

INSPECTION REPORT

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Paddington, London

LEA area: Westminster

Unique reference number: 101124

Headteacher: Mr Patrick Moloney

Lead inspector: John Brennan

Dates of inspection: 11 – 14 October 2004

Inspection number: 267449

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 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	331
School address:	19 Cirencester Street Paddington London
Postcode:	W2 5SR
Telephone number:	020 7641 4326
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Steve Maingot
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Dolours serves an inner city area of Paddington. The school has a very open admissions policy and is culturally very mixed. There are large numbers of pupils from either a Black Caribbean or Black African background. A similar number of pupils come from a variety of white backgrounds. This includes a significant number of Portuguese pupils and pupils from other European countries. The school also has a significant number of pupils of Asian origin. There is a small number of refugee families from Africa and Europe attending the school. Over one third of pupils begin school at the early stages of learning English but many are proficient in their own language. Forty eight per cent of families are entitled to free school meals. This is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above average and encompasses pupils with learning, social, behavioural and emotional needs. The school is a Beacon School and has received an Achievement Award in each of the last three years. It is part of an Education Action Zone and benefits from the Single Regeneration Budget and the Children's Fund.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school with some very good features. Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress. Pupils behave very well, relationships are of a very high quality and pupils work very hard. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in acquiring the basic skills in English and mathematics and, in the case of speaking and listening, very well, to reach standards that are well above average.
- The speedy progress made by pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and by those who have special educational needs.
- The very good quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2.
- Some teaching in Years 3 and 4 and, for higher attaining pupils in science through Years 3 to 6, is not challenging enough.
- Considerate and ambitious leadership has built a very harmonious school.
- Some of the procedures that underpin the school's strong attitude of care lack detail.
- Shortcomings in development planning and management structures do not always make the most of the enthusiasm of co-ordinators.
- Marking does not give pupils a clear enough idea of how they could improve.
- The school has a very positive attitude to supporting parents in helping in their child's education.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen in English, history and in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and, at the end of Year 2, in mathematics, science and art. The quality of education for children in the Foundation Stage has improved. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and those who have special educational needs achieve at a quicker rate. Curriculum organisation is more coherent, so that pupils now meet national expectations in history and art at the end of Year 6. Shortcomings remain in how the school monitors its work.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A*	A*
mathematics	A*	A*	A	A*
science	B	A	C	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. * Indicates that the school was in the top five per cent of school for results in this subject*

Pupils are achieving well. The children in the Foundation make a good start to school. By the end of Reception most children are on course to reach the expected goals for children of this age. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve very well. Standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and art. National Test results for 2003 were well above those of similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. This is in part due to the rapid progress pupils who are learning to speak English make. By the end of Year 2 many of these pupils are confident speakers. Throughout the school pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening to reach standards that are

well above average. Achievement through Years 3 to 6 is good overall. It stalls in Years 3 and 4 but picks up again later in the school, especially in Year 6. Inspection findings show that currently standards are well above average in English and mathematics and average in science, where higher attaining pupils could do better. National Test results for 2003 show that compared to similar schools standards were very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Standards meet expectations in art at the end of Year 6. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve very well. Through the school pupils now achieve well in ICT. Pupils meet expectations in history at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. It was not possible to judge standards in other subjects because too little teaching was seen.

The provision for **pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Pupils are confident, mature learners who show high levels of respect for themselves and others. Attendance rates are satisfactory and punctuality good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The curriculum is now more organised and **teaching is good.** In the Foundation Stage the attention paid to developing pupils' social and emotion learning and speaking and listening skills sets a good base for future teaching. Activities here are interesting and varied. The teaching of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is very good. Partnerships with teaching assistants are strong, helping pupils who have special educational needs do very well. The teaching of literacy and numeracy remain strengths of the teaching. The best teaching is found in Years 1 and 2 and Year 6, it is often interesting and helps pupils learn very well in a variety of subjects. Some teaching in Years 3 and 4 does not build on what pupils have already achieved. Through Years 3 to 6 pupils do not do enough investigative work in science and some of the work they do in other subjects involves copying facts rather than learning subject specific skills. Otherwise clear assessment systems are undermined by weaknesses in marking which do not show pupils what they could do to improve. The higher profile given to the arts has helped raise standards in art by giving pupils enriching experiences.

The very good quality of relationships is underpinned by the school's caring attitude but some of the procedures lack detail and are not widely enough known. There are very good relationships between school and parents. The school receives very good support from parents in response to its open attitude and the very good efforts it makes to help parents support children's learning at home.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Taken overall the quality of leadership and management is good. Effective leadership by the headteacher and other staff has succeeded in creating a strong sense of common purpose, a drive to succeed and a very positive ethos. Underpinning management practices do not always make the most of this and some weaknesses in provision exist over time. The quality of governance is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard and express considerable satisfaction with its work. Parents and pupils are ambitious for what the school has to offer them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The detail and circulation of policies that guide the school's concern for pupils' care and welfare.
- The coherence of development planning, monitoring, and the work of key co-ordinators.
- The consistency of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and the challenge provided for higher attaining pupils in science through Years 3 to 6.
- The quality of marking.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall pupils achieve well. Achievement in the key areas of English and mathematics is good. Achievement in speaking and listening is very good, leading to rapid progress being made by pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils who have special educational needs also achieve very well. Standards in the basic skills are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. Achievement through Years 3 and 4 is not as strong as elsewhere in the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very successful promotion of speaking and listening ensures all pupils achieve well, including those who are at the early stages of learning English, and leads to standards being well above average.
- In other aspects of English and mathematics pupils achieve well to reach standards that are well above average.
- Pupils who have special educational needs often reach expected levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The pattern of achievement is not consistent and stalls in Years 3 and 4 where some teaching lacks ambition.
- Higher attaining pupils in science are capable of achieving more through Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

1. Although many pupils are proficient in their own language, the principal barrier to achievement is the limited English skills many children start school with. The promotion of language begins in the Foundation Stage and continues through the school, so that this barrier is quickly overcome. The strong focus on speaking and listening is woven into all areas of learning in the Nursery and Reception classes, so that pupils achieve very well in acquiring and using language. This is also helped by their very good achievement in personal and social skills, which helps them make the most of the varied learning opportunities presented. As a result children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all other areas of learning and start Year 1 ready for the National Curriculum. As a result of very good personal development they quickly become well adjusted learners ready to make the most of the opportunities school provides.
2. The continuing emphasis given to literacy and mathematics and the very good quality of teaching helps pupils achieve very well through Years 1 and 2. Once again achievement in speaking and listening stands out, with approaches fostering a sense of debate and questioning throughout the school that serves learning very well. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English benefit most from this approach and by the end of Year 2 many are proficient in English and transfer skills well to learning in other subjects. It is testimony to the school's success in this area that standards in speaking and listening are well above average by the time pupils leave the school. The concentration on key skills suits pupils of all abilities so that by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. This is borne out by results in National Tests for seven- year-olds. In 2003 these were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Inspection findings indicate that currently standards are above average in each these three areas. Results have improved well over time and compare very favourably to those of similar schools, being well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference, at the end of Year 2 or Year 6, between the achievement of boys and girls or between the achievements of pupils from differing ethnic backgrounds

