

INSPECTION REPORT

ST EDMUND'S ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

297 Westferry Road, London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100951

Headteacher: Ms G O'Flaherty

Lead inspector: David Speakman

Dates of inspection: 28th February to 3rd March 2005

Inspection number: 267769

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: 185

School address: 297 Westferry Road
London
Postcode: E14 3RS

Telephone number: 020 79872546
Fax number: 020 75380332

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Ros Coffey

Date of previous inspection: 25th February 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average sized voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serves the local area, which experiences a high degree of social disadvantage. An above average proportion of pupils joins or leaves during the school year. Pupils come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with about a half of the pupils classed as White British. Forty per cent of the pupils have English as an additional language and over a quarter are at the early stages of learning the English language and are supported through external funding. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average and nine pupils have a statement of special educational need. Special educational needs are typical and include severe learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural problems, speech or communication difficulties and profound and multiple disabilities. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. The school is situated in an area which is part of an EiCEAZ (Excellence in Cities Education Action Zone) and has a strong and supportive relationship with a local business that provides financial and other support.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20086	David Speakman	Lead inspector	English Music English as an additional language
32768	Jane Manfield	Lay inspector	
31334	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History Personal, social and health education and citizenship
12367	Anthony Green	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good** school. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average and because of good teaching, very high levels of inclusion, a very good ethos and very good leadership and management, pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in English and average standards in other subjects. The school very effectively meets the diverse learning needs of all pupils. The school shows excellent levels of care for all pupils, encouraging them to develop very good attitudes towards learning. It gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and work of the governing body have been instrumental in a rapid improvement since the previous inspection.
- Children get a very good start to their education due to very good provision in the Foundation Stage.
- The academic and personal needs of all pupils are met very well, through the good quality of teaching and the school's extremely high commitment to inclusion.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and the very good provision for their personal development combine to create a very effective learning environment and school ethos.
- In response to the excellent levels of care shown for all pupils, they feel secure and confident to learn effectively.
- Although there is a very good level of curriculum enrichment, the non-core¹ curriculum needs further development.
- The senior leadership team provides a very good level of support for the headteacher in her work and has contributed very effectively to the improved provision.
- There is not enough investigative work in science and standards remain below average.

At the time of the previous inspection in 2003 the school was removed from special measures. It is now very effective so the level of improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are better and, as a result, they are better learners, achieving improved standards. The quality of education is now good. There are excellent levels of care and guidance for all pupils. The leadership of the headteacher and the governing body is excellent and of other key staff, very good. The school has responded well to issues raised in the previous inspection and these have been met fully.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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.

Achievement is **good** overall. Children start in the Foundation Stage with well below average attainment and they achieve very well, with most pupils meeting the goals children

¹ The non-core subjects include National Curriculum subjects other than English, mathematics and science

are expected to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well and attainment in English is above average and average in mathematics, but remains below average in science. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good. By the end of Year 6, standards remain above average in English, average in mathematics, but below average in science. However, when these standards are compared to those when they were in Year 2, pupils' achievement is good. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are as nationally expected at both Years 2 and 6.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' attitudes towards school and learning are very good and their behaviour is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are good. They are good in Years 1 to 6 and very good in the Foundation Stage. Pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn in lessons and this, combined with very effective encouragement to do their best, gives pupils good levels of confidence in their own ability to tackle new work. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage this very well. Pupils' good behaviour supports their learning effectively. Teachers ensure that all pupils have very good opportunities to be fully included in all learning activities. Teaching assistants provide good support and are effective when working with groups of pupils. Teaching is very good in English because of teachers' very good understanding of how pupils learn language and literacy skills.

The curriculum is good for children in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly those linked with the arts and sport. Teachers' skills and experience meet the needs of the curriculum very well and there is a good number of teaching assistants to support them. The school shows an excellent level of care for its pupils. The relationship between the school and parents is good and there are very beneficial links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and she receives a very good level of support from other staff with leadership responsibility. Governance of the school is excellent. There is an extremely clear vision of the needs of the school. This has been instrumental in the rapid improvement since the previous inspection two years ago. Management is good. Statutory requirements are met fully.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. Those at the meeting and who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire expressed satisfaction with all areas of the school's provision and outcomes. Pupils like being in school. They like all adults working in the school and the friendliness of other pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in science by the end of Years 2 and 6.

- Improve the non-core curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **average** at the end of Year 6. Achievement is **very good** in the Foundation Stage and **good** in Years 1 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and, starting from a very low base, attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception.
- Achievement in English is very good in Years 1 to 6 and standards are above average by the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- Although achievement is satisfactory, standards in science are below average at the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- All groups of pupils achieve well at all stages of the school.
- Pupils achieve well in music and the quality of singing is particularly good.

Commentary

1. Results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests are now much better than they were two years ago when the school was removed from special measures. There has been a significant improvement since then. Latest results are above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics when compared with schools nationally, and with similar schools, results in reading are very high (in the top five per cent of similar schools) and well above average in writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that this year, standards are above average in English and mathematics but below average in science. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good.

Key Stage 1

<i>Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004</i>		
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (17.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.7 (15.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (18.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. This situation is reflected in test results at the end of Year 6. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, achievement between Years 2 and 6 was average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. In 2004, results in English and mathematics were much improved, reflecting a significant upward trend in attainment since 2002. Results in 2004 were well above average in English, average in mathematics but remained well below average in science, when compared to all schools. When compared with similar schools, achievement between Years 2 and 6 this year was well above average in English, average in mathematics but well below average in science. Inspection

evidence indicates that, this year, overall attainment is average, which shows that current Year 6 pupils have achieved well since Year 2. Attainment is above average in English, average in mathematics but below average in science.

