education provided. They believe that the school is well led and managed, teaching is good and their children make good progress. Pupils like school and think lessons are interesting. They also enjoy taking part in extra-curricular activities. They feel well supported and are confident that any problems they might have will be taken seriously by staff and dealt with quickly.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to support staff so that they maintain the good quality of teaching throughout the school.
- Improve the pupils' handwriting.
- Ensure that the quality of marking is consistent across the school and helps pupils to understand how they can improve their work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils achieve well and by the time they leave school have usually attained at least average standards in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of their very good attitudes to learning and the good quality of teaching.
- In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 6 attained average standards in English, above average standards in mathematics and well above average standards in science when compared with pupils in similar schools. This shows improvement in standards for mathematics and science.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting is below average.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because their needs are identified early and good quality additional support is provided.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well and reach standards in line with their levels of English acquisition.
- The school's focus on writing is beginning to raise the older pupils' standards.

Commentary

1. On entry to school, children display a wide range of attainment and have had a variety of experiences but, overall, their attainment is below that for children of the same age nationally, particularly in relation to their personal, social and communication skills. However, in some years, pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. Each year a few pupils join the school speaking little or no English or who have special educational needs and this also affects the overall standards. In the nursery children make a good start and this is developed well in the reception class. Overall, children achieve well because the quality of teaching and the curriculum are good. Staff focus on developing the children's personal and social skills and basic skills of communication and this helps them to succeed across the curriculum. Progress is good so that by the time they enter Year 1, children in the current reception class are likely to reach the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in all areas of learning. In the areas of personal and social development, standards are likely to be above average.
2. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2 was average in reading and mathematics, and well below average in writing when compared with pupils in all schools. These results show lower standards than the previous year, particularly in writing. Pupils did not achieve as well as they should in the writing test and few attained a level above that expected for their age. This affected the overall standards. However, a close scrutiny of these pupils now in Year 3 show that pupils are achieving well and approximately 20 per cent are working at a level above that expected for their age. Results indicate that nearly 50 per cent of the pupils attained a higher level in reading and this continues to be one of the school's strengths. The percentage reaching a higher level in mathematics was broadly average. In science, the teacher's assessment shows that all pupils reached the level appropriate for their age and nearly 20 per cent above this. When compared with schools with a similar number of pupils receiving free school meals, they attained well above average standards in reading and mathematics, and below average standards in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (16.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.2 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.5 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6 was below average in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. These results show similar standards to the previous year in English and better standards in mathematics and science. Pupils are successful in reaching the standard expected for their age in English and mathematics but a lower percentage reached the higher Level 5. Staff are addressing this issue, for example, by focusing on developing pupils' writing skills, and this is beginning to reap benefits. In science, the greater focus on developing pupils' investigative skills is helping them to reach levels above those expected for their age and nearly 50 per cent reached this level. When compared with pupils who attained similarly in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils attained average standards in English, above average standards in mathematics and well above average standards in science. Overall, these results reflect the school's focus on developing teaching and provision so that pupils achieve well. However, the recent improvements in writing provision and the work on developing mathematical thinking and problem-solving have not been in place long enough for them to have impacted on overall standards. The school broadly met its targets set for English and mathematics in 2004 with fewer than expected pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (26.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.4 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.7 (28.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Evidence from this inspection indicates that, overall, pupils have achieved well by the time they leave school. Currently, pupils are achieving satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and achieving well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently working at average levels in English, mathematics and science and above average levels in art and design. Throughout the school, the standard of singing is extremely high. Pupils are working at average levels in information and communication technology (ICT) in Year 2 and above average levels in Year 6. Overall, pupils' handwriting skills are below those usually seen for pupils of primary school age and this affects the presentation of their work.
5. No significant difference was noted in the achievement between boys and girls during the inspection although there have been some differences in the Year 6 national test results. For example, over the last three years, girls did better than boys in English and boys did better than girls in mathematics and science.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. Indeed many such pupils reach the nationally expected level by the time they leave the school. This is because they receive very good support from well-trained and

effective teaching assistants and class teachers who usually plan work for them that is at an appropriate level. Individual education plans are well written and have clear and attainable targets.

7. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection in its provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented and currently their needs are met well. Appropriate work is set in lessons and additional challenge provided through the wide range of clubs and additional activities. The more capable pupils generally achieve well as shown by the Year 6 science results last year. However, in Year 2 they did not perform as well as they should in the national writing tests and sometimes pupils are not sufficiently challenged in mathematics.
8. From the information provided by the school and through observation and discussion with pupils, it is clear that there is no significant under-achievement of pupils from specific minority ethnic groups. The school's good ethos and focus on equality of opportunity are effective in helping all pupils to succeed. The school places a high priority on inclusion and all pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum which meets their needs and helps them to achieve well. Analysis by the school reveals differences across cohorts of classes and ages but no overall group being identified as underachieving. Black boys, in particular are said to be doing better in this school than seen nationally. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and are at the earlier stages of learning English are well supported in school so that they achieve in line with their peers and their level of English acquisition. Bilingual pupils also achieve well because their strengths are acknowledged and they are well motivated to succeed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good and their behaviour good overall. Pupils' moral, social, cultural and spiritual development is also very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to work and play. They approach tasks with high levels of enthusiasm, interest and concentration.
- Pupils' relationships with each other are excellent. This is reflected in the good behaviour in lessons.
- Because of the very effective way in which the school promotes excellent relationships, including racial harmony, pupils have a very clear understanding of their individual and corporate roles and responsibilities within the school community.
- Pupils show the greatest of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of each other.
- Pupils respond very well to the many very good opportunities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is very effective in the action it takes to promote very good attendance.
- There are no significant weaknesses in this aspect of the school's work.

Commentary

9. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and develop excellent relationships with others in their classes. Parents agree that their children like coming to school. Overall, pupils' attitudes to their work and their life in school are very good. This is reflected in their good punctuality and enjoyment of lessons. During the inspection, pupils' attitudes were good in Years 1 and 2 as they became familiar with their new teachers. Pupils say that teaching is good and that they are made to work hard. They have lots of friends. The very good attitudes displayed by pupils are an improvement since the last inspection.

10. The rate of attendance is above that of similar schools nationally and continues to be very good since the last inspection. The school has a close link with the Attendance Officer and any unexplained absences are quickly followed up.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

- Pupils are well behaved and co-operative in lessons. Parents and pupils alike agree that behaviour is good. Those few pupils who do not always meet the high standards set are well supported by staff in the school as well as from outside to achieve their behaviour targets. Pupils with special educational needs who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are usually well managed in class and during breaks. They are helped by their teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors to become valued members of the school community. They respond well to this positive approach and are fully included in all activities.
- Pupils listen to adults and follow instructions. They are encouraged to take different responsibilities as they progress through the school. Older pupils are often seen helping the younger children, particularly at lunchtimes. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' personal development since the last inspection. This leads to most pupils gaining in confidence and developing high self-esteem. Staff value the cultural diversity within the school and this helps to set the scene. The very good focus on inclusion means that all pupils within the school feel valued and work very well in harmony with each other. Parents agree that their child is not bullied or harassed at school. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare and where they do occur, the school is quick to deal with them effectively. There has been one fixed period exclusion in the past academic year.