3. Overall pupils achieve well through Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics to reach standards that are well above average. National Test results for eleven- year-olds were well above average in 2003 for English and mathematics and in the top five per cent of similar schools. Results have consistently been at this level and the school invariably meets the challenging targets it has set for these. The school has regularly received Achievement Awards in recognition of this.
4. The very good relationships in the school, strong work ethic, concentration on key skills and well thought out assessment and intervention systems for pupils who have special educational needs, ensure that these pupils achieve very well. At the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 many reach national expectations and over time a good number progress to the point where they no longer need additional help.
5. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 makes very good use of pupils' growing confidence in literacy by applying this well to other subjects and, because of the consistency with which this is done, pupils' achievement is good in many subjects. For example pupils not only make good progress in acquiring ICT skills, but they apply these well to other areas of work. In ICT pupils continue to pick up key skills at a good rate through Years 3 to 6 but do not use these as widely as pupils lower down the school. The higher profile given to art results in pupils achieving well throughout the school. Pupils exceed expectations at the end of Year 2, but the effects of past weakness are still to be found at the end of Year 6, where standards currently meet expectations. It was not possible to judge standards in music, geography, physical education or design and technology because too few lessons were seen. Those that were seen indicate that pupils were working at expected levels.
6. Generally speaking though achievement through the juniors is patchier and is not as strong as that made through Years 1 and 2. There are three principal reasons for this:
 - Some teaching in Years 3 and 4 does not build well enough on the very good base earlier teaching has established. Achievement stalls, with some higher attaining pupils marking time. This puts undue pressure on teaching higher up the school, especially in Year 6. Here, very good teaching means that pupils catch up and is one of the main reasons why standards have remained high in English and mathematics. The school has not been able to maintain the same picture with science. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and, although results are well above those of similar schools at the end of Year 6, they are average overall. Results here do not come up to the standards achieved in English and mathematics. This is largely because higher attaining pupils are not given enough work that tests their understanding or allows them to experiment.
 - In history standards meet expectations at the end of Year 6 but skills are put to better use in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6, where there can be an over-emphasis on literacy skills. In some instances this leads to the copying out of factual information which slows achievement in history itself. This over-emphasis on copying facts can also be seen in science and in some geography work.
 - These shortcomings arise out of the rather unstructured way the school sets about monitoring its work.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.7 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.9 (14.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.7 (31.4)	26.8(27.0)
mathematics	29.9 (31.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (29.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very proactive in encouraging attendance.
- Very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour help all pupils to achieve well.
- There is a caring and supportive ethos in the school which results in very high quality relationships between adults and pupils.
- Pupils are highly confident and show high levels of respect for themselves and others.
- Pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development is very good, with provision for their moral and social development being especially strong.

Commentary

7. Pupils are very proud of their school and enjoy coming to it, a view supported by nearly all the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire. Whilst attendance at the school is satisfactory overall, unauthorised attendance for 2002/03 was higher than the national average. However, the school rigorously applies the restriction of authorised absence to 10 days and the high level of unauthorised absence is a result of the extended absences of some pupils visiting overseas. The school has recently introduced a comprehensive range of initiatives, such as class certificates and 100% attendance awards, to raise the profile of attendance.
8. In lessons throughout the school, pupils show enjoyment in their work, are keen to answer questions and work well in collaboration with each other. For example, pupils respond very positively to homework with many older pupils going to great lengths in carrying out personal research. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds including those who have special educational needs have very good attitudes to school and learning. This has a positive impact on their achievement and the very good progress they make.
9. In responses to leadership which exudes a sense of calm and consideration for others, pupils are helpful, friendly and very well behaved. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils move around the school in a very orderly manner, conduct themselves sensibly during lunchtimes and sit quietly during assemblies. Playtimes are lively and pupils play well together. No instances of bullying, harassment or racism were observed. Pupils know that any behaviour issues will be dealt with promptly and they are pleased about this. There are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour because of the school's approach to behaviour management. There have been no exclusions over the past year.
10. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good overall. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong because of the school's strong moral and social code. Much of this is due to the thought the school has given to planning a curriculum for pupils' personal development. Relationships are such that issues

can be discussed openly, with pupils feeling that their views matter. Staff and pupils treat each other with mutual respect and emphasise the importance the school places on working together. As a result pupils are very confident and have high self esteem. They understand the consequences of their actions upon others and have an awareness of themselves and their responsibilities to the school community. Older pupils take on responsibilities for overseeing younger pupils walk safely on the school's numerous stairwells and act as monitors in the Reception classes. Pupils in every class take their class responsibilities and jobs seriously.

11. Pupils' cultural development is good. The school encourages pupils to appreciate differing traditions and cultures and this results in a highly supportive and caring atmosphere. This is evident in the displays proudly showing where pupils come from in the world and the many languages that are spoken at home and in the school's support for Portuguese and Lebanese classes. Provision for spiritual development is good. The strong Christian ethos in the school promotes good spiritual development. There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on themes in lessons and assemblies. Prayers which reflect the spirituality of the church's teachings are a regular feature in every classroom after morning registration. Acts of collective worship give pupils time to reflect on what they have been learning and are often used to reinforce the school's behaviour rules.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003%

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided for pupils is good and is particularly appropriate for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Teaching, which has improved in quality since the last inspection, is helped by better curriculum planning. There are however, some inconsistencies in the impact these improvements have on learning because of some shortcomings in how the work of the school has been monitored.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the last inspection. The quality of assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage pupils very well to create very good relationships with pupils and very good conditions for learning.
- The teaching of basic skills, especially in speaking and listening, is strong and helps pupils learn skills needed in other areas of study.
- Teachers establish very good partnerships with teaching assistants and support teachers to successfully meet pupils' differing needs.
- Teaching through Years 1 and 2 is very good.
- Some of the teaching through Years 3 and 4 and, in science through Years 3 to 6, lacks challenge.
- Marking does not give pupils enough information to improve their learning.