Key Stage 2

<i>Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004</i>		
Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (27.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.7 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.3 (26.8)	28.6 (28.6)
<i>There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.</i>		

3. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. They start from a well below average baseline and achieve the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in all areas of learning, except in their physical development, where they exceed expectations.
4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good gains in their learning relative to their prior attainment. They make good progress because of the good, and often very good, support given by teachers, teaching assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well in acquiring English language skills. Once they have gained sufficient competence in English, they achieve well in other subjects and many go on to become the school's higher attaining pupils. Improvement has been good, as at the time of the previous inspection, and pupils with English as an additional language achieved satisfactorily.
5. Attainment in each of the elements of language and literacy, speaking and listening, reading and writing is above average. Pupils develop a good vocabulary and the majority is able to articulate their views clearly and listen attentively to teachers and to each other. The majority of pupils develop very good strategies for reading unfamiliar words and read with a very secure understanding. The improvement in writing has been significant. Pupils write to a good standard in a wide range of styles and have a very good understanding and ability to use structure and words for effect, making their writing interesting to read.
6. Although pupils have a good understanding in mathematics, there is a lack of a regular focus on using and applying their knowledge and understanding. In science, there has been insufficient skilled teaching in the past, which has had a negative impact on the development of scientific skills and knowledge. Now that there is an overall improvement in teaching and a focus on practical science, there are signs that standards are improving, although they are still below average, especially in practical and investigative science. Pupils achieve well in music and they are developing good performing skills, especially in singing, where the quality is particularly good, and their performing skills indicate a good understanding of musical structure.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are **very good**. Behaviour in and around school is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. Attendance is **unsatisfactory** and below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's caring ethos is reflected in pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards adults and each other.
- The school works hard to promote good behaviour and is successful in its endeavours.
- Pupils respond well to the many opportunities to show responsibility.
- Despite good procedures to promote good attendance, the poor attendance of a minority makes attendance unsatisfactory overall.

Commentary

7. Good behaviour, positive attitudes and good levels of personal development, together with very good relationships, support pupils' good achievement. Well-planned transition procedures combined with a secure, caring atmosphere enable children in the Foundation Stage to settle quickly into the routines of school life. Pupils of all ages are keen to come to school. Those with English as an additional language display very positive attitudes towards learning. They are keen to learn and consequently achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes overall to class and group activities, which support their good achievement as they are generally very willing and eager to learn.
8. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are of a very good quality and the strong caring ethos is evident. Pupils make the most of good opportunities to work in co-operation with others. Pupils are helpful and considerate to each other and to visitors and adults in the school. Consequently, pupils feel at ease in the school. Year 6 pupils speak very highly of the support of adults in the school to help them deal with any difficulties that they may have, including feeling well prepared for the move to their next school. Play times are safe and secure and there are different environments in which pupils enjoy playing vigorously or relaxing in quieter surroundings.
9. Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils know the consequences of poor behaviour. Action is prompt if behaviour is unacceptable. Parents have confidence in the school and the way in which it deals with issues and problems. The school has an effective anti-bullying policy. Pupils say that most children are friendly but if someone does start to bully them they know it will be dealt with promptly. There have been no exclusions in the past two years.
10. Pupils have good opportunities to exercise leadership and responsibility by undertaking jobs and pupils at all ages show good levels of responsibility. Older pupils carry out jobs reliably and even nursery and reception children take messages and deliver the register to the office. Elected pupils from the nursery upwards attend the school council. It plays an important part in the life of the school, with pupils organising events such as the talent show and school discos. Activities to raise money for charities and extended residential visits for pupils in Year 6 all contribute effectively to pupils' personal development, which is of a very good quality.
11. Pupils recognise and understand the strong values, principles and beliefs of the school mission statement, because it is written collectively. These values are based upon mutual respect, empathy, compassion and concern for others. The school is a very inclusive school. The school has a strong moral code and provides all pupils with

a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are developing the independence to think, to make decisions and to resolve disputes very well. They sensibly choose the most appropriate pupils to represent their class in the school council. All staff provide very good role models and, as a result, pupils have a very strong sense of what is fair. They know about their local community and have a good sense of the wider world and the lives of people in it.

12. Attendance is unsatisfactory and punctuality is satisfactory. Most pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time. However, lack of support by some parents in ensuring their children come to school has resulted in attendance which was well below the national average for the last school year. The school has good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality, and works effectively with the education welfare officer in all cases of persistent absence or lateness. This rigorous approach is reflected in improved attendance over the last term, although, at 93.6 per cent, the figure is still below average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)					
Authorised absence			Unauthorised absence		
School data:	7.8		School data:	1.1	
National data:	5.1		National data:	0.4	

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching is **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** and benefits from **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The school provides **excellent** levels of care, guidance and support for its pupils. Its links with parents are **good** and **very good** with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 are **good** and **very good** for children in the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures are **good** and used well in planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' skills in English and mathematics lead to very good teaching in these subjects.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and the encouragement and support for pupils to do well is very effective.
- Teachers' expectations of attainment and pupils' behaviour are high.
- Teaching assistants are used well and make an effective contribution to pupils' achievement.
- Assessment and its use are very good in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 to 6.
- The use of learning objectives in plenary sessions is not used consistently well to assess the progress made in lessons.

Commentary

13. The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory at all stages of the school. It is now very good in the Foundation Stage and good for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Teaching and learning in English and in mathematics are very good, good in music and satisfactory in science, ICT and physical education. Since the previous inspection a strong team of very knowledgeable practitioners, led by an experienced co-ordinator have worked in the Foundation Unit². Here, the quality of teaching and learning is very good and as a result, children achieve very well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	16 (40%)	16 (40%)	6 (15 %)	2 (5 %)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn in English and mathematics and this supports the very good teaching in these subjects. The headteacher and the teachers appointed to lead these subjects already have proven teaching and management skills, which are used effectively to develop other teachers' knowledge and

² Teaching groups for children of nursery and reception age

understanding of how pupils learn literacy and numeracy. Development in English is ahead of that in mathematics, but very good teaching in these subjects has enabled pupils to achieve very well and standards have improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection. Teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods, which are highly appropriate to these pupils' learning needs. The teacher in Year 6 very effectively modelled how tension could be brought into writing through the use of charts, so that pupils knew when to start introducing appropriate words to start building tension in their writing.

15. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and the encouragement and support for pupils to do well are very effective. All pupils' contributions are valued and none is dismissed as wrong. Teachers keep a careful watch and those pupils who do not easily volunteer answers are encouraged, with teachers effectively building their confidence. Teachers make learning interesting and stimulating with the use of role-play, for example when the teacher captivated pupils' attention by becoming 'the sound collector' during a Year 3 lesson on writing poetry and how letter combinations create different sounds. Teachers' high expectations of attainment and pupils' behaviour are used very effectively to encourage pupils and to make pupils feel confident to move on to the next stages of learning. Pupils respond well and their very positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour combine to establish a very effective learning environment, where all pupils achieve well.
16. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is usually well matched to their prior attainment which results in good achievement. However, the targets on individual education plans are not always specific or considered and referred to when teachers plan lessons. Liaison procedures between teachers and teaching assistants are good and ensure that teaching assistants give good support for pupils in class or when they are withdrawn for small group work. Teaching assistants give good feedback to teachers about pupils' progress, which informs the next stage of learning. A knowledgeable and experienced speech and language teacher is employed for one day a week to support pupils with speech and language difficulties. Teaching for pupils with English as an additional language is good. All pupils are fully included in all activities and teachers are aware of their learning needs. Teaching assistants support these pupils well in the early stages of acquiring English language skills.
17. Assessment and its use are very good in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics, and are good overall. Where it is used very effectively, it helps teachers track pupils' achievement and to identify those pupils who need extra support, either through special educational needs provision or through the wide range of intervention strategies³ used to support pupils' achievement. However, the use of learning objectives at the end of lessons when teachers are going over what pupils have learned is not used consistently well to assess the progress made in lessons. The marking of pupils' work is mainly supportive and indicates where they might improve. In Years 3 and 4, where teachers are trialling new marking and assessment procedures, there is a conscious effort to pick out what is good, but also to give each pupil a development point – 'two stars and a wish'.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils and the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. Curriculum enrichment and provision for extra-curricular activities are **very good**. The experience and skills of teachers match the demands of the curriculum **very well** and that of support staff is **good**. Accommodation is **good** and resources are **satisfactory**.

³ Special support groups to improve the achievement of identified pupils, particularly in Literacy and numeracy.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum and very good provision of resources for children in the Foundation Stage help to provide a very good start to their schooling.
- Pupils' learning experience is enhanced through a very good range of sporting and arts events and activities and resources, much of which is supported by the school's links with the community. .
- Recent curriculum initiatives for subjects other than English and mathematics are not fully developed.
- Teaching staff are very well qualified and experienced and effectively supported by a good number of teaching assistants.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good support to access the curriculum.
- The limited site is imaginatively used to create an effective learning environment for pupils of all ages.

Commentary

18. To make learning more interesting and relevant for pupils, the school is moving from a curriculum where subjects are taught in isolation to one where subjects are linked together as part of a topic or a theme. At present, the links between subjects are not always clearly planned for. However, this is at an early stage of development and the headteacher and the senior management team recognise that this is an area for further development. The curriculum for English is very good. It focuses strongly on the teaching and learning of knowledge and understanding in language and literacy and the skills to use and how to apply them effectively in their work.
19. The curriculum in Foundation Stage is good. Very effective links between different areas of learning help teachers to plan meaningful activities. Well-organised planning, monitoring and tracking of children's activities ensure that all children receive a good balance of learning activities, including those designed to promote independent learning.
20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and complies with the Code of Practice⁴. The day-to-day support for pupils is good, and often very good, especially for English and mathematics, and so they access the curriculum as well as other groups of pupils and make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language receive the same curriculum entitlement as other pupils. Once they have acquired sufficient English language skills, they have full and equal access to all curriculum opportunities.
21. The school provides a rich and varied programme of experiences to enrich the curriculum for all pupils, which contributes very effectively to pupils' educational and personal development. This includes an extensive range of visits and visitors, including a residential trip for Year 6. Provision for the arts and sport is very good and inspection evidence supports parents' views that the school provides a good range of activities which their children enjoy. Through very good business partners and community links, pupils in Years 3 to 6 participate in clubs and tournaments for football, netball, cricket, rugby, athletics and gymnastics. Art, music and drama clubs and opportunities to participate in competitions and performances are run by specialist teachers supported through further external funding

⁴ Nationally required procedures for provision for pupils with special educational needs

22. The school works hard and is successful in its arrangements to support pupils' learning outside the school day. Year 6 pupils benefit from 'booster' classes in English, mathematics and science. There is no homework club but, where help at home is not possible, school staff support pupils to ensure this work can be done.
23. Buildings and grounds are safe, attractive and their use is well planned. The outside area for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is small, but the grounds are thoughtfully arranged to maximise the opportunities for outdoor play, including a separate fenced area for football and a wildlife garden. The outside area for the Foundation Stage is well planned, including a very good range of equipment for children to engage in practical learning activities. Financial constraints on the school's budget mean that the school relies heavily on support from its business partners and other initiatives. Each class has an interactive whiteboard, for example, funded through the EiCAZ⁵. After a number of changes over the last two years, the school is now benefiting from a stable teaching staff and teachers are very well matched to the needs of the curriculum. A good number of support staff work well alongside teachers.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **excellent**. Guidance and support for pupils are **very good** and their involvement in the school's work and development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has an outstanding commitment to ensuring pupils' safety and wellbeing.
- Very good arrangements for pupils' induction to school provide a smooth start to their schooling.
- All pupils receive good levels of educational and personal guidance, based on the school's good knowledge of them.
- The school is very effective in building pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

Commentary

24. The excellent quality of care is evident in staff knowledge of pupils' needs and in the way the school promotes the best interests of all pupils. Very good relationships between adults and pupils make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and wellbeing. Staff are consistent in their friendly, caring manner of communication and pupils know that they can go to them with any problems or concerns. The learning mentor and home-school worker, in close liaison with other staff, play an important part in providing all pupils with very good guidance and support. This helps them mature and develop personally as they move through the school. This shows continued and significant improvement since the last inspection and reflects parents' positive views on the support given to their children. Great emphasis is placed on pupils' welfare and health and safety. As a result, all children feel nurtured and valued. Daily routines are well planned and staff work very effectively and sensitively to ensure that these include all pupils. Designated and fully trained first-aid staff are always on hand, should the need arise. Children are very well supervised at all times.
25. Assessment procedures effectively support the educational guidance provided for all pupils. The arrangement for the assessment and identification of pupils with special

⁵ Excellence in Cities Action Zone

educational needs are good. Teachers, teaching assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator know their pupils very well. However, the targets on individual education plans vary and are not always specific. Not all pupils are aware of their individual targets, in order to improve, and their responses are not always recorded. The monitoring and support for pupils with a statement of special educational needs is good. Liaison with outside agencies and external support staff is good which also ensures that pupils make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good guidance and support from the headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants. This enables them to achieve as well as other pupils in the school.