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	67	0	0
White – Irish	18	1	0
White – any other White background	31	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0

Black or Black British – Caribbean	19	0	0
Black or Black British – African	49	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	8	0	0
Any other ethnic group	5	0	0

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

13. The pupils are proud of their own background and beliefs. They are developing a good awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs and cultures through the teaching of art, music and assemblies. They respect the views and beliefs of others and understand that this is important. Very good moral development is fostered well through clear rules and reminders of why pupils should consider the needs of others. There is plenty of opportunity within and outside school for pupils to develop very good social skills, for example, through the raising of money for a number of charities both local and international. Spiritual awareness is raised among pupils by periods of reflection during inspirational assemblies. The prayer garden situated within the grounds of the school is another area where quiet periods can be enjoyed. Pupils focus regularly on people and places less fortunate than themselves and develop a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion. Pupils are very proud of their school and have an excellent understanding of how they can make it a better place for the whole school community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

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

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection.
- Teaching and learning are currently good in the nursery, reception class and in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching assistants support the pupils well and help them to make good progress, particularly those pupils with special educational needs.
- There are some inconsistencies across the school in the way pupils' work is marked and this means that some pupils are not clear about how they could improve.
- Staff use their knowledge of the pupils, gained through thorough assessment, to plan work which meets their needs.
- Overall, teachers have high expectations, and encourage and engage the pupils very well.
- Teaching is effective for those pupils learning English as an additional language.
- The use of specialist teachers enhances pupils' learning.

Commentary

14. Pupils generally make good progress throughout their time in school and achieve well. This is because of the good overall quality of teaching, provision of a good curriculum and the pupils' very good attitudes to learning. The chart below gives an outline of the quality of lessons seen during the inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and there is a higher

percentage of teaching that is very good or better when compared to the last inspection. This indicates good improvement, particularly as several of the teachers are new to the school and some new to teaching. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have worked hard to ensure that the pupils' learning is not disrupted by changes in teachers and long-term staff absence through illness. They have been very successful in building a team of professionals with a strong sense of purpose and desire to provide good quality teaching. The inconsistencies noted during the inspection are to do with inexperience and teachers being new to the school rather than any weaknesses in overall teaching. This has resulted in the quality of teaching being never less than satisfactory, as in Years 1 and 2, and frequently good and occasionally better elsewhere.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	13 (28%)	23 (50%)	9 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

15. Teachers' planning is good overall and a significant feature of the best lessons. Since the last inspection, the school has developed the way it assesses pupils' work, and collects and records information about the pupils' achievement and the standards they attain. Teachers are able to plan more effectively because they are now more aware of the next stages needed in the pupils' learning. Information is also used to track pupils' progress over time so that early intervention can take place if pupils are not seen to be achieving as well as they should and appropriate support provided. In the best lessons, teachers have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and share that with them at the start of the lesson. They provide appropriate support and challenge, which ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment maintain a good pace in their learning. This was seen in Year 6, in particular.
16. Teachers generally use their knowledge of pupils well in lessons and encourage them to improve and work harder if they think they can. Some are also effective in indicating through their marking how pupils can improve their work. However, several teachers are not fully aware of the school's expectations on marking, so practice is inconsistent. Also, pupils are not always clear about what they should do to improve their learning, as they are not fully involved in target-setting or self-assessment.
17. Teachers are developing their practices in the light of national expectations and this is helping to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning. For example, the effective management of the nursery and reception class has resulted in a broader team approach to the planning and provision for these children and the quality of teaching has improved, particularly in the reception class. Planning has been developed well so the children now receive much greater opportunities to learn through structured play. As they get older, activities and the organisation of lessons change and develop so that the children are well prepared for work in the National Curriculum. Teachers across the school have also continued to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and this, together with improved resources, have extended the pupils' learning. Staff use interactive whiteboards well to aid their teaching and stimulate pupils' learning.
18. The school employs specialist teachers in art and design, music and physical education. This is having a positive effect on the pupils' development of skills and the standards they achieve. For example, standards are above average in art and design and singing is of an extremely high standard. Pupils experience a very good range of activities and teachers are quick to identify those with special abilities and provide appropriate activities which challenge them further. The latter is also true for those with specific musical talents who benefit from a good range of provision. The expertise and skills of the music teacher are particularly well highlighted through the pupils' singing, which is of a much higher quality than that heard in most primary schools.
19. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is excellent and a factor in how staff successfully manage the pupils in their care. Staff are encouraging and supportive, which results in pupils becoming more confident in their abilities and willing to 'have a go'. Staff mostly have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to these as they know what they should do.
20. Teachers and teaching assistants give good support in class to those pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers use the very skilled teaching assistants very well and fully brief

them about their role in each lesson. Many assistants keep a careful record of the achievements of the pupils in their groups to share with the teacher and show the progress each pupil has made. This is a great help when planning future work as it enables it to be pitched at an appropriate level.

21. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its work with gifted and talented pupils. A register of these pupils is referred to by staff who try to ensure that sufficient opportunities are available to keep pupils interested in their learning and well challenged. Provision for more capable pupils is usually effective although those currently in Year 3 were not sufficiently supported in writing to ensure that they did as well as they could in the Year 2 national tests. Also, in mathematics, pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Examples of good teaching include pupils being well challenged in a Year 6 science lesson. This helped to extend their scientific investigative skills and scientific thinking. Teachers are aware of differences that may occur in the responses and learning of girls and boys so try to use a wide range of methods to ensure that all are included and interested.
22. The teaching of pupils speaking English as an additional language is good and helps them to achieve well. Most teachers are aware of the key vocabulary associated with the lesson and ensure that this is understood. Adults provide effective support because they are aware of individual needs and speak clearly, repeat unfamiliar words when appropriate and demonstrate using gestures and actions. Those at the early stages of learning English are encouraged well and thereby develop their ability to speak clearly in English. Bilingual learners are confident in class and participate well. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and from different backgrounds are well supported, so that they are included in all class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their abilities. Staff are sensitive to the needs of such pupils and value the diversity within the school.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. Opportunities for enrichment are excellent, including provision for extra-curricular activities. Overall the accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The art and information and communication (ICT) curricula are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is good.
- There is very good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
- Pupils are prepared well for the later stages of education.
- The good quality of support staff enhances pupils' learning.