Commentary

12. From the moment children start school in the Nursery, where organisation and teaching are much improved, the school sets about establishing patterns of behaviour, routines and relationships with pupils that serve learning well. The recently extended outdoor learning area is often used to help children learn to play together. Throughout the school the management of pupils and the relationships established between teachers and pupils is very positive. Both parents and pupils see this as strong point of teaching. Teachers and other staff are quick to praise pupils and to provide opportunities for them to work together. Routines are well thought through and pupil behaviour consistently managed. As a result, teachers waste little time admonishing pupils and classrooms are calm, productive places where pupils give of their best. Teachers and pupils can go about their work in peace and pupils feel able to share their thoughts and feelings with teachers. This is one of the key reasons why pupils achieve very well in speaking and listening.
13. Teachers make good use of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy and successfully target key skills. This was seen in a very good literacy lesson in Year 6, where the pupils were given the opportunity to develop their story openings through role play. Resulting compositions were spontaneous and imaginative. In mathematics lessons teachers throughout the school are skilled at using the beginning of lessons to extend the strategies pupils use to calculate and solve problems mentally.
14. Teachers, aided by teaching assistants and other support teachers, are skilled at drawing speaking and listening opportunities out of every day activities. This begins in the Nursery and Reception classes, where aided by other members of staff, teachers ensure that rhymes, games and social activities all involve talk. As a result, pupils who often join school fluent in their home language, pick up English very quickly. The teaching for these pupils is very effective. The specialist support teacher works very closely with class teachers, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 where needs are often more acute, to prepare necessary support for targeted pupils. There is a very good partnership between class teachers and the support teacher, who is very adept at 'hijacking' pupils' current areas of study to bring out the talking and listening opportunities they present. As teachers generally have very high expectations of pupils at the early stages of learning English, they achieve very well. This strong foundation work prepares them well for the study of other subjects. As pupils become more fluent teachers higher up the school ensure that there are plenty of opportunities within a range of subjects, for pupils to answer questions, to share their own thoughts and to value the opinions of others. As a result pupils leave the school as mature debaters able to draw upon a wide vocabulary when talking to others.
15. The contribution made by teaching assistants and other teachers who help pupils who have special educational needs is equally effective. Teaching assistants are skilled at giving just the right amount of help at the beginning of lessons to enable pupils to join in with the rest of the class. This also prepares them well for any follow up work, so that the close attention they get ensures they work hard and with considerable success. This classroom-based teaching is matched by the well-taught catch-up units of work. These are particularly successful in reading for pupils in Years 1 and 2. All in all the barriers that speaking English as an additional language or having special learning needs present pupils and the school are quickly addressed. This sets the scene well for future learning.
16. Although not exclusively the case, it is teaching through Years 1 and 2 that most consistently exploits the relationships the teachers have worked hard to forge with pupils and the key skills they have successfully targeted, by giving pupils stimulating and interesting tasks. It is this that sets the best teaching apart. This was the case in a very good mathematics lesson in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class where the teacher's captivating style had pupils hanging on her every word. Questioning drew out from the pupils how they would go about finding who was the tallest in their group, giving pupils scope to come up with their own solutions and their own ways of

working together to display their results. Pupils set about the task with a will, developing some systematic problem solving skills. Such lively teaching also carries through in several other subjects, so that, for example in Information and Communications Technology, pupils in Years 1 and 2 conversed through e mail with a fictitious character about where they live. There are plenty of times, therefore, where pupils experience how learning in one subject can serve another.

17. Although teaching in Year 6 is often of the same high quality found in Years 1 and 2, this is not consistently the case throughout Years 3 to 6. Some of the teaching in Years 3 and 4 in particular lacks ambition and does not build well enough on what has gone before. Tasks can be too simple and so higher attaining pupils mark time. For example, in an unsatisfactory lesson in a Year 3 and 4 class all pupils were asked to look at pictures of people going about their jobs and to write what they were doing. Even the most able wrote little more than 'This is a librarian. She helps me choose books.' Such mundane work failed to ignite pupils' interest, so that many pupils became chatty and worked carelessly. The quality of teaching picks up to an extent in Year 5, but especially in 6. However, some uncertainties in teaching subjects such as history and science still exist. Here, teachers do not enable pupils to work in ways that suit the study of the subject and put too much emphasis on literacy skills. In science for example, there is too little investigative work. In some instances in Year 5 pupils all do the same work, copying out facts rather than engaging in the different ways of working subjects can present.

18. The school has made some important changes to day to day procedures for assessing pupils. These work well for English and mathematics and for pupils who are learning English as an additional language or who have special educational needs. In these areas teachers have a good idea about how well pupils are progressing and what they need to do next. Assessment in the other subjects is carried out at the end of units of work, but the school is not getting full benefit from these because subject co-ordinators are not yet using them to identify where the successes and concerns lie as a first step to improving teaching and learning. Pupils are given individual targets in several subjects but these are undermined by present shortcomings in marking which tends to praise pupils' efforts rather than give them a good steer on what they need to do next. As a result of this and because teachers rarely refer to targets in lessons, they are not at the forefront of pupils' minds when they are working. This reduces their impact.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	10 (20%)	26 (53%)	8 (16%)	3 (6%)	0	0

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

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, which is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A well planned curriculum for teaching the basic skills, especially speaking and listening, meets the key needs of pupils.
- The school successfully meets the needs of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and those who have special educational needs.
- Extra-curricular provision extends pupils' interests and learning outside lessons, especially in the arts.

- Although the curriculum is now more coherent, there are inconsistencies in how schemes of work are implemented in some subjects through Years 3 to 6.
- Improvements to facilities for ICT and outdoor learning facilities for children in the Foundation Stage have added to the quality of pupils' learning.

Commentary

19. The school has chosen appropriately to give a high priority to developing pupils' basic skills, especially speaking and listening. This is paying dividends, with the vast majority of pupils achieving well in these key areas. The curriculum reflects approaches recommended in the National Strategies for both literacy and numeracy, with a particularly good range of strategies being used to target speaking and listening.
20. The very good quality of the curriculum for speaking and listening is clearly visible in the very good achievements in speaking and listening for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. The school's decision to target intervention at pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 works well. Very good partnerships between class teachers and a specialist teacher ensures that pupils' everyday learning is adapted and used very well as a vehicle for developing language.
21. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. Support staff understand pupils' needs and meet them well. The school achieves a good balance between helping pupils in class and in small group work. The high number and quality of teaching assistants makes a telling contribution to pupils' learning. In addition continuing assessment of reading allows for the regular targeting of pupils throughout their time at school. It is not uncommon to find the teacher responsible for this using snatched moments, often before school starts, to teach reading to individuals. These are added to by catch-up lessons so that pupils are given plenty of individual attention.
22. The school has improved aspects of curriculum planning which was a weakness noted in the last inspection. Shortcomings in the curriculum in the Nursery have been put right, with a well organised curriculum ensuring that children's education gets off to a good start. The development of pupils' personal qualities is enhanced by a well planned curriculum for the development of these and is one reason why behaviour, relationships, and the climate for learning are a strength of the school. Curriculum planning elsewhere is effective, with a two-year rolling programme to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. The provision for ICT has improved significantly since the last inspection, and it is now good. Elsewhere, the curriculum ensures that statutory requirements are met but monitoring, which has concentrated on compliance, rather than the quality of learning, has missed some shortcomings in the way individual teachers use schemes of work. In some classes in the juniors the continued focus on literacy skills relegates subject specific skills which are not always given a high enough priority. This is particularly the case in science and history. In other subjects, such as physical education, an imbalance in elements of the subjects exists, with for example, too little emphasis given to gymnastics through Years 3 to 6.
23. The school has responded well to parents' requests for more after school activities. The pupils now benefit from a good range of clubs and activities, before and after school hours. Pupils enjoy a good range of enriching experiences which, in particular, has raised the profile of the arts in the curriculum. Paddington Arts, a local organisation, takes dance classes and Education Action Zone funding is used to invite English National Ballet and the English Pocket Opera into school. Arts and musical activities are much appreciated, giving pupils many chances to demonstrate and develop their talents. These opportunities make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.
24. The school has worked hard to improve resources and accommodation and has overcome shortcomings noted in ICT and outdoor play provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Facilities for these are now good and overall in school, resources and accommodation adequately meet the needs of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory support, advice and guidance for pupils through monitoring their achievements and personal development. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good, trusting relationships between pupils and adults throughout the school which create a strong sense of community and mutual respect.
- Some of the procedures that underpin the school's strong, caring ethos need reviewing and should be more readily available.
- There is good informal monitoring of pupils' progress and personal development.
- Induction arrangements for children into the Nursery and into school are good.
- The school encourages and acts on the views of pupils.