26. Children starting school are supported by a very good induction programme. Nursery staff and the home-school worker arrange home visits for all children prior to them starting in the nursery. This is an opportunity for the children to get to know school staff and for parents to share information about their children to help them settle into school. For pupils joining older year groups, the school has a very effective 'buddy' system, so that new pupils are helped to find their way around and settle into school routines as smoothly as possible. There is a good programme for pupils leaving at the end of Year 6. As pupils move through the school there are opportunities for them to visit local secondary schools for sporting and other events.
27. Pupils throughout the school know that their views matter and this contributes well to building their self-esteem. The school is successful in providing a variety of opportunities, such as the school council, for pupils to become involved and influence school life. A good example is the school magazine which, with support from school staff, is edited and produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 and includes contributions from pupils in all year groups.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with the local community and other schools and colleges are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes very good use of the local community, including very effective links with local businesses, to enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- The school communicates well with parents and supports gaining knowledge and understanding of their children's education well.
- Very good links with other schools enhance the range of learning opportunities for pupils and enable staff to share and extend their expertise.

Commentary

28. Parents' views expressed through the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting were very positive. Almost all parents feel that their children settle well, like school and are making good progress. Parents feel well informed about the curriculum, school activities and events. Pupils' annual reports are informative, including information about academic progress and personal and social development. Although the reports include a section for parents to comment, there is currently no opportunity for pupils to remark on their progress and targets for improvement.

29. Communication with parents has continued to develop well since the previous inspection. The majority of parents feel that the school is approachable and that their suggestions and concerns are taken into account. Liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are aware of the point of contact in the school and are given opportunities to share in the targets on the individual education plans, although their contributions are not always recorded. The school provides a good range of extended services for parents and carers. This includes family and adult learning courses and one-to-one support through the home-school worker. These facilities are used well and are effective in helping parents understand how to support their children's learning. They also play a significant part in encouraging parents to become active partners with the school and this is reflected in parents' increasing support. Many parents volunteer to help in class and on school outings and there is growing involvement of the school's family group association in helping to organise school fund-raising events.
30. Very good links with the community are used very well to support pupils' learning and their awareness of the wider world. A very good range of visits and visitors contributes to pupils' academic achievement and personal development. The school has forged highly productive links with a number of business organisations. Pupils benefit through visits arranged with these organisations, financial support for much needed resources and generous contribution of employees' time and skills to the school. The adjacent parish church plays a key role in school life and pupils and residents are involved in church events held at the school.
31. The school has developed an impressive range of links with other schools. Links are established with all neighbouring schools through the EiCAZ and the school makes very effective use of opportunities for financial and practical support. Pupils benefit from participating in joint academic, sporting and arts events. Teachers are able to attend joint training with other schools, making a valuable contribution to increasing their skills and sharing expertise and best practice.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **excellent**. Other key members of staff give **very good** support. Governance is **excellent**. Management systems are **effective**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The exceptional clarity of vision and sense of purpose by the headteacher and the outstanding influence of the governing body on the work of the school stems from a clear sense of priority for improvement.
- The highly effective leadership team successfully motivates and influences staff.
- Good management systems, including consistently rigorous self-evaluation, are used very efficiently to improve standards and provision.
- The school has an extremely high commitment to the inclusion of all pupils.
- Team work is very strong and facilitates rapid improvement.
- Support and development of teaching skills for new staff are areas for further development.

Commentary

32. The exceptional clarity of vision and sense of purpose by the headteacher, combined with the outstanding influence of the governing body, has resulted in a much-improved school over a short period of time. Parents speak very highly of the headteacher's leadership and its impact on the school in the last three years. She has inspired, motivated and influenced the whole staff and they feel their work is highly valued. She has extremely clear ideas of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and what they need to move the school further forward. This vision of excellence is backed up by clear plans of how this will be achieved. The vision focuses not only on academic achievement, but also on the personal development of all pupils and on enabling them to develop secure learning skills. The rationale in the school development plan clearly explains the aspirations for the school shared by both the headteacher and governors. Having successfully improved standards in literacy and numeracy the school is planning to raise the profile of non-core subjects and to change the curriculum delivery into a topic approach, which is meaningful to their pupils. This is planned to bring about widespread improvement, including developing teachers' understanding of how children learn.
33. The school has changed the organisation of leadership and management in order to cover all areas of responsibility with a small number of staff. The leadership team is responsible for monitoring progress in achieving the targets in the school development plan and other temporary teams have responsibility for the organisation of school events. This form of organisation successfully develops the leadership skills of the whole staff. The leadership team, formed by the headteacher, is a strong team of senior staff all of whom have high quality professional skills. They are influential in improving the quality of education provided, especially the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' achievement and hence standards. They work with new and less experienced staff and pool their strengths to provide leadership in the non-core subjects and are therefore highly effective in supporting the headteacher to achieve improvement. The deputy headteacher is a major part of this team and leads through very good example in planning, organisation and delivery of the curriculum.

34. Inclusion is part of the shared vision of the headteacher and the governors. It is a very strong feature. It is central to the work of the school and underpins the whole school ethos. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is well led and managed by the headteacher in conjunction with the special educational needs co-ordinator. Together they use assessment data to ensure that all pupils receive appropriate provision. The special educational needs co-ordinator works part time for two days a week. She manages and leads the subject well and has maintained her good leadership since the previous inspection, supporting teachers and teaching assistants well to ensure good support for pupils in their work and social development. The co-ordinator is very well supported by a very knowledgeable governor for special educational needs, who works in the school as a special educational needs assistant and so knows the pupils very well.
35. The school has developed good management systems. The headteacher and leadership team, together with the governing body, monitor performance data and review patterns very thoroughly. They use the information gained in a very effective way to track pupils, set targets and decide upon priorities for improvement. Although still in its infancy, staff performance management has been used successfully to bring about improvement. Newly qualified teachers and new staff are matched to a very experienced mentor from the leadership team. They also attend courses; however, the school recognises that training could be more structured in order to develop skills, knowledge and understanding.
36. Good financial management helps the school to achieve its priorities. Management of the school's budget is good. The school administrative assistant gives very good support in the day-to-day running of the school. The school makes the best use of all the funding it receives, and although running on an inherited deficit at present, has plans to be in credit by the end of 2005. Funds are tight and the school is aware that the resources to support development in the non-core subjects need to be improved. The school is constantly searching new sources of funding. They have supportive links with the EiCAZ and with other highly valued community links. Best value principles are central to management and the use of resources.