Commentary

23. There has been a sound improvement in the curriculum since the time of the last inspection and the national strategies for English and mathematics are now well embedded. The art curriculum is very good, particularly the collaborative art projects undertaken by pupils and the inclusion of visits to see important works of art in the London galleries and museums. The school continues to provide a very good ICT curriculum. The science curriculum is good, particularly its emphasis on scientific enquiry. The school regularly revises its curriculum to improve the use of literacy, mathematical and ICT skills and makes meaningful cross-curricular links between subjects. Significant improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage curriculum where the work is now well planned to meet the children's stage of development and learning. Continuity and progression of learning from the nursery to the reception class is now good. Overall, the curriculum provides a broad range of worthwhile activities and experiences, which meet well the needs of pupils, and all statutory requirements such as

those for a daily act of worship, religious education, sex and relationships education and drugs education, are met.

24. Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is very effectively enriched by visits and visitors. For example, members of the local community, like nurses and the police, support the teaching of personal, social and health education, and visits to places like the National Gallery support the art curriculum well. The pupils' involvement in a wide range of sporting events enrich the formal physical education curriculum very well and help to extend their skills. There is a very good range of well-attended extra-curricular clubs for sporting, artistic and musical activities; useful opportunities for instrumental tuition; and all Year 6 pupils have a good opportunity to take part in a residential visit.
25. The staff work hard to ensure that all pupils have equality of access and opportunity, and are working to improve lesson planning further to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. Where pupils need some extra help, staff identify needs early and arrange for appropriate provision. Teaching assistants are well deployed to help pupils who need some extra support. If pupils have specific needs the school ensures that the necessary resources are available. For example, the needs of boys and girls and those from different cultural backgrounds are identified and, where appropriate, different styles of teaching and learning used. Those pupils learning English as an additional language are well supported and provided with appropriate work which extends their learning, range of vocabulary and use of English.
26. The curriculum provides well for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. Where appropriate, the work they are given by their teachers is linked to the targets in their individual education plans and is specifically designed to help them achieve well. Pupils are given full access to the curriculum and receive very good quality help from a strong team of skilled and very competent teaching assistants who, together with other staff working in the school, make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. When working outside the class with teaching assistants, the pupils are usually engaged in tasks that match the work of the other pupils in the class so that they do not miss any important learning in other subjects. When this is not possible the pupils are withdrawn on a rota so that they do not miss the same lesson each week. The benefits gained from working in groups far outweigh any minor disadvantages. The pupils from Year 2 working in the computer suite with a skilled teaching assistant were making very good progress in their literacy skills.
27. Pupils are prepared well for subsequent stages of learning. There is a strong emphasis on personal development so that pupils become responsible individuals and keen learners. There are good procedures to ensure that pupils move successfully to their next class and the school works closely with the local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for the pupils. Pupils are prepared well through homework activities and study skills for subsequent stages of learning.
28. Although there are several new and inexperienced teachers, overall, there are sufficient teachers with the appropriate skills and knowledge of different subjects to teach the curriculum effectively and to co-ordinate subjects well. They are assisted by a very good allocation of support staff who make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
29. Overall, the accommodation and resources are very good and the outdoor area is excellent. There is a very good range of outdoor play equipment, tables and benches, several shaded areas, a wide range of different plants and trees, a pond and a quiet place for prayer. The outdoor area provides a welcome 'oasis' surrounded by high and low level housing and developments. The resources for ICT are very good and used well to encourage pupils to reach above average standards by the time they leave school.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very good levels of care and staff pay good attention to the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Provision of support, advice and guidance for the pupils is very good. There is good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very warm, caring and purposeful learning environment where all pupils are highly and equally valued.
- There are very good procedures in place to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils have an excellent and trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school.
- Pupils have access to very well informed support and guidance.
- The school is active in seeking the views of the pupils on school improvement.
- There are very good induction arrangements.
- Pupils need to become more involved in evaluating their own work and setting personal targets.

Commentary

30. This is a very caring school where staff treats pupils fairly and with respect. This ensures that pupils are comfortable about approaching individual teachers or support staff for help or guidance. Pupils say teachers always take time to listen to them and they can always have their say. Pupils are highly satisfied with the school and what it provides.
31. The staff know the pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are able therefore to provide very good support and guidance. Parents say that the school is helping their child to become mature and that the children are treated fairly. The needs of pupils from a variety of backgrounds and cultures are quickly identified and met well.
32. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for. The work of all pupils with special educational needs is carefully tracked to monitor their progress and to ensure that they are achieving as well as possible. Their individual education plans are well written, set appropriate and achievable yet challenging targets and are regularly reviewed. Liaison with outside agencies is good and the school makes great efforts to ensure that pupils receive as high a level of care as possible. The four pupils with a statement of educational need receive their full entitlement as outlined.
33. The very good personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme and good assessment procedures enable staff to provide targeted support for individuals, including those with special educational needs. This very good support and guidance is helping to raise pupil achievement and is an improvement since the last inspection.
34. Health and safety arrangements are securely in place and risk assessments are carried out for the premises and school trips. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Recently revised child protection procedures are in place and well known to all staff and governors. There are good links with outside agencies. A formal policy has been developed for Internet safety, after consultation with parents and others involved in its implementation. A conscientious premises manager and cleaning staff ensure the school remains free from hazards and maintained in a very clean condition.
35. The school actively encourages the pupils' views both in informal and formal ways. There is a school council that considers matters as diverse as new playground games and the rules for behaviour. This opportunity to contribute to school improvement contributes very well to pupils' personal development. Pupils with special educational needs contribute to their annual

reviews but other pupils are not fully involved in setting personal and learning targets and assessing their own work.

36. Parents say that the arrangements for their son and daughter to settle in when he or she started at the school were good. Pupils say that they were able to make friends quickly and learn the school routines. These procedures significantly reduce any anxieties that children or

their parents might have. The transfer arrangements from nursery education enable the school to respond well to the individual needs of the children and ensure their first experience of school is a happy one.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good partnerships with parents, the community, other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept very well informed about the school and their children's progress.
- There are very good procedures for ensuring satisfaction and to deal with any parental concerns or complaints.
- The very good links with other schools and colleges ensure a smooth transition for pupils to their next stage of education.
- The contribution made by parents to their child's learning at home and in the school is very good.
- Use of the school premises by the wider community is underdeveloped.