Commentary

25. Trusting relationships throughout the school are a considerable strength. Staff provide very good role models for pupils. This encourages the high level of respect that exists between adults and pupils and contributes to the caring ethos that is evident throughout the school. The school has provided a number of good initiatives to enhance pupils' personal safety, including Internet safety and workshops for older pupils. These were also made available to their parents. Helping pupils to make healthy choices in their diets starts when pupils enter the Nursery. They are introduced to the concept of healthy foods and have the opportunity to cook 'healthy pizzas'. The school has adopted the 'Water in school is cool' programme. Pupils welcome this. The strong sense of community means that pupils naturally look after each other and older pupils readily look after younger pupils at break times.
26. Whilst the school has the required procedures that underpin care in place, these need reviewing and expanding. They do not always reflect the current good practice. Risk assessments need to be more formally documented and relevant information should be more widely available in both the school handbook and to parents. All staff have received first aid training. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
27. The school is a stable community with a low turnover of staff and pupils. Staff throughout the school have a good knowledge of individual pupils and provide a high level of support for both their academic and personal development. Whilst pupils are set targets for English, mathematics, science and ICT, these vary from class to class in how specific and useful they are to pupils. Scope also exists to involve pupils who have special educational needs more in reviewing and setting their personal targets. Recording personal development and areas of concern for individual pupils, apart from those with special education needs where this is good and for children in the Foundation Stage, is not systematic.
28. The school encourages both parents and children to feel comfortable and familiar in the Nursery. Parents receive useful information prior to their child starting and they are overwhelmingly supportive of the provision. At the time of the inspection in the first half of the autumn term, children were confident and already well aware of the routines. All parents who responded to the questionnaire were satisfied with the arrangements for their child to settle into school.
29. Pupils are confident that their concerns are heard and that they are taken seriously. The school council members are articulate and able to voice their opinions well. Their concerns over the quality of the playground surface had been acted upon and they welcomed the additional clubs that had come about as a result of both a pupil and parent survey in the previous term.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents. There are good links with the community and with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationship between parents and the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress.
- The school is very open to listening and acting upon parents' views. The headteacher is available to parents at the start and end of the school day to discuss any concerns or complaints.
- There are good arrangements to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils to secondary schools.
- The school makes good use of the local community.

Commentary

30. The school has been very effective in building and sustaining very good relationships with parents from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. When children start in the Nursery parents are given comprehensive advice and guidance about how to help their child acquire and improve their language skills. This partnership approach enables children to receive a very good start to their school life and extends itself throughout the school. Parents are actively encouraged to listen to their child read and there are reading record books for each child. The school has taken the innovative step of facilitating a scheme to enable some pupils to have computers at home. The school also provides computer literacy skills for parents, thereby enabling them to support their child's learning. One parent, who had been attending the club for only a short period of time, was thrilled with her own success in passing an assessment but also commented that her increased confidence meant she was better able to help her child at home.
31. Parents welcome the availability and presence of the headteacher on the playground at the start and end of each day. A regular weekly surgery is held for parents to raise any issue affecting their child or the school. Parents are confident that their views are heard and that concerns are carefully considered. In the term before the inspection the school had conducted a survey of parents and reported back. One area where immediate action has been taken is the introduction of more after school clubs, an issue raised by a number of parents. There are a number of parents who would welcome more regular written information from the school although there has been an improvement in the amount of curriculum information provided.
32. Pupils transfer to a very wide range of secondary schools. However, they receive good preparation for moving on to the next stage of their education through the emphasis placed upon their personal development and the high self-esteem and confidence this engenders in the vast majority of pupils. Pupils also have direct experience of secondary education through a series of weekly science lessons at one school, and there are visits to a number of other schools.
33. The school is an integral part of the catholic community that it serves and there are strong links with the parish. The school has welcomed the Lebanese catholic community into the school and provides accommodation for the weekly Saturday school. During the summer term the school is used by the Genesis Carnival group to prepare for the Notting Hill Carnival. Pupils visit the Forrester Court Care Home and there are continuing and productive links with local arts organisations, which make a good contribution to the arts curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher and other key staff, leads the school well, creating a strong sense of common purpose and a drive to succeed. Underpinning management practices, which are satisfactory overall, do not always make the most of this. The quality of governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective leadership has built a school with a strong sense of purpose and ambition and has created an atmosphere in which every pupil matters and pupils of all backgrounds flourish.
- Leaders are alert to opportunities that add to what the school can offer pupils.
- Shortcomings in management structures and in how the school plans for the future do not always make the most of the enthusiasm of key staff or of past initiatives.
- Governors, whilst supportive of the school, rely too heavily on informal ways for seeing how well it is doing.

Commentary

34. The quality of leadership has improved since the last inspection. The headteacher, leading by example, has created an atmosphere in school in which individuals matter. His open and empowering style of leadership, and concern for the individual, is evident in the knowledge he has of pupils and his constant presence around school. Snatched moments are taken to talk to pupils about their concerns and his open availability to parents helps forge trusting relationships. Other staff show the same concern for pupils and so a strong feeling of harmony and community ensues. Such informal leadership is underpinned by systems that take on board the views of others by, for example, consulting with parents and pupils. These are taken seriously and action often follows. All in all therefore, a strong sense of team and common purpose is highly visible. Carefully considered daily routines, such as how pupils move around the myriad of stairs, ensures that the school operates smoothly on a daily basis and helps preserve a sense of calm. All of this results in a very positive climate for learning in which pupils, parents and staff feel valued, willing to give of their best and are ambitious for the school.
35. This ambition is clearly seen in the way leaders look for initiatives and the support of other agencies in moving the school forward. The special needs co-ordinator has, for example, joined with the local education authority in piloting new assessment systems and a higher profile for the arts has come about through making use of The Children's Fund and working closely with the Paddington Arts Group. The effective work of the deputy headteacher, who is also the ICT co-ordinator, can be seen in the significantly improved provision for ICT. Part of this success has been down to working with colleagues in the Education Action Zone and responding positively to the opportunities the Single Regeneration Fund presented to help parents become more computer proficient.
36. Management has not improved to the same extent as leadership and does not always make the most of the leadership qualities of key staff. Some weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection, particularly in the work of co-ordinators, remain. There are several reasons for this.
 - Some of the management structures in the school do not gel. The school has teams of teaching and non-teaching staff that work as a unit in various phases of the school. This has succeeded in building small teams and is one reason why teaching assistants are as effective as they are. The main role of phase leaders is to ensure the smooth running of their part of the school and of these teams. This, they do well. However, there is an over-emphasis in some phases, especially in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6, on ensuring that things happen rather than how well they happen. It is no coincidence that in Years 1 and 2, where teaching is at it strongest, that phase leader has been proactive in working alongside

colleagues to improve the practice of their teaching. Whilst this is also the case in the Foundation Stage, it is not a prominent part of work of phase leaders in the juniors.