<i>Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004</i>			
Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	856,781	Balance from previous year	-9,595
Total expenditure	851,069	Balance carried forward to next year	-3,883
Expenditure per pupil	4,364		

37. Excellent governance is instrumental in bringing about remarkable school improvement. Led by a strong chair and vice chair, governors are very astute and knowledgeable. They have significant and relevant professional qualifications and experience, which they have brought into play. They show strong feelings and commitment for their association with the school, complementing the excellent leadership of the headteacher through their challenge and support. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are fully met. It has a significant role in shaping the vision and direction of the school and is fully involved in and informed about school development planning, monitoring its implementation through consultation and feedback. The governing body has a full awareness of what assessment information and data means and uses it effectively in establishing priorities and school improvement planning. It is committed to inclusion and promoting a way of life through faith. All governors are fully aware of the needs, challenges and

demands of the diverse community that they serve and are constantly seeking ways of improving school life for all pupils and staff.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**.

38. The attainment of children entering the Foundation Stage is well below the national average. By the time they enter Year 1, most children have attained the nationally expected early learning goals in all areas of learning. This represents very good achievement. Over the last 18 months a strong team of very well qualified practitioners, led by an experienced co-ordinator, have planned a Foundation Stage unit for reception and nursery children that provides continuity throughout the whole of the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The teachers' command of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very secure. They have high expectations of the children and good deployment of well-trained teaching assistants extends and supports learning in an effective way. The curriculum is good. Very effective cross-curricular work helps children to make secure links in different areas of learning. Well-organised planning provides meaningful activities and very thorough assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's activities ensure that all children benefit from their experiences in the secure, welcoming atmosphere of the unit. There is a high degree of independent learning; all children are confident and are beginning to have some understanding of their own learning.
39. The accommodation is good. The unit benefits from a small but well-planned outdoor area, providing a rich learning environment, which enhances the indoor provision. Children with special educational needs achieve very well because of the good support they receive from an early stage. The development of basic English skills for those with English as an additional language is effectively supported. Induction procedures are very good. They form a sound basis for strong relationships with parents. The staff work very well together as a team. Their sensitive intervention helps all children to succeed. The leadership and management of the co-ordinator are very good. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide very good role models of caring and considerate behaviour.
- Children are given choices to help them learn to play and become more independent.
- Staff have very good knowledge of the children's needs and give this area of learning high priority in all teaching plans.

Commentary

40. Children enter the nursery with attainment well below that expected for children of this age in this area of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and, as a result, children's achievement is very good. Most children have attained the nationally expected early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Staff are very skilful at planning stimulating experiences to capture the children's

interest. These help the children develop concentration skills so that they sustain attention and remain on task for often quite extensive periods of time. Children soon become confident, both reception and nursery children quickly become totally engrossed in the well-planned activities. Staff work hard to reinforce good learning attitudes. Children respond very well to encouragement to tidy up independently after activities. Teaching assistants support children in a sensitive way so that they become fully independent by the time they reach reception age. Children are happy in school and join in activities willingly and co-operatively. They wait patiently to take their turn and take responsibility for tidying up, dressing and undressing themselves. They work and play well collaboratively, benefiting from a wide variety of activities planned to develop increasing co-operation. As a result, children become more involved and confident, often willingly taking responsibility for their own learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good, focused teaching enables children to achieve very well.
- Well-structured activities consolidate learning.
- Staff effectively model the use of language as a tool for thinking.

Commentary

41. Children are taught in groups according to their ability in both the nursery and reception age group and this accelerates achievement in communication, language and literacy. With the exception of a few children with special educational needs, most children come into the nursery with well below average communication and language skills. Planned and unplanned opportunities are used well to develop the children's oral skills throughout their time in nursery and reception. In the nursery, children use actions and different voices to consolidate their learning and to help them remember their letter sounds. Children are encouraged and supported to answer in whole sentences, whilst reception age children demonstrate how well they have progressed by confidently answering questions about their reading in whole sentences. Good questioning skills enable children to reflect and structure their thinking. Children in the nursery maintain concentration at the 'writing table' making vertical marks on their paper, whilst higher achieving children in the reception class write sentences independently. The children are given opportunities to develop secure early reading and writing skills in small closely targeted groups. By the end of the reception year most children will reach the goals expected as a result of the very good teaching.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Exciting and enjoyable activities enable children to achieve very well.
- Well-planned, interesting practical activities effectively support learning.

Commentary

42. Children's learning is made both exciting and enjoyable. Staff frequently use the outside area to play games with individuals or small groups, involving them in practical counting on and adding, to develop the use of mathematical terms in real situations. Very good direct teaching enables nursery children to become confident in matching one to one as they count and then consolidate their learning with meaningful activities. Teachers make good use of the opportunity to extend children's oral skills as they discuss various possibilities with their partner when estimating how many more leaves are needed to reach the top of the beanstalk. Children's learning is securely consolidated with interesting activities carefully planned to match their own learning needs so that the least able are well supported and the higher achieving pupils are well extended. The pace of learning is fast and children are working at full capacity all the time. As a result, children achieve very well and a high proportion of children reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy a wide range of interesting activities that give them an increasing number of experiences of their own world.
- Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. At the beginning of the nursery, most are working at levels well below those expected for their age. Imaginatively planned activities support learning well, stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. In the nursery, children who choose to dig in the garden, benefit from skilful use of questioning and sensitive interaction by all staff. They encourage children to extend their speaking and listening skills as they use their senses to investigate the world around them. Reception children are very well supported by a teaching assistant to develop their observational and language skills as they use a microscope in conjunction with a digital camera and the interactive whiteboard in order to record experiments based on clean and dirty hands. Small world toys extend early experiences beyond the home and school, giving children the opportunity to make sense of a widening community. Children are confident in their use of computer programs, confidently using different colours as they draw their pictures. A high proportion of children reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching enables children to experience a wide range of activities for physical development and learning.
- Learning in the outside classroom is stimulating and very effective.
- Skills such as cutting and sticking are developed well and the children's achievement is good.