Commentary

37. Parents are highly satisfied with the work of the school and what staff provide. They say their child is making good progress. Also, that the school is led and managed well and that the teaching is good. Members of staff are always available at the beginning and end of each day to deal with any concerns or complaints parents may have. This informal contact ensures very high levels of parental satisfaction and that any problems are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The very good partnership with parents shows continuous improvement since the previous inspection.
38. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, weekly newsletters, school noticeboards and web-site. They appreciate the opportunities to discuss their child's progress at both formal and informal meetings with teachers. A helpful end-of-year academic report, containing targets to help the child improve, accompanies these meetings. The governors' annual report meets statutory requirements. The very good information provided for parents shows continuous improvement since the last inspection.
39. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed. The school involves parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs from the moment their child is identified as being in need of additional help. They are always invited to meetings to review individual education plans. Parents and carers are given a copy of the individual education plan with useful advice on how best to support their child's learning at home. Relationships with parents whose children are learning English as an additional language are also very good. Staff ensure that parents are kept well informed and are aware of the support provided.
40. The school has engaged a number of parents to help in school. Some listen to children read and one helps with ICT and organises a French Club. The vast majority of parents contribute to their child's learning at home supported by useful curriculum information and workshops

provided by the school. A small number of parents would like more support with mathematics to enable them to better help their child at home. The school has acknowledged the need to re-visit this important aspect of school life, even though it has improved since the last inspection.

41. The school links very well with the University of East London and local primary and secondary schools in the area. Through the headteacher's involvement in several committees, the school takes part in joint initiatives, sharing of best practice and professional staff

development. These links ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils to the next stage of their education. Students new to the teaching profession are successfully employed under the Graduate Training Programme.

42. The very good links with the community include a close liaison with the police, local businesses and the Catholic Church, all of which have a positive effect on pupils' personal and academic development and improvement of the school grounds. Very good links are also made through local sporting activities which help to develop the pupils' skills and raise levels of achievement. The school and some parents have recognised the need to work even more closely with the wider community to further improve this aspect of school life and become more outward-looking. The links with non-denominational organisations and community groups who may wish to use the school facilities productively are underdeveloped.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and a key factor in the school's success. He is very well supported by a deputy head who clearly shares his vision for the school. The leadership of the other key staff is good overall. The management and governance of the school are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and direction that is influential beyond the school.
- He is very well supported by the deputy head.
- Very good management ensures that the school continues to improve.
- Teamwork amongst the staff is very good and there is a very positive ethos for pupils to learn.
- Induction for new staff is very good.
- Financial management is excellent and helps the school to achieve its goals.
- The governors are very effective in their role.

Commentary

43. The headteacher provides very good leadership and sets a very clear direction for the school. His shared vision and aspirations for the school are firmly based on all pupils reaching the highest standards they are capable of and providing high quality teaching and support. Strategic planning is well focused on accomplishing the school's visions and aims. There is a strong emphasis on high achievement and the inclusion of all pupils within the lively and outgoing Catholic school community. The school successfully includes all groups and the promotion of positive relationships and racial harmony is excellent. Teamwork amongst the staff is very strong. The headteacher has created a very positive ethos in which all pupils learn and that draws on the very good links established with parents.
44. The headteacher's influence has spread beyond the school, where his leadership and management skills, along with personal support, are very much recognised and appreciated.

He has been instrumental in helping to set up and seek funding for a local federation of schools; and he is closely involved in programmes for training teachers, which involves creating course units, providing placements and training mentors for new and prospective teachers.

45. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. She has been at the forefront of the school's curriculum development and been closely involved in the induction of new teachers. Recently, there have been many changes in the teaching staff. Appointments have been very carefully considered by senior management to help ensure continuing effective teaching and learning. Rigorous monitoring has quickly taken place and along with strengths, weaknesses have been identified and support given. All staff members have very good opportunities for further training to help develop their skills. Very good performance management procedures, based on monitoring, provide teachers and support staff with appropriate targets to further both their own continuing professional development and school improvement. The school has been particularly successful in managing these recent changes and establishing an effective, enthusiastic and harmonious team to carry the school forward. Along with managing these changes, the issues from the previous inspection have been well addressed.
46. Staff development has further focused on enhancing the skills of phase and subject managers. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed so that children have a successful start to their schooling that provides a secure foundation for future learning. New co-ordinators for English and mathematics are developing their roles successfully. Co-ordinators for other subjects, many of them inexperienced and new to the school, are already starting to oversee the delivery and quality of their subjects within the full curriculum.
47. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision well. She carefully tracks the progress of individual pupils to ensure they are achieving well. All paperwork is kept up-to-date and she liaises with outside agencies effectively so that they are fully involved in the provision when required. The regular meetings with the teaching assistants are very useful as they provide a forum for discussion of important developments and to address any concerns arising. Governors are kept well informed about the provision and its effectiveness through the special needs governor who works closely with the school. The provision fully meets statutory requirements.
48. The co-ordinator for provision for pupils who are gifted and talented, those from minority ethnic groups and those speaking English as an additional language has recently been appointed. Clear procedures are in place to ensure quick and reliable identification of need and appropriate resources are provided. Management of provision and the pupils' learning is good, and this enables pupils to achieve in line with their peers.
49. Within the governing body there is a wealth of experience and expertise that is drawn on to the best advantage. Governors are committed and very supportive. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and this enables them both to challenge the school and to contribute fully to its vision and direction.
50. Financial planning and management are excellent and funding is very well used to support and achieve educational priorities. The school makes every effort to secure further funding and has looked closely at the budgetary implications following the ending of the Education Action Zone and changes in the funding, for example, for special educational needs. The principles of best value are applied very well in the purchase, management and use of resources. The school has a higher than usual surplus but this has been set aside to renovate and refurbish the school house and to make further improvements to resources. Expenditure per pupil is higher than average but given pupils' good achievement, good teaching, the very good ethos and very good leadership and management, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,074,402
Total expenditure	1,050,951
Expenditure per pupil	4,397

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	77,397
Balance carried forward to the next	100,848

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection, particularly in the reception class so that current practice now reflects national guidance well. Good leadership and management encourage good liaison between the nursery and reception class and this ensures continuity of teaching and learning in line with the age and experience of the children. Planning is now good as it is appropriate to the age and stage of the children's learning. Appropriate time is spent on adult-led and child-initiated activities and, as children move towards learning in the National Curriculum, a more formalised approach is taken. This prepares them well. Information gained from assessing children is used systematically to provide a planned curriculum to ensure good, consistent learning across all areas. All staff assess the children's learning on a day-to-day basis through careful observations and use this information successfully to build up an individual profile of learning for each child. Pupils' record profiles are some of the best seen and include annotated work and photographs which highlight gains in the children's learning and the standards achieved. At the time of the inspection, although regular play outside was observed, learning took place inside for most of the day. Discussions with staff indicate that when the weather is better more activities are provided outside and further improvements are planned for the area outside the reception class. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good overall as there is a good range of interesting activities where children develop their confidence to try things out and co-operate well with others.