- The school has not fully thought through how the work of the deputy headteacher, subject co-ordinators and phase leaders fits together. As a result therefore, improved assessment procedures, introduced for several subjects, are not as effective as they might be. At present, all of these go the deputy headteacher and enable her to check that the well thought curriculum map she has designed is being put into operation, thus checking on compliance. However, because co-ordinators do not have this information they are not in a position to fully evaluate the impact of schemes of work. This in turn undermines the base from which they plan future developments. Subject co-ordinators themselves tend to be more effective within the phase of the school they work and in some instances do not extend their influence as effectively to other parts of the school. The English co-ordinator for example has ensured that small group reading sessions operate well in Years 1 and 2, where she teaches but has not had the same positive effect in other parts of the school.
- Since the last inspection the school has extended the range of ways in which it monitors its work. Sharper assessment procedures are in place for English, mathematics, and to assess the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and who are learning English. This has helped target resources, including staffing, where they are most needed and is one of the key factors in the success the school has met with in these areas. Leaders, especially the headteacher and deputy headteacher, now carry out more observations of teaching and learning. On the whole these are of a good quality and provide clear guidance to teachers. They are also used well to inform performance management procedures for teaching staff and help guide whole school training. However, outside of performance management, observations have no set pattern and are not linked closely enough to the School Development Plan. This in itself lacks the necessary detail to guide the quality assurance work of subject leaders, governors and others with management responsibilities. As a result, past actions are not always checked up on closely enough and weaknesses, such as in marking, can slip through the net.

37. Governors are supportive of the school and have some knowledge of how well it is doing. The budget is carefully managed, with the school responding positively to the relatively minor issues raised in a recent auditors' report. Prudent financial management has led to improvements in outdoor play provision for Foundation Stage children and to resources for ICT, both of which were weaknesses in the last inspection. They are aware of what assessment data tells them about performance but over rely on informal ways for going about their work. Some governors, for example, are regular visitors to school and in the course of these visits check to see how new staff have settled in and keep an eye on how well classes seem to be taught. This gives them some knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are, for example, aware of improvements made to provision in the Foundation Stage. However, the School Development Plan provides few reference points for them to hold the school to account, to systemise their own quality assurance work and to make the most of the varied expertise they bring to the school. This makes it difficult for them to fully consider how much the school has gained from past decisions and to assess value for money. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and have, for example, been instrumental in ensuring the school has an effective Race Equality Policy, but their role needs spelling out more clearly in other policies, particularly those that guide health and safety.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,093,586	Balance from previous year	3,162
Total expenditure	1,086,859	Balance carried forward to the	9,889

Expenditure per pupil	3,254

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the Nursery. Children begin the Nursery with a wide range of attainment, which overall is below expected levels. Many children begin speaking little English and, although fluent in their home language, this initially acts as a barrier to achievement in other areas of learning. On the whole children achieve well and most are on course to meet expected goals by the end of the Reception year, and beyond expectations in personal, social and emotional development.

The quality of teaching and learning overall is good in all the areas of learning and very good in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy, where the whole staff take every opportunity to focus on the acquisition of English. The nursery nurses and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the children's learning and development. In the Nursery there is a good balance between activities which are adult led and activities where children are free to choose their own learning tasks. However, there are times in the Reception class where children are given too little choice, reducing the opportunities they have to make decisions about their learning. Staff record their observations of children's knowledge and understanding very diligently and plan accordingly, often on an individual basis. Progress is recorded in the newly introduced individual profiles which are readily available to parents and make it easy to trace progression.

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The teachers, who were new in post at the start of the term, are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic. All staff are fully involved; consequently they all work together as an effective team. The arrangements for introducing children into school are good. Parents work closely with the staff on an individual basis, helping their children in the acquisition of English.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- Children achieve well and make good progress especially in developing independence and self-confidence.
- Good routines are in place so children feel safe and secure.

Commentary

38. Children settle down quickly when they enter the Nursery. This reflects not only on the trusting relationships that the school has with parents but also the skilful teaching of the staff, who see personal, social and emotional development as a high priority. There is a good range of opportunities and activities provided. The children are encouraged constantly to feel proud of their achievements and therefore they become confident and assertive. Daily routines are made clear and expectations with regard to behaviour are consistent. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong effectively. Consequently the children are polite and behave well. Not only are they attentive and eager to learn but also they are keen to share their work with each other and the adults around them. Adults provide good role models as they teach the children how to form good relationships with others through the many good opportunities to work in pairs or as part of a small or large group. Children are taught to show

consideration and respect for property and each other. This, they do well. They make good progress in developing their independence, especially in the Nursery, and self-confidence as they make their choices. Staff expect children to organise themselves for the activities and then clear away tidily. This is helped by clear labelling and organisation of equipment, helping children develop a sense of responsibility. Children, especially in the Nursery, achieve very well and many are on course to exceed expected levels by the end of Reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall teaching is very good.
- Children speaking English as an additional language are given very effective help.

Commentary

39. From the moment children start in the Nursery staff seize every opportunity to help children acquire and use an increasingly wide repertoire of words and phrases. This is due to the effectiveness of a well-structured programme, the good quality and range of opportunities for learning, together with very good teaching and proactive support from parents. The adults provide good role models in the way they talk to each other and the children. The staff engage children in conversations in small groups and also individually. Children learn the new vocabulary and the appropriate ways to express themselves. Consequently they enjoy talking to each other as they work and thus language skills are acquired, reinforced and practised. As a result children at the early stages of learning English achieve very well. This approach suits all children, so that all benefit from the emphasis placed on speaking and listening. The children start to link sounds with letters through language games so that in Reception they name most of the letters of the alphabet, and through daily practice learn and consolidate new sounds each day as part of the planned literacy activities. Children take good advantage of the many planned opportunities within a range of activities to develop their writing skills such as making birthday cards, writing lists or messages. There is a good range of books available for the children to enjoy, including books about different countries and cultures around the world. Good progress is made as children share books with each other and with the adults. In Reception the children were keen to talk about the fruit in a book about Africa because this linked with the making of fruit salad which was an activity from the current theme of Healthy Food. Children have been taught and can understand how a book works. They can talk about their favourite parts of a story and can predict a logical end to the story. Some children in Reception can recognise a few simple everyday words. Overall children achieve well and, in the case of speaking and listening very well, with most on course to achieve the goals expected of children by the time they leave Reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical language is developed well.
- A wide variety of activities promotes mathematical thinking.

Commentary

40. Mathematical development is promoted well through exposure to activities that encourage mathematical thinking. In the Nursery for example, staff make good use of everyday objects to

help children learn to match, sort and count everyday objects and to teach them the names of basic shapes. In Reception, games and rhymes as well as more formal activities encourage children to count accurately. As a result some children can match and count reliably up to 10 and are beginning to understand simple problems such as 'one more than'. Activities are designed specifically in order that children gain knowledge and understanding of capacity, weight and measure from practical activities in the sand and water and by using the scales, bricks and puzzles. Such activities are used well to develop mathematical language, which is promoted across all elements of the curriculum. As a result children achieve well by the end of Reception and most are on course to reach expected levels.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are offered a good range of experiences to develop their skills of investigation.
- The garden area provides good opportunities for training in observation skills.

Commentary

41. Children are taught effectively to understand about the importance of looking after themselves by eating healthily and living safely. There are many planned opportunities for children to gain scientific knowledge and understanding through observation and experiment. For example, children note the changing appearance of the trees in the garden area. In the Nursery children were planting a variety of beans and in Reception children were making fruit salad with fruits from around the world. In every activity language appropriate to the area of learning is stressed, so for example, children can name the various parts of their bodies. Pretend play is used well to simulate situations children may meet in the wider world. In the outdoor area for instance children learn to cross the 'road' in a safe place and that they must only play where it is safe with toys that are safe. The children are given opportunities to demonstrate and extend their knowledge of how things work as they build a range of models using construction toys. Computers are always available so children are able to practise their skills in the use of the mouse to draw pictures and patterns or to move items on the screen. Children achieve well and many are on course to achieve the expected goals by the end of Reception.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The newly extended secure outside area provides important opportunities to promote and ensure children's physical development.
- There is a good range of well planned indoor and outdoor activities.