Commentary

44. Children show good levels of physical control in their movements. In the nursery, they move with confidence and respond well to the challenges from the teacher. They safely pedal wheeled toys at speed and change direction in the secure outdoor area. Very effective direct teaching helps reception children make very good progress in their skills so that they move with a high degree of control. All children achieve very well, developing skills quickly and securely. Children have developed their manipulative skills well by the time they reach reception class, having entered the nursery with poor skills in this area. Activities, such as handling dough, scissors and brushes and manipulating small construction equipment, improve their dexterity. Very good teaching ensures that children achieve very well and most achieve the goals expected by the end of reception in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of imaginatively planned activities extends the children's experience effectively.
- Role-play and other well-planned, stimulating activities encourage the children to use their imagination.

Commentary

45. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and children achieve very well. A well-planned curriculum provides for a smooth transition through nursery and reception. A wide variety of activities, materials and media allows children to explore colour, texture, shape and form, using different tools with safety. Children gain great enjoyment as they experiment with colour as they paint. Nursery children learn the names of musical instruments and begin to learn how to clap in time to a rhythm and join in a song. By the time they have reached reception, most children sing simple songs from memory and match movements to the words. The commitment and enthusiasm of all staff creates a very positive working atmosphere and, as a result, children have the confidence to try new skills. All children are in line to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of English are excellent and the high level of support and advice teachers receive is evident in the very good quality of teaching.
- The curriculum is very effectively focused on the development of skills to enable pupils to achieve very well.
- Assessment is very good and used very well to ensure pupils are challenged and learn very effectively.
- The excellent practice in the improvement in English provides a very good model for improvement and development in other subjects.

Commentary

46. Shortly before the previous inspection, test results were well below average in reading and very low in writing at the end of Year 2 when compared to all schools nationally. These standards were reflected in Year 6, where English results in the national tests were well below average. Since then, a new subject leader, with proven high quality teaching skills, has been appointed. She works in close partnership with the headteacher, who also has significant expertise in the teaching of English and monitoring of provision, and as a result there has been a dramatic improvement in both provision and standards. Test results improved significantly and the latest results at the end of Year 2 show that the school now achieves above average standards in reading and average standards in writing when compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, standards are well above average in writing and in the top five per cent of similar schools in reading. Results at the end of Year 6 have shown a similar level of improvement. Test results for 2004 show results to be well above average when compared to all schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence shows standards currently remain above average in both Years 2 and 6, which represents a very good level of improvement and an impressively upward trend in standards since the previous inspection.
47. Pupils achieve very well, particularly the current group in Year 6. Although current standards are above average, rather than the well above average ones shown in recent test results, it is important to note that when these pupils were in Year 2, their attainment in both reading and writing was well below average. The improvement in standards shows that these pupils have achieved very well through Years 3 to 6. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress in acquiring English language skills and they achieve very well, with some becoming the school's higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve similarly against the targets in their individual education plans.
48. Assessment procedures are very good and are used very effectively to establish attainment of individual pupils and those who would benefit from the very wide range of learning support strategies used by the school. This has made a significant contribution to the raising of standards and improved provision. All areas of language and literacy are carefully assessed and the school keeps very detailed records of pupils' achievement and attainment, which are used to enable pupils to achieve high standards. Currently, teachers in Years 3 and 4 are trialling 'Assessment for Learning', which will involve pupils in assessing their own achievements and therefore having a good knowledge and understanding of their own progress.

49. This very good level of improvement is due to the excellent subject leadership shown at the time of, and since, the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school and the strong features common to many lessons reflect the expert subject knowledge shown in the leadership and management of English. Pupils of all ages are taught a good understanding and knowledge of the English language, and the skills to use these to produce work of a good quality. Through the advice and guidance of the subject leader, teachers have gained a very good and sometimes excellent knowledge and understanding of how to teach language and literacy skills very effectively. Pupils are not only taught the use of different types of words used to make writing more interesting, but also where to position words such as adverbs and adjectives to achieve the best effect. Year 6 pupils were taught very effectively how to construct a piece of writing and add text that brought tension into their writing. The teacher carefully discussed with pupils techniques and skills to achieve this effect. This is typical of the activities that reflect teachers' high expectations and the setting of challenging activities which enable pupils to achieve high standards. Pupils are taught how to research using reference books and then how to translate their notes into well-written prose. The school recognises that these learning skills are of benefit to pupils in different subjects and hence the improvement in pupils' English skills provides a basis for future improvement in other subjects.
50. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement, particularly those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. They ensure that all pupils have the knowledge, support and confidence to be fully included in all activities in the lessons.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. This is very good and reflects the high standards seen in pupils' English books. English has very effective cross-curricular links with other subjects such as history. Specific language skills are also taught, such as research and writing skills, that have a positive impact on standards in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistent monitoring of challenging targets has resulted in improving standards.
- Information from the analysis of tests and very good assessment is used effectively in future planning for learning.
- There is a lack of consistent challenge for higher achieving pupils.
- Good leadership and management have benefited the quality of teaching through providing good quality professional development and support.

Commentary

52. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards in line with national expectations. End of Year 2 results in the 2004 national tests show standards in mathematics to be in line with the national average for all schools and well above the average for similar schools. This is consistent with inspection evidence, which shows that all pupils, including those with

special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, have maintained a good level of achievement. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6 show standards were in line with the national average for all schools and for similar schools. However, those pupils were well below all schools nationally and very low in comparison with similar schools at the end of their year in Year 2. This shows a very good level of achievement from Year 2 to Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that pupils at the end of Year 6 are currently in line with the national average and achieve highly.