Teachers and support staff form a good team and use their good knowledge of how young children learn to provide activities which stimulate learning in all areas. Teaching is consistently good and occasionally very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this ensures they develop appropriate skills and achieve well. Children for whom English is an additional language also achieve well. Their needs are quickly recognised, and good support is given to extend their language and ensure that they fully understand what is said to them and what they are expected to do.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

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

Commentary

51. A very good induction programme ensures that children settle quickly in both the nursery and reception class and the early involvement of parents encourages the development of good parental support. This is reflected in the way parents agree to their child having a cooked school meal so that children in both the nursery and reception class eat together and relate well to each other. Children develop very good attitudes to learning because they are interested in what they are doing and the activities are appropriate. They are encouraged to persevere and to complete activities before moving on, and levels of concentration are usually good. Due to good support and teaching, by the end of the reception year children have

developed very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour. Relationships are frequently excellent. Children 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, for example, the use of the interactive whiteboard in the nursery. There are good opportunities for children to make choices and to develop confidence and independence.

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 helps children to achieve well.
- Children receive good support from the support staff.
- Most children are expected to reach the standard expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- Letter sounds are taught thoroughly, which gives children a good foundation for developing reading and spelling skills.

Commentary

52. Children achieve well because staff realise the importance of developing their communication skills and encourage their interest in reading and writing. Teachers and support staff use a good range of strategies to encourage the development of the children's oracy and literacy skills either through specific sessions led by the teacher or through the provision of appropriate activities. Most children in the nursery confidently talk with each other and adults and were keen to find out what the inspectors were doing. This was really taken on board when a small group of girls in the nursery became inspectors, recording what the other children were doing by making marks on paper and using a clipboard. In the reception class, children are encouraged to speak clearly when answering questions and talking about their work and have the confidence to speak with adults and each other. Children's speaking skills are also systematically developed through the provision of specific activities, such as in the imaginative play areas. Staff are effective in encouraging children learning English as an additional language as they speak clearly and emphasise any unfamiliar words. This was seen in the reception class when the teaching assistant was particularly effective at encouraging children and developing their confidence. Children respond well to stories as they are encouraged to listen and put forward their views, for example, in the reception class when they listened to *On Christmas Eve*. Here, the teacher's good questioning and reading of the story maintained the children's interest and ensured all participated well. 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 class when children write for a variety of purposes, for example, by writing a story and making puppets to retell it. The children's communication skills are further enhanced as they are encouraged to sign during a singing session.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and help children to achieve well.

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

Commentary

53. The children's mathematical skills and understanding are taught during specific sessions, and consolidated through daily play activities. In the nursery, the children's interest was maintained throughout a good lesson when they developed their number recognition and counting skills through activities often related to Christmas. Those working with the teacher were able to identify and name a number on a bauble before placing it on a picture of a Christmas tree. They achieved well because of the teacher's high expectations and the good pace of learning. Teaching assistants also supported learning well either through working with a child with special educational needs or with groups of children who were placing plastic fruit into net bags. The latter encouraged both the children's counting and matching skills, and also their knowledge of different fruits and colours. Support staff work well with children who experience difficulty with their learning and encourage them to try hard. The Christmas theme was also continued with children in the reception class who excitedly counted the teacher's presents as she removed them from her Christmas stocking. Learning was further extended as the teacher introduced the 'Biscuit Beast'. Children quickly became involved as they saw the beast eat two chocolate and two plain biscuits which they said meant that he had eaten four altogether. Later in the lesson, children were observed using the correct terminology as they provided answers to questions such as $4 + 2 =$ and $4 + 4 + 3 + 2 =$. The latter question was used effectively to challenge a more capable child. Throughout, children behave well because they are interested in what they are doing and the pace of learning is good.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

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

Commentary

54. It was only possible to observe a limited number of activities during the inspection, but teachers' planning and classroom observations show that children enjoy a good range of experiences over time. In the nursery, children have opportunities to develop their ICT skills as they listen to story tapes and use the new interactive whiteboard to further their mathematical and phonic skills. They also develop their understanding of family life and the meaning of Christmas through imaginative play. In a good reception lesson, children made good progress as they developed an understanding of where they live. This was achieved through good teaching which focused on children looking at pictures in *The Two Mice* which highlighted differences between the town and the country. This developed their observational skills well. Comments from the children showed that they had listened well and clearly understood. Their knowledge and understanding are further consolidated when they take part in a range of activities such as sorting out pictures of activities and features related to town and country life. Children are also introduced to the ideas of a healthy lifestyle by looking at food which is good for them, and developing a good understanding of, for example, the need to wash their hands before eating.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children reach standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1.
- The outdoor area for the nursery children is very good.
- Children develop their physical skills well by, for example, playing with small equipment, riding bicycles and having formal physical education sessions.

Commentary

55. Teaching, learning and achievement are good overall. Teachers and support staff in the nursery provide outdoor activities which develop the children's skills well. They interact with the children well and this brings about significant improvements in their skills with, for example, hoops, skittles and ribbons. Children in the nursery have a satisfactory awareness of space, avoiding collisions as they work. The area outside is well developed and provides good opportunities for children to balance, run and climb. Activities are well structured to develop the children's skills and very good attention is placed on making the area safe. In addition, short sessions provide the children with opportunities to take part in action rhymes and songs. Children in reception have weekly formal lessons which are planned to develop their skills systematically over time and get them used to work in the National Curriculum. In one good lesson observed, many children showed above average ball skills. This was due to the high expectations of the specialist teacher and support given by the class teacher and the teaching assistant. Adults encouraged independence and promoted confidence by praising effort and encouraging individual children to demonstrate what they were doing to the rest of the class. Most children follow instructions well. Specific activities are provided which encourage children to practise their small motor skills, such as building a museum out of blocks, and many of the daily activities include an element of manual dexterity, for example using scissors to cut fruit shapes and folding paper dolls.

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 and children are likely to reach the standards set nationally for children of their age at the end of the reception year.
- Children develop skills and confidence through performing in front of an audience.

Commentary

56. Children are introduced to a good range of activities which helps them to develop their creative skills. Children enjoy painting and talk about their work explaining what they have painted and the colours they have chosen. In the nursery, one child spontaneously painted Father Christmas explaining why she had used the colours red and white. This work was praised and quickly put on display. The class displays enhance the learning environment and encourage children's self-esteem through the valuing of their work. In the reception class, children had painted 'Where We Live' and made a countryside collage. These showed good development of both their creative skills and their knowledge and understanding of the local area. Children dress up and use their imaginations well. This also encourages their social development. In the rehearsal for their Nativity play, children in the nursery responded well

to the prompts by staff and showed enjoyment in the activity. They were able to retell the story in their own words when later spoken to. Children in both classes sang well a variety of songs mainly related to the coming Christmas celebrations. Overall, they participate very well, as shown by their involvement in the Liturgy. This provided an excellent opportunity for them to further their spiritual development and participate as part of the school community.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained at the end of Years 2 and 6 indicate good achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good. Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to their work.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Handwriting and presentation skills are not well developed.