Commentary

42. The Foundation Stage has spacious teaching areas indoors and outside. The outdoor areas are fully accessible and safe and represent a considerable addition to facilities since the last inspection. This area is used constantly, especially by children in the Nursery. These children have free access to outdoor play, with a good range of large and small resources, such as scooters, tractors, bikes and two fixed climbing frames. This is used effectively to develop the children's physical skills. Staff are always on hand to provide support and encouragement in a calm, sensitive and safe manner in order that children feel confident but do not over reach themselves. Provision is supplemented by lessons that take place in the school hall which

help children develop awareness of space and to develop co-ordination and control in movement. In the main, children can manage their own clothing when they change from one activity to another. Much of this is down to expectations of staff. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop key skills. For example, children in Reception were shown how to cut pineapple into very small pieces whilst making their fruit salad. Children are achieving well and most are likely to reach expected levels by the end of Reception.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

43. It was only possible to sample this area of learning. Planning is good, instilling sense of purpose into activities. When painting a still life of fruit in a stainless steel bowl the Nursery children were experimenting with paint and using their imaginations and observations to create pleasing results. One child was completely engrossed with full concentration on the roundness of the bowl, as she made firm circular strokes with the thick grey paint. There is a full range of materials available providing opportunities to experiment with colour, shape, texture and form. However, some of the resources in the setting for imaginative role play are in need of replacement. The children really enjoy their work and readily talk about what they are doing, thus aiding language development. Children enjoy listening to music, moving and clapping to the rhythm of the beat. They sing their favourite songs with great enthusiasm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator has made important improvements to provision for English but is not always in a position to see how well these are being implemented.
- Speaking and listening are promoted very well through discussion, group work and drama.
- Specialist staff and teaching assistants make a telling contribution to meeting the needs of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English or who have special educational needs.
- Teaching of reading and writing is more effective in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6.
- Marking gives encouraging comments but does not always tell pupils how to improve their work.
- On the whole literacy skills are prompted well though other subjects.

Commentary

44. Decisive action taken by an effective co-ordinator has ensured that standards have risen since the last inspection, particularly in speaking and listening. There are several reasons for this. Teachers employ a wide repertoire of strategies and, on the whole, the teaching of speaking and listening is very good. The increase in the use of drama, in which pupils act in role, and the bountiful opportunities pupils have to debate, answer questions and explain thinking are fundamental to teaching in English and other subjects. The quality of relationships teachers establish with pupils gives them every confidence that they will be listened to, so that pupils learn to value talk, their own opinions and the opinions of others. There is very effective use of specialist support staff to target those in most need of help, identifying their needs early and providing encouragement and help within lessons and in small group work. As a result, these pupils make rapid progress, particularly in their early years at school. Additions to the curriculum such as a visit from a theatre group and a poet from the local community further enrich opportunities for speaking and listening. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6.

45. The school's approach was seen at its best in an excellent lesson in Year 2 where pupils worked in groups to retell the story of Amazing Grace from pictures, using time connectives to order the events of the story. The class waited in anticipation as the teacher retold the story, and followed a series of pictures on an illuminated white board and the acting of a fellow pupil, who mirrored events in the story. Group drama ensued, with pupils putting together their own set of actions and words. Teaching moved at an energetic pace, challenging pupils to use as many time connectives as possible in ordering the events of the story within a set time. All pupils were totally absorbed, resulting in all pupils, including many at early stages of learning English, making exceptional progress in their speaking and listening and understanding of the story.
46. Teaching overall for reading and writing is good although it is not as consistently high as that found for speaking and listening and is stronger in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. This is because the co-ordinator, who is also the phase leader for Year 1 and 2, has been able to monitor and influence the quality of teaching more easily here than elsewhere in the school. As a result some inconsistencies exist. Not all teachers are successful in Years 3 and 4 in building on what pupils have achieved to date and so progress flattens out before picking up again later in the school. This is evident in the teaching of reading. The teaching of reading to groups is handled well in many cases, with all pupils engaged in purposeful activities. This was seen in a lesson in Year 5 in which all groups, reading from a range of books, did so while searching for key information. This instilled a sense of purpose and enabled the teacher to work closely with targeted pupils. This is not always the case and in an unsatisfactory lesson in Year 4 most pupils simply read in silence and with little intent while the teacher worked with a group. Pupils had too little to do; some swapped books or sat quietly when they had finished and so little was achieved. The well targeted help of teaching assistants, and well conceived catch up reading programmes for chosen pupils in Years 3 to 6, ensure, nevertheless, that pupils with particular needs continue to achieve well. All in all, therefore, by the end of Year 6 many leave the school as fluent readers with clear preferences for authors and particular books.
47. Writing is most effective where teachers make links between speaking and listening, reading and writing. For example, pupils are encouraged to discuss what they read and rehearse their ideas orally before writing. However, once again some of the teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not challenging enough and sets mundane task for pupils to complete. This leaves much to teaching higher up the school, with teaching of writing in Year 6 often more stimulating. Here achievement improves so that by the time they leave the school standards of writing are well above average with a good proportion of pupils able to write for a range of purposes and able to use interesting and imaginative words and phrases to add interest to the reader. Teachers generally use assessment well to check on the quality of pupils' writing but there are few comments and indications in marking to help pupils to improve their own work. This reduces the impact of the individual targets that are set for pupils and pupils' own knowledge of how to improve their work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Language and literacy are promoted very well through other subjects of the curriculum. There are many examples of teachers using lessons to develop speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 researched famous Victorians like Lord Shaftesbury and produced role-play in which they interviewed him asking why he wanted to help the poor. However, in some instances, especially in science and history, Year 5 pupils copy out facts which do little to improve literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective implementation of recommended approaches and the continuing high profile of mathematics help pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Achievement through Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent because of variations in the quality of teaching.
- Marking is not consistent and does not give pupils a clear steer on what they need to do to improve.
- The school does not maximise the potential of the enthusiastic and skilled co-ordinator.
- Not enough thought has been given to linking mathematics to other subjects.