53. Pupils are grouped by ability within their class, using the school's effective analysis of data. This, together with out-of-school hours booster lessons⁶ and the setting and monitoring of challenging targets, has helped to raise standards. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching and learning has improved as a result of high quality professional development from the subject leader, and the deputy headteacher who has proven skills in teaching numeracy. As a result, all teachers have developed secure subject knowledge and understanding, which they apply accurately and perceptively to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Newly qualified teachers are supported very well to achieve a good quality of teaching. Where teaching is very good, there is a high level of challenge, the pace of lessons is very good and all pupils achieve highly. Resources are used to very good effect. Interactive whiteboards are used very effectively to present a clear visual image of new areas of learning. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy mathematics. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support pupils well.
54. Overall there is a good coverage of the curriculum for mathematics. However, there is a lack of a regular focus on using and applying mathematics. Where it is a focus for the lesson, it is taught effectively and supports pupils' developing understanding well. Homework consolidates learning well. Marking is not always consistent but where it is good, it encourages improvement. Some work remains unchecked and at times does not indicate how pupils might improve.
55. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths in the subject and areas for further development. He is a very good practitioner and leads by example, giving effective support where it is needed in order to raise standards. He has had the opportunity to monitor teaching through lesson observation, analysing the quality of pupils' work and talking to the teachers about their concerns. The school has very good systems for assessing pupils' progress and teachers use assessment well to plan further work and to identify those pupils who will need extra help. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

⁶ Extra lessons to boost and support the achievement of selected pupils

Mathematics across the curriculum

Standards in numeracy in other subjects are satisfactory. Teachers make good use of mathematics across the curriculum and link work well with ICT and geography. In science, pupils consolidate the use of measure and see the reason for interpreting graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of practical and investigative science is unsatisfactory.
- Good attitudes and behaviour help create a positive approach to learning science.
- The subject leader leads well and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in science.

Commentary

56. Teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils in 2004 assess standards to be well below average. Results in National Curriculum tests in 2004 for Year 6 pupils were also well below average. Standards in science have been much lower than in English and mathematics because the main focus in recent years has been to raise English and mathematics standards. There has been difficulty in retaining skilled teachers, which has resulted in a lack of continuity in the teaching of science and which has had a negative impact on pupils' development of scientific skills and knowledge. However, now that there is more stability, an overall improvement in teaching and a focus on practical science, the school is well placed to improve pupils' achievement. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving by Year 2 and Year 6, although they are still below average, especially in practical and investigative science.
57. Teaching is satisfactory overall and results in satisfactory achievement by pupils at all stages, including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. Teaching seen during the inspection ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. In the very good lessons there was a strong emphasis on practical and investigative science where pupils were asked to make predictions and give reasons. For example, in a very good Year 4 lesson about keeping fruit fresh, the teacher continually responded to pupils' answers and comments with "*Why?*" which encouraged them to explain their observations and draw conclusions. However, in the satisfactory and unsatisfactory lessons pupils were not encouraged to predict and explain their work or use scientific language. Analysis of pupils' work shows that where teaching is satisfactory, tasks set for pupils of different ability are similar and do not always match the different learning needs of all pupils in the class. Few teachers share the objectives of the lesson with their pupils so that they know what is to be learnt and why, and can assess their learning at the end of the lesson.
58. Pupils enjoy science and are keen to investigate when given the opportunity. They are managed well by teachers and so behave and work well together. Pupils with special educational needs, together with those who speak English as an additional language, are fully included in lessons, often because of the good support of teaching assistants. In the very good lessons, pupils' behaviour is very good because of the stimulating and well-matched work set. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson on magnetism, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were very good because they were enraptured by the

way a magnet could be used to move a metal object around a piece of card. The teacher skilfully used the pupils' interest to develop their vocabulary and understanding from saying "*the magnet sticks to other objects*" to understanding that "*a magnet attracts*" metal objects.

59. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the science curriculum. He is ensuring that there is now a whole-school focus on practical and investigative science, which is beginning to raise pupils' achievement. Good use is made of mathematics to support the subject but the use of ICT is an area for development. Good links have been established with the local secondary school for Year 6 science activities. An initiative with a local charity has seen the development of a pond and wildlife area which, once established, will enhance the teaching of science. Science was not reported on in the previous inspection report so it is not possible to report on improvement since then.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of ICT to support other subjects is underdeveloped and computers in classrooms are not used to the full.
- The subject leader has raised the profile of ICT in school improvement.

Commentary

60. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are satisfactory. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is satisfactory. At the time of the previous inspection, the new suite was 'beginning to make an impact' on ICT. Its regular use for whole-class teaching is ensuring that all pupils receive an allotted weekly amount of time for ICT. However, the suite is being used at the expense of computers in the classroom. During the inspection week, few examples were observed of pupils using the class computers to back up work completed in the suite or to support their learning in other subjects.
61. The quality of teaching in the computer suite is satisfactory overall, although one Year 5 lesson observed was good and a Year 4 lesson was very good. No direct teaching of ICT was observed in classrooms. However, class computers were used regularly by the majority of teachers to support their teaching and for displaying work on the interactive whiteboards⁷. Teachers' skills when using the whiteboards vary greatly. In the good and very good lessons, teachers are confident with the technology and the programs being used and so are clear in their explanations of the tasks, which results in good and very good progress in lessons. Teachers do not always share or recap the objectives of the lesson so that pupils know what is to be learnt and can use the objectives to assess their own learning at the end of lessons. Pupils enjoy ICT lessons, co-operate well and support each other. Assessment of pupils' skills is not used sufficiently to match work to the different groupings within a class. Higher attaining pupils especially, are unable to make better than satisfactory progress because they are often given insufficient challenge to work at their own pace. This is the main reason why achievement of pupils is only satisfactory. In some lessons, teachers pair higher attaining pupils with those of lower attainment. Although this gives lower attaining pupils the opportunity

⁷ A large whiteboard onto which computer images are projected and which responds to touch with a special 'pen' in a way that is similar to using a mouse with an ordinary computer screen.

to learn from their partner, it does not always allow higher attaining pupils to learn at their own pace.

62. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has raised the profile of the subject and has implemented regular training for teachers. She has identified the use of ICT to support the curriculum, and the development of teacher confidence and skills, as a priority for the year in order to raise the standards and achievement of pupils. Extra-curricular opportunities and those arising from the school's links with local businesses are helping to raise pupils' standards and skills. The school also provides basic ICT skills courses for parents, which have been very well received.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum, especially English, history, science and art and design. Satisfactory use is beginning to be made of the interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching and learning in a number of subjects. However, the limited use of computers in classrooms means that pupils often have to wait until their allocated period in the suite before being able to complement class work with a computer assisted activity. Very good use is made of ICT by a group of pupils who edit and produce a school magazine.