Commentary

57. There has been a good improvement in English since the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening throughout the school are now good and the quality of teaching has improved.
58. In the 2004 national tests the pupils in Year 2 attained standards in reading similar to the national average and well above the standards found in similar schools. In writing they were well below the national average with only one pupil exceeding the expected level. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are working at average levels overall in reading and writing with an increased number working at a level above this when compared with the last year's cohort. During the inspection the writing skills of the pupils who were in Year 2 last year and are now in Year 3 were looked at closely and it is clear that around 20 per cent of them are working at a level above that expected for their age and standards are in line with other schools nationally. Pupils in Year 6 reached standards in English below the national average but in line with those schools whose pupils achieved similarly when they were in Year 2. A good number of pupils, eighty-four per cent, attained the nationally expected level but as few pupils exceeded it then the overall results were below average. Those in the current Year 6 are working at average levels overall.
59. The good improvement in speaking and listening is a direct result of the many well-planned opportunities pupils have in lessons and at other times such as in assemblies to develop these skills. For example, they use 'talk partners' to discuss their ideas before reporting back to the class and are regularly encouraged to speak clearly and in full sentences. By the time the pupils leave the school they are confident and articulate speakers and are willing listeners to the views of others.
60. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing, speaking and listening as they receive good quality teaching. Teaching in Year 6 is very good. Pupils are achieving very well in all aspects of the English curriculum and higher-attainers are reaching the levels of which they are capable. In the very good lesson seen about *A Christmas Carol* in which the pupils were analysing Scrooge's feelings, the super relationships evident and the meticulously planned work ensured

that all pupils made very good progress. Lessons are planned well throughout the school with work for different groups of pupils carefully matched to their prior attainment. This ensures that all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve well as they move through the school. Teachers use the skilled teaching assistants very well to support pupils who require additional help. Sometimes, pupils work outside the class with these well-trained assistants to help improve their skills in reading and spelling. They use a variety of carefully planned strategies to improve standards including a computer program that improves pupils' confidence in reading. A concentrated writing improvement course for the pupils in Year 6 is having a positive impact on the standards they reach. Class lessons are interesting, often with appropriate links to other subject areas such as history, designed to fire the pupils' imagination. In most classes pupils are well managed and teachers create a good working atmosphere that helps pupils concentrate without interruption.

61. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave well in lessons. They often display a maturity beyond their years in their relationships with adults and each other. When working in pairs or groups, they support each other and share ideas sensibly and fairly. Pupils are keen to succeed and are attentive to their teachers and other adults they work with.
62. English is well led and managed by an enthusiastic subject leader. She is new to the post but has already identified areas for improvement and has drawn up an action plan to achieve them. The monitoring of the subject is firmly established and the analyses of test data are proving effective in identifying individuals or groups of pupils in need of additional support, including extra provision for gifted and talented pupils. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also good and these pupils achieve well. Unfamiliar words are emphasised so that the meanings and pronunciation are clear.
63. Handwriting and presentation skills throughout the school are underdeveloped. Work in books and displays is sometimes untidy and this detracts from the content that is often well thought out and interesting. Teachers rarely make comments about handwriting and it is not taught systematically throughout the school. The use of the interactive whiteboards, although a very useful teaching tool, does not give pupils a good writing model to follow. It is extremely difficult for teachers to demonstrate good handwriting using the electronic pens so most writing shown to pupils on these boards is typed in a non-cursive script. The school has identified this as an area for development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. Pupils' language and literacy skills are used well in other subjects of the curriculum. When their inclusion is carefully planned, as with speaking and listening skills, then the benefit to pupils' achievement in both subject areas is considerable. In subjects such as history, pupils often write at length and the lesson time is used effectively to improve their writing skills as well as their knowledge and understanding of historical events. The high quality Year 3 reports about the Romans and the Celts are a good example of this. This frees up curriculum time so that more time can be spent on writing or greater time allocated to another activity.
65. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement about overall provision in this subject. The school has recently introduced **French** lessons to the curriculum for all junior classes. There is also an infant French club. The curriculum is mainly, but not exclusively, based on the government scheme of work for junior pupils. All classes are presently at a similar stage of development. No lessons were observed during the inspection as they are taught on Fridays. The specialist teacher was interviewed. Some Year 3 pupils discussed their work in French but although they can pronounce some words satisfactorily and know their meanings, it is evident that they are at a very early stage of learning the language. However, they were all enthusiastic about the subject and indicated that they are enjoying the lessons. They have

limited knowledge of France. There are no links with other schools yet so that pupils cannot benefit from their input on suitable activities and resources.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in the junior classes is good overall. It is very good in Year 6. Junior pupils are achieving well.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Teachers do not set precise targets for pupils to ensure an even more rapid improvement in standards of attainment.
- There is a pattern of differences in gender attainment in Years 2 and 6.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

Commentary

66. In 2004, test results for Year 2 were in line with the national average but well above average when compared with the results from similar schools. Ninety-four per cent of pupils attained at least Level 2 and 25 per cent attained the higher Level 3. Girls outperformed boys as they have done for at least the last three years. The results were not as good as they have been in recent years, particularly in 2001, but cohorts are relatively small in this school and a few pupils' results can affect the data significantly. Pupils start Year 1 with average attainment and make sufficient progress, so that by the end of Year 2, their achievement is satisfactory and their standards average. This is borne out by the standards seen during the inspection in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language achieve in line with other pupils.
67. In 2004, tests results for Year 6 pupils were in line with the national average and above average when compared with the results for similar schools. This was an improvement on the previous year's results but still lower than results had been from 2000 to 2002 when they were either well above or above the national average. The school has been focusing on improving results for junior pupils. Eighty-seven per cent of pupils attained Level 4 but only 19 per cent of pupils attained the higher Level 5. Boys have outperformed girls for at least the last three years. In 2004, all the pupils who did not attain Level 4 were girls. The standard of work seen during the inspection for the current Year 6 pupils is average overall, with some higher attaining pupils achieving a higher level. Junior pupils are achieving well currently, particularly in Year 6, where they are achieving very well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are achieving in line with other pupils.
68. In the infant classes, teaching and learning are satisfactory. There have been some changes in staff this term and this has led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. There are some lost opportunities to involve all pupils in lessons and to assess them by the use of individual whiteboards or number fans. Some parts of lessons do not have sufficient pace and pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Pupils have good attitudes to their work, persevere and behave well.
69. In the junior classes, teaching and learning are good. This is because teachers plan well to take account of all pupils' prior attainment and challenge all pupils appropriately. Teaching is usually lively and enthusiastic. This is particularly noticeable in Year 6 where all are particularly well challenged and many pupils say that mathematics is their favourite subject. Pupils show good attitudes to their work and behaviour is good. Support staff play an important role in enabling all pupils to succeed both in whole-class parts of lessons and in group and individual work.