Commentary

49. The high standards noted in the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils continue to achieve well and so reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. This is due to the effective implementation of approaches recommended in the National Strategy for numeracy and the good quality of teaching that ensues from this. The influence of the National Strategy for numeracy can be seen in the lively start to many lessons which focus on developing the pupils' mental strategies. These are very effective and build on the very good relationships evident in the vast majority of lessons. Pupils respond confidently to both the pace and the high expectations of these short sessions and a good tone is set for the rest of the lesson. The emphasis on mental work and the care with which teachers use and explain mathematical vocabulary suits the needs of pupils who are still acquiring English. It makes the most of their underlying abilities, develops their self-esteem and gives them a growing vocabulary with which to tackle future work. As a result, these pupils achieve well. Demonstrations are invariably clear. In a Year 2 lesson clear links were made to previous learning and very good use was made of the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate concepts and methods, with the result that pupils had very a good understanding of the addition facts for the numbers ten and twenty and made good progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution at such times, echoing what the teacher is saying, encouraging pupils to join in and instilling confidence, so that pupils are able to successfully complete follow up work. Pupils who have special educational needs, in particular, benefit from this and achieve well. Many reach nationally expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
50. What sets the best teaching apart is the added level of challenge teachers bring to pupils' everyday work. Following on from her work on the interactive white board the teacher in Year 2 tested pupils' ability to estimate, to predict and to discover relationships between numbers. Such challenge is a common feature of teaching by the co-ordinator, who teaches in Year 6. In a very good lesson on fractions she very skilfully moved on from helping pupils express simple fractions as equivalent decimals through to the more complicated concepts of expressing fractions as percentages. The use of more advanced examples meant that higher attaining pupils were able to put this into practice, adding an extra dimension to learning. Pupils invariably rise well to the challenge such teaching presents and display a real zest for learning.
51. Such high quality teaching is not always evident through Years 3 and 4. Here, some teaching does not make enough demands on pupils. This was evident in an unsatisfactory lesson on shape. This started off well, with pupils describing the characteristics of shapes they could only test by feeling. This was thought-provoking and extended the use of language. However, the lesson deteriorated into the completion of a worksheet which failed to inspire higher attaining pupils or demand enough of their thinking. Achievement, as revealed through the school's own tracking data, is not even through the juniors and much of the school's success in the juniors is down to the quality of teaching in Year 6 and the extremely well attended catch-up sessions this teacher runs.

52. The co-ordinator has high aspirations for both staff and pupils and a very clear vision for improvement. There are good procedures for collecting the assessment data and analysing the results but marking and the effective use of target setting are underdeveloped. Structures within the school do not make the most of the role model the co-ordinator provides. Although some observations of teaching have occurred and are of good quality, the targeting of these has been patchy and so some shortcomings in provision have gone unchecked.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Mathematics in other subjects is under-developed. Sometimes pupils are given opportunities to apply their skills but these are incidental and are not reflected in the teachers' planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Important improvements to provision are undermined by limited opportunities for checking up on how well they have been implemented.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is often lively and stimulating.
- The emphasis put on using and acquiring scientific vocabulary serves the need of pupils who are learning English and those who have special educational needs well.
- There are too few opportunities for investigative work for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

54. The co-ordinator has improved the organisation of the curriculum for science since the last inspection so that teachers have helpful guidance to shape their teaching. The introduction of end of unit assessments is beginning to help teachers have an understanding of how well pupils are doing. However, the limited opportunities for monitoring undermines the success of these actions and the quality of leadership and management, which is satisfactory overall. Inconsistencies therefore exist in the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Here, teachers put too much emphasis on the acquisition of facts at the expense of investigative work. More widely the quality of marking undermines the success of assessment and is not used to challenge and extend pupils' thinking well enough.
55. Throughout the school pupils show very good attitudes to learning. Relaxed relationships see pupils who are eager and enthusiastic. Participation in lessons is high with pupils who have special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as keen on science as other pupils. It is the ability to build on such strong foundations that sets the good teaching apart. This is most consistently done through Years 1 and 2. The quality and range of opportunities for the pupils to use observational and investigative skills is more widespread here and lessons are more stimulating. For example, in an excellent Year 2 lesson, the teacher's well developed subject knowledge enabled her to encourage and prepare pupils well for an active question and answer session with two mothers and their babies. Pupils' questions were probing and helped them to think as scientists. In this way the lesson achieved the twin aims of improving factual and investigative knowledge of science.
56. The emphasis teachers put on pupils' scientific vocabulary is evident in almost every conversation. Few opportunities are missed to help pupils use and extend their use of language. Help for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English dovetails well with the current unit of work, so that these pupils achieve very well. Pupils who have special educational needs also benefit from this approach, with many reaching the expected level by the end of Year 2. All in all therefore, pupils achieve well through Years 1 and 2, so that standards have risen since the last inspection and are now above average.

57. The strong emphasis on acquiring vocabulary is maintained through Years 3 to 6 so that pupils who have special educational needs and those still becoming confident with using English continue to achieve well. By the end of Year 6 standards are average and almost all reach the nationally expected level for their age but the number reaching the higher levels is not as high as it could be. Achievement overall, therefore, through Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. It is the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils that undermines achievement. There are two principal reasons for this.
- While there are some examples of investigative work, as for example in a good Year 3 lesson on fair testing and accurate measuring, there is a lack of opportunity for investigative science, especially for older and more able pupils.
 - In too many classes in Years 3 to 6, much of the work for various ability levels is exactly the same and, on occasions, is copied from books. This may help with learning scientific facts but it does little to deepen pupils' ability to investigate and work independently.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Important improvements have been made to the curriculum and facilities for Information and Communications Technology.
- Skills are well taught.
- Not enough thought has been given to the application of skills, especially through Years 3 to 6.
- Good use is made of ICT facilities outside of lessons.

Commentary

58. Effective leadership has vigorously pursued improvements to ICT which has gone a long way to overcoming the major weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Very good use of additional funding has led to the building of a well-equipped suite of computers, while much thought has been given to putting in place a scheme of work that allows for the systematic acquisition of skills. Training for staff has, by and large, been successful with many staff now confident, for example, in using the large computer screens that are part of every classroom. Where staff are less secure the use of specialist ICT support and teaching by the co-ordinator, has ensured the scheme of work has been fully implemented. As a result pupils now achieve well, especially in the acquisition of key skills, and standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 now meet national expectations.
59. The concentration on teaching key skills is working well and has enabled pupils to progress to the point where they are confident in using computers and have an increasing repertoire of skills across word processing, data handling and other aspects of the ICT curriculum. Much of this is down to the accurate demonstration of skills that form part of many lessons. These are helped by the use of a large computer screen which makes it easy for pupils to see. Questioning in these sessions is good, so pupils not only learn how to perform actions, but also acquire a growing list of technical language.
60. The school has yet to make the most of the skills it has taught pupils by requiring them to use them in thought-provoking ways. This is most consistently done in Years 1 and 2 where class teachers do much of the basic skills teaching and are able to link these well to other areas of work. This is more difficult to achieve in the juniors where the co-ordinator and an ICT specialist are responsible for teaching most of the classes. This can fragment learning somewhat as scenarios for learning skills are divorced from pupils' current work in other subjects. However, these lessons are used well to challenge pupils' thinking when learning a new skill. So for example, in a good lesson on data handling in Year 4 pupils were given scope to devise questions to interrogate a data base they had previously entered and to discuss the merits of different questions. However, the subject of the data base did not fit any current work

and so lessons are less successful in challenging pupils to apply their newly found skills. Consequently pupils do not always see how they could use ICT in creative and imaginative ways. For example, pupils in Year 6 have good knowledge of how spreadsheets work and can enter formulae but they are unsure on what occasions they could use them.

61. The school sees to it that it gets full value from the investment it has made in ICT. Older pupils are able to use the suite, under supervision of staff, to carry out research work. This helps with the completion of homework. In addition, an early morning computer club, which operates daily for younger pupils, helps them to practise skills and learning in other subjects. These are well attended with pupils, for example, logging on to a mathematics programme to practise numeracy skills. Much thought has been given to developing parents' ICT skills with laptops loaned out and the suite used to teach parents.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. As well as the computer suite, classrooms are also equipped with computers. These are often used in lessons, especially in literacy, to aid learning. There are fewer examples of skills learnt in the suite being applied using these. Isolated examples do exist showing the potential that now exists in the school for pupils to make choices in how to use their improved capability. Perhaps the best example of this is to be found in Year 6. Here, having previously learnt how to use Power Point, pupils chose to use their newly found ability to add to their work on the Victorians by devising a slide show that combined sound and graphics.