HUMANITIES

64. Religious education is subject to a Section 23 inspection. Insufficient evidence was available to support overall judgements on provision in history and geography. Very little written work was evident in either subject.
65. In **geography**, a small amount of map work in Years 2 and 3 showed limited progression from the early stages of map work to sketch maps of the locality in Year 3.
66. In **history**, pupils in Year 2 increase their knowledge of chronology through a timeline of their own lives; however, inconsistent marking of work fails to correct pupils' mistakes. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were presented with a good range of first-hand evidence in order to develop an understanding of historical interpretation and enquiry but inadequate time meant that the opportunity to immediately follow up on this experience and draw pupils towards their own conclusions was not possible. In Year 6, pupils cover aspects of World War Two satisfactorily through literacy and ICT but the lesson on evacuees had been covered in previous years and did not provide sufficient new knowledge and understanding to enable pupils to make progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology were not the focus of the inspection and so there is insufficient evidence on which to base reliable judgements about the quality of teaching and learning or standards and provision.

67. In the one lesson observed in **art and design**, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Pupils worked purposefully as they used sketches to inform their work to make three-dimensional sculptures. Teachers' planning, photographic evidence and displays around the school indicate that a satisfactory range of media is used in a variety of contexts. The displays of pupils' artwork in corridors, shared areas and on the stairs are enhanced by good presentation which celebrates work in art and design.

Pupils study a number of well-known artists, such as Matisse and Breughel, and links are now being developed with other subjects of the curriculum. For example, Year 3 pupils study a painting by Breughel of a playground scene and then produce their own version based on the school's playground. This helps to put the painting into a historical context. A weekly art club, led by art teachers from a local education trust, contributes well to the subject.

68. In the two lessons sampled in **design and technology**, teaching was good in one and satisfactory in the other. In both lessons, pupils were motivated by the tasks and so their attitudes were good and they behaved well. They used resources sensibly and safely. Evidence available indicates sound coverage of the curriculum and satisfactory development of skills. Links are now being made with other subjects to make the curriculum more interesting and relevant for pupils. For example, in science, pupils design and make flying rockets as part of a topic on the planets and in history, they designed and made a life-size mummy case as part of the topic on Ancient Egypt. In the good Year 1 lesson observed, pupils designed and made a camouflaged hat for someone visiting the rainforest of Madagascar, which linked well to geography.
69. Although links are now being made between art and design, design and technology and other subjects of the curriculum, planning is still not firmly embedded in all year groups to make the links totally relevant to pupils.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good, and pupils are given good opportunities to develop and practise a wide range of musical skills.
- There is good curriculum enrichment, which further develops pupils' experience, knowledge and understanding in music.
- Music makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and cultural life of the school.
- The leadership and management of music are good and ensure that all pupils build a good level of basic music skills.
- The school's good resources are used effectively to give pupils valuable practical experience.

Commentary

70. Although attainment is satisfactory in Years 5 and 6, standards are above those nationally expected by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3. This is because, whilst the school was in special measures, music was not a priority and older pupils missed out on the development of composing and performing skills. The current good leadership of the joint leadership team has recognised this weakness and now pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given good opportunities to develop these skills through good teaching, which meets the learning needs of pupils at all ages well. Consequently, all pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. The quality of singing is particularly good.
71. Since the time of the previous inspection, the profile of music in the school has been raised. Although music is not a current priority, this has been achieved successfully. There are good planned opportunities for curriculum enrichment, which provide further good opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and which make a significant contribution to

pupils' cultural development. These range from live performances to workshop sessions, which are held for pupils throughout the school. Singing in whole-school singing sessions was sensitive and tuneful and pupils were committed to performing at a high level. Teachers taught pupils technical skills to sing 'Sing Hosanna' in a particularly complicated but very effective arrangement. The atmosphere in the hall was often exciting and music clearly makes a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school.

72. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and is skills based, enabling all children to have a good grounding in the core musical skills of singing, listening, performing and composing. The teachers' good subject knowledge and teaching skills result in significant gains in pupils' knowledge and understanding of music and enable them to teach accurately and make lessons enjoyable. Teachers maintain a good pace in lessons to ensure all pupils remain on task. Younger pupils respond well to musical challenges to extend their listening and rhythmic skills and they show their appreciation of rhythm through their movements in time to the music.
73. The leadership and management of music are good. The curriculum is well planned to meet the identified learning needs of pupils at all ages. There are good plans for further development of music and to maintain the high profile of music in the school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The physical education curriculum is enriched very well by clubs and sporting activities.

Commentary

74. Very good links have been established with the local secondary school, businesses and professional bodies to support the teaching of physical education, and to enrich the curriculum, with a very good range of extra activities. For example, members of local professional clubs visit the school to teach rugby, football, cricket and netball, a festival of athletics and cricket is held at the secondary school and a local business provides instructors. All these add to the opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and to pursue physical activities outside of the school day.
75. Only games and dance lessons were observed during the inspection. Therefore, it is not possible to make judgements about pupils' achievement in gymnastic and swimming. However, by Year 2, standards are in line with expected levels in dance and games. No lessons were observed in Year 6 but observation of Year 5 indicates that pupils are on course to be in line with the expected levels in games and dance. Assessment records show that standards in swimming are in line with expectations. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, together with those who speak English as an additional language, is satisfactory.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In one games lesson observed, taught by a professional coach, teaching and learning were good. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. Pupils are well managed, which results in good behaviour and a safe environment where pupils apply themselves to the tasks set.

However, teachers do not always use opportunities to explain to pupils the effect of exercise on their body or give pupils the opportunity to watch each other and constructively evaluate each other's performance, so as to improve the quality of their work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

There is not enough evidence to report on this area fully.

77. This is a developing area and the school is aware of the many opportunities for further improving the current level of provision, including citizenship. Funding obtained through links with the community has enabled Young Enterprise to train members of the community to deliver blocks of work towards the 'Young Citizens' award with the teachers. This has given the teaching staff new skills. The school is in the final stages of gaining its 'Healthy School' accreditation, which has had a positive impact on pupils' personal development. The Borough provides drama workshops on racist issues, which are very powerful and effective. There is a drugs and sex education policy in place and the school benefits from material and advice from the Borough. This helps teachers to develop their own understanding and gradually take ownership of the area.
78. Pupils are encouraged to feel positive about themselves, to be actively involved in the life of the school and the wider community and to make wise choices about developing a healthy and safe lifestyle. Pupils' personal development needs have been successfully identified and the school meets these well. In 'circle times'⁸, teachers have a pleasant, warm manner and relate well to pupils. They show sensitivity when they carefully discuss different feelings and issues. Teachers ensure that pupils at all levels of attainment are fully involved and contribute to discussions.

⁸ During 'circle time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	1
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	