70. Teachers use assessment satisfactorily to ensure that pupils make sufficient progress but with more rigorous tracking and pupil target-setting progress would be even more rapid. Marking is inconsistent. It is usually regular and supportive but does not always indicate sufficiently well how pupils can improve. All teachers made appropriate and good use of interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching and learning but there is insufficient use of ICT by pupils, although there are some very good examples of spreadsheet work. Teaching and learning in smaller groups are provided for junior pupils who need some extra help to catch up.
71. The quality of leadership and management is good. Although the subject leader is new to the school, she has already started to monitor teaching and learning in lessons and provide planning support to other teachers. There was good evidence of her work in the quality of planning, teaching and learning in the junior classes. She has not yet begun to work with the infant class teachers. She is particularly well placed to lead this subject because she is enthusiastic about the subject and provides a very good model of how to teach mathematics effectively. She has identified important areas for development, like reviewing planning to ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged, auditing of mathematical equipment and developing further the use of interactive teaching programs. However, the school has not yet investigated the gender issues shown in the Year 2 and Year 6 results. Since the last inspection, there has been a satisfactory improvement in provision overall.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Pupils are encouraged well to use their numeracy skills in other subjects. They develop spreadsheets and interrogate databases in ICT. There are many planned opportunities in science and design and technology to measure, calculate and explain results in tables and graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reached above average standards in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6.
- Teaching is generally good and this ensures that pupils make good gains in their learning.
- Good standards have been sustained since the last inspection.
- Higher attaining pupils are well challenged.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are inconsistent across the school and sometimes unsatisfactory.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always show how they can improve.

Commentary

73. Inspection findings and recent national test results for pupils in Year 6 indicate that pupils make good progress in science and achieve well. In the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils, the standard achieved was above average when compared with all schools and well above average when compared with similar schools. The subject has been well managed over time and this has helped to ensure that pupils receive a good curriculum with an emphasis on investigative science. The latter has been a key feature in maintaining good standards, particularly those of more able pupils, and stimulating pupils' enquiry skills and thinking.
74. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are currently working at levels appropriate for their age. Most respond very well to the way science is taught and enjoy the practical nature of the tasks. Staff have

focused well on developing the pupils' skills of scientific enquiry so that by the time pupils leave school they can select a suitable way of finding things out when trying to answer a scientific question. This was seen in a very good Year 6 lesson when pupils were investigating changing materials. The teacher's good subject knowledge and questioning encouraged pupils' scientific thinking and resulted in them achieving very well. Pupils based their predictions on previously gained scientific knowledge and understanding and identified key factors to be considered when a fair test is part of the investigation.

75. Although most teaching is at least good, in Years 1 and 2 it is currently satisfactory. This reflects recent changes in staffing and the relative inexperience of staff with their classes. Time spent on ensuring that pupils paid full attention affected the pace of learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work vary across the school - again, a reflection of the recent changes in staffing. Although the way teachers assess pupils' work is generally good, there are inconsistencies in marking so some pupils are not clear about how they can improve. Good teaching is characterised by good planning which makes science interesting and meets the needs of all pupils.
76. The subject has been well led and managed. Through effective monitoring, a clear view of how to maintain good standards and develop provision further has developed. This reflects the school's drive for continual improvement. Pupils are well challenged and additional activities such as visits to the Science Museum and visitors to the school have helped to raise the profile of the subject and widened the pupils' learning experiences. When asked, pupils frequently reply that they '... like doing science' and this is confirmed in the lessons when they display very good attitudes to learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by Year 6 are above average.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Teaching and learning are good and enable pupils to achieve well.
- Very good use is made of ICT in other curriculum areas.
- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

77. Standards by Year 2 are average in those aspects of the subject where there is evidence. By Year 6, standards are above average. Overall, pupils achieve well due to effective teaching and learning. Since the last inspection very good subject co-ordination has helped to maintain high standards and enabled the school to keep fully up-to-date with developments in the subject. The school is very well resourced. The computer suite has been re-equipped, and a bank of wireless lap-top computers and interactive whiteboards in all classrooms have given further access to new technology that has helped to forge very good cross-curricular links. This shows good improvement since the last inspection.
78. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Some lessons were judged to be very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, know what they want to teach and generally have high expectations of pupils. Where teaching is stronger, activities are well planned for the range of ability within classes and adult support is well focused so that all pupils make good progress in their learning. This was evident in a very good Year 6 lesson where pupils were introduced to the use of spreadsheets. All pupils were well supported in appropriate activities. Higher attaining pupils were challenged to enter formulae into their work. As a

result, a significant proportion of the class demonstrated their ability to work at a higher than expected level. Where lessons are weaker, the key area for improvement was the management of classes in the computer suite. Overlong introductions, with a lack of questioning, discussion and opportunities to be involved in modelling the work, led to restlessness and inattention. Consequently, introductions were not fully effective, leaving pupils unsure about their tasks.

79. There is a new co-ordinator for the subject who has the potential skills to further develop the subject and its application throughout the curriculum. A scheme of work based on national guidelines has been introduced, helping to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered. Assessment is improving and is starting to be used to provide clearer starting points for future learning. An ICT support teacher has been particularly effective in guiding the many teachers recently appointed to the school. A technician provides invaluable support by keeping all of the systems fully up and running.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. The school is successful in developing ICT as a tool for learning. During the inspection many opportunities were observed where pupils were word processing, using programs to support their learning, and using the internet for research. Year 6 pupils have researched and made power point presentations of wild animals with sound and animation, designed for Year 2, and prepared an interactive quiz on Ancient Greece as part of their work in history. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were using a paint program effectively to produce pictures in the pointillism style of Seurat. Programs have been introduced to support the music curriculum. Surveys and the results of science investigations, for example, draw on data handling programs. Some of the work that pupils do in school, with guidance on layout, is posted onto the school's well constructed and informative web-site.