HUMANITIES

63. **Geography** was not the focus of the inspection and so no overall judgement can be made about, the quality of teaching or the provision made. No lessons were seen in geography. Pupils work reveals that there is now a scheme of work in place. There is good use of pupils' literacy skills to write about places to visit such as in Year 2, but relatively little independent work in Years 3 to 6. The development of map skills, for example, is not a prominent feature of pupils' work. There is currently no co-ordinator for geography, so while checks have been made to ensure teachers use the scheme of work, little has been done to test its impact.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved curriculum planning gives teachers a good base from which to plan lessons.
- Teaching in Years 1, 2, and 6 is imaginative and thought provoking.
- Teaching elsewhere in the school puts too much emphasis on factual knowledge at the expense of historical understanding.
- History makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills but in some classes in the juniors this is given too high a priority.

Commentary

64. The present co-ordinator is new to post and has not yet not been able to monitor current strengths and weaknesses. However, she has been given a good base to work from, with improvement to the cohesion of the curriculum giving teachers a firm base from which to plan lessons, and improved assessment procedures having the potential to inform her of the success or otherwise of teaching and learning in different units of study, classes and parts of the school. As a result of past efforts standards have improved since the last inspection and achievement is now satisfactory, so that at the end of Years 2 and 6 standards meet national expectations.
65. At present what separates the good or better teaching from that which is satisfactory is the ability of teachers to build on the enthusiasm of pupils and exploit the potential history has to engage pupils in research, questioning and comparing their lives with that of others. At present this is most successfully done in Years 1 and 2 and Year 6. Here teachers plan lessons well

to ensure that pupils are challenged with interesting and stimulating work, which is well matched to pupils' abilities. In these lessons pupils achieve well because gains in factual knowledge and deepening their understanding about events become twin aims. In this way pupils grow to understand why some events happened in the past. In two good lessons in Years 1 and 2, pupils were able to identify improvements in hospital care introduced by Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War. Here, the help given to pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is integrated very well with everyday learning. As part of this project a groups of pupils just learning to speak English were very skilfully taught through a short drama session in which they took the role of wounded soldiers or doctors. The teachers skilfully probed their thoughts and stimulated talk with props and key words. This led to a highly engaging and sharply focused session in which pupils not only learned new words but also learned to enjoy history. The use of drama was also used to good effect in a lesson in Year 6, where pupils played out the roles of Lord Shaftesbury and a member of parliament to debate reforms for children at work in the 19th century. This provided an interesting outcome of previous research work and enabled pupils to test how the standpoint of individuals affected what they wrote about events. Such an approach helped pupils work collaboratively and independently and aided the development of speaking and listening skills.

66. In other classes in the juniors the strong emphasis on the acquisition of factual knowledge and on using history to develop pupils' literacy skills is not always balanced with the development of enquiry skills associated with history. As a result pupils' knowledge of history is in advance of their ability to think and act as historians. There are opportunities for pupils to carry out research. In a lesson in Year 5 for example, almost all pupils had gone to the trouble of using the internet, including local internet cafés, to bring to school information on Victorian child labour. However, the teacher's use of this was largely literacy led, for example, stressing how to use bullet points to make notes. Previous writing was used to good effect to enable pupils to write from the points of view of a working child of the time. However, relatively little attention was paid to considering the validity of differing points of view and the reliability and validity of source material. It is this element that is lacking in several lessons. Marking for instance tends to stress correct language and elements of English, rather than history. On other occasions, often classes for older pupils, pupils copy out facts, serving neither literacy nor history well.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. No lesson was observed in **design and technology** and therefore it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision and standards in the subject. Teachers' planning and a scrutiny of displays show that all elements of the subject are planned and taught over the year. Pupils gain experience of a range of materials and develop skills of designing and making different objects and evaluating them as required in the curriculum. There are sound examples of pupils' work on display round the school. For example, the slippers and hats made by Year 6 show how the pupils have used felt and other materials to create them.
68. Not enough evidence was gathered to make secure judgements about overall provision in **music**. In the one lesson that was seen during the inspection the teacher's preparation and planning were good and children responded enthusiastically, singing and performing well. Pupils have opportunities to listen to music throughout the day especially as they enter assembly. The co-ordinator has recently introduced a music scheme which is proving successful in Years 1 and 2. She is working alongside some colleagues in Years 3 to 6 to help develop their own expertise and runs a lunch-time recorder club, giving ample opportunities for beginners and more advanced learners to achieve and progress. Pupils perform regularly at assemblies, festivals and church services.
69. Only one lesson was seen in **physical education** (PE) so it not possible to make an overall judgement on provision. The school has upgraded its curriculum since the last inspection, but in the main PE does not have a high profile in the curriculum. However, there have been some additions to it to make the curriculum more interesting. In the one lesson observed pupils

worked with a dance company to produce their own dance sequences. Not enough has been done to fully check up on the implementation of the scheme and, as yet, the newly appointed co-ordinator is not in a position to identify any shortcomings. As a result there are some inconsistencies in the diet of activities pupils receive. Pupils in the juniors, for example, have had relatively few opportunities to do gymnastics.

Art and Design

Provision in Art and Design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator has put in place a well devised curriculum for art, providing pupils with a good range of experiences.
- Pupils are taught key skills which they then apply to their own work.
- Art contributes well to learning in other subjects.

Commentary

70. Enthusiastic and successful leadership has raised the profile of art so that provision has been enhanced since the last inspection. Curriculum planning has improved so that, over the year, pupils are provided with a good range of artistic experiences. These include three-dimensional activities involving, for example, the construction of models using clay, paper mache and other materials. As a result of this and the good quality of teaching, standards have also improved and pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2 they are currently above expectation. At the end of Year 6, where the effect of past weaknesses are still felt, standards meet expectations
71. Teachers generally have high expectations of both achievement and behaviour and the pupils respond by being fully engaged in their work throughout lessons. Relevant techniques are taught effectively, enhancing the pupils' skills. For example, pupils in the infants were successfully taught how to mix colours to represent their skin tone and had produced good quality self-portraits, using chalk and charcoal. Successful teaching in Years 5 and 6 which stressed the need for close observation and detail and how to use texture, tone and shadow enabled pupils to create well-executed drawings of objects such as fruit, bottles or glasses showing a fine eye for detail. Indeed there are many examples of their drawings and paintings of still life round the school.
72. Art is used well to support other areas of the curriculum. For example, the pupils in Year 2 have produced collage pictures of the Great Fire of London, using different types of paper. Good use is also made of computer programs to produce pictures. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils have used ICT to produce 'Rangoli' patterns to prepare for the festival of Divali.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. Too little teaching was seen to make an overall judgement of provision. However, it is clear that the school has made considerable improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection. It has broadened its approach, beyond Religious Education, to include dedicated lessons on citizenship. This enables pupils to consider sensitive issues, such as drug misuse, and pupils' place in society. Provision is aided by the high quality of relationships in the school and so personal, health and social education makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development and the positive ethos evident in the school.

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	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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