HUMANITIES

81. Inspectors observed three geography lessons and one history lesson. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and spoke with staff and pupils. It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in geography and history. The school's curriculum map shows that the schemes of work are based on national guidelines. The school improvement plan shows that their implementation is to be monitored throughout the school.
82. Of the three lessons seen in **geography**, two were good and one satisfactory, a key weakness in it being classroom management. In the good lessons, however, management was a strength and based on positive relationships; tasks set took account of pupils' abilities. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils worked in literacy groups to prepare, to varying degrees, a non-chronological report on the River Thames.
83. One good lesson was seen in **history** where the method used was effective in developing pupils' understanding. Pupils were 'hot seated' as characters from Boudicca's revolt against the Romans and others encouraged to ask pertinent questions. Past work in geography and history shows that marking is variable, often without constructive comments for improvement. Work is, at times, based on worksheets that offer insufficient challenge particularly for more able pupils. ICT is used well to support learning in both subjects; a planned opportunity, for example in Year 5, was given for pupils to research aspects of the Vikings.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. No lessons were seen in design and technology. One was observed in art and design and two each in music and physical education. Inspectors also spoke to staff, analysed the school's curriculum provision and evaluated pupils' work from the previous year and displays around

the school. Pupils were heard singing and playing in assembly and on a video of a production and a concert. A visiting rugby specialist was seen and teachers' plans in both subjects were looked at. It was only possible to make an overall judgement on art and design.

85. There was very little pupils' work for analysis in **design and technology** but what was seen was of good quality. The school uses the government's scheme of work and pupils' work is planned to take advantage of cross-curricular links whenever possible to make their learning meaningful. Evidence from planning indicates that the skills are taught progressively and the principles of design, making and evaluation are covered effectively. The subject leader has just taken on this role.
86. Evidence shows that all aspects of **music** are taught to pupils throughout the school. All of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is by a skilled music specialist who is himself a talented singer and is a superb role model for the pupils. Pupils listen to music as they enter and leave assemblies. As at the last inspection, the standard of singing is extremely high and all performances are of the highest quality. Pupils have many opportunities to sing and play in events such as the Christmas Carol Concert, in Mass, the end of year concert and in the annual Year 6 production. This spectacular production is extremely well received by parents and visitors and helps considerably to raise the profile of the school in the local community as well as providing a wonderful experience for all the pupils involved. Recent extremely successful productions have been *The Sound of Music* and *The Wizard of Oz*. Pupils in the choir also have the opportunity to sing to a wider audience in the local libraries, when carol singing for charity at King's Cross Station, at an ordination service at Westminster Cathedral and were invited to sing at the Teacher Graduation ceremony at the Institute of Education. As a useful addition to the provision there is tuition in recorder, flute, percussion, violin and cello. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they have to listen to and perform music and are very keen and eager to participate in activities.
87. All aspects of **physical education** are covered including outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils learn to swim and the majority, over 80 per cent, are able to swim 25 metres confidently. A specialist rugby coach visits the school and teaches rugby skills. The residential school journey to the Isle of Wight for pupils in Year 6 gives them many opportunities to take part in adventurous activities in a safe environment, as well as learning to live together in harmony away from home. Since the last inspection, the hall floor has been much improved so that all pupils are now able to have regular gymnastics and dance lessons. The quality of the Year 6 lesson observed was very good and helped pupils to develop their skills well. The Year 2 lesson was satisfactory. The physical education co-ordinator is an extremely skilled sports coach and works tremendously hard to give all pupils the opportunity to participate in as many sports as possible. He has contacts throughout the local borough and London with clubs that offer classes for interested pupils to join and is ever willing to help pupils find a sport that they will enjoy. The school has a number of after-school clubs for pupils to join in games and dance. Pupils also participate in competitive tournaments for rugby and tennis as well as the local cross-country competition. The school holds two sports days each year that are well attended and enjoyed by parents and carers as well as the pupils taking part. The level of involvement in all kinds of sporting activities is very high and contributes greatly to the promotion of healthy living and development of skills.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above average in the infant and the junior classes and all pupils are achieving well.

- Leadership and management are very good.
- Extra-curricular provision contributes very well to pupils' achievements.

Commentary

88. Pupils benefit from very knowledgeable teaching as the school employs a specialist teacher. Although only one lesson could be observed during the inspection because of timetabling arrangements, it is evident that pupils are learning well and achieving above average standards. The evidence to support this judgement comes from the very wide range of pupils' individual and collaborative high quality work on display, discussions with the co-ordinator and a power point presentation created by the subject leader showing the pupils' work. This excellent presentation also showed how the school teaches the individual units in the government's scheme of work and how the school takes full advantage of the wealth of art galleries and museums in London to enrich pupils' learning.
89. In the one good lesson seen, led by a class teacher with the specialist art teacher's support, pupils were learning a printing technique in order to create patterns. ICT was used well to show pupils slides of important patterns, like those in the work of William Morris and in Islamic and Celtic art, as a stimulus to their work.
90. There are very good opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures. For example, pupils made Middle Eastern and Thai puppet theatres and, through their frequent visits to London galleries, are introduced to art from many different cultures. There are strong cross-curricular links with other subjects. For example, pupils have made a collage of the Great Fire of London, which linked to their history and science topics, and textiles work linked to the religious education theme of Trinity. When studying portraits, the older pupils looked at Tudor and Victorian portraits at the National Portrait Gallery and this had strong links with their work in history. The school environment benefits greatly from pupils' collaborative work. There are brightly painted murals in the playground, the Tree of Life embroidery in the hall and pupils' work on Russian icons in the junior corridor. There has been a good improvement in provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Provision in personal, social, health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school places a very high emphasis on the provision for PSHCE.
- The very good quality teaching helps develop very positive relationships throughout the school.

Commentary

91. Standards are well above expectations because PSHCE is taught regularly in discrete lessons as well as being fully embedded in all other aspects of school life. All school staff work together most effectively to ensure that pupils are constantly and consistently taught to respect themselves and others in the school and wider community. A very good programme of study ensures that pupils learn moral values and relate them to the world in which they live. Pupils learn what it is to be a good citizen through these lessons and taking part in the voting for the members of the school council. Those elected also learn the importance of discussion and the democratic process. Sex education and drugs awareness are covered appropriately for pupils throughout the school. Outside agencies and visitors are used to good effect to teach pupils about the dangers of drugs and the high level of participation in sport helps all pupils develop a healthy lifestyle.
92. The quality of teaching in the three lessons seen was always good with one lesson of the highest quality. The teachers have developed very good relationships with their pupils and the PSHCE lessons take place in an atmosphere of calm and mutual respect. Pupils respond

well to this very good teaching and are willing to discuss their own experiences and feelings in a secure and supportive environment. The lessons are very well planned to meet the diverse needs of the school community as well as taking into account events around the world. The very good quality teaching of PSHCE gives very good support to pupils' personal, social and moral development across the school.

93. Leadership and management of this area of the school's work are very good and have helped to improve the range and quality of provision significantly since the last inspection. Provision is well integrated throughout the school's work and specific lessons are well taught.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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

poor (6); very poor (7).