

INSPECTION REPORT

Stillness Infant School

Brockley Rise/London

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100705

Headteacher: Mrs Alison McClelland

Lead inspector: Kathryn Taylor

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th May 2005

Inspection number: 267990

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	286
School address:	Brockley Rise London
Postcode:	SE23 1NH
Telephone number:	020 8690 1208
Fax number:	020 8314 0297
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Valerie Sairbrass
Date of previous inspection:	April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stillness Infant School is an above average sized school currently with the full-time equivalent of 268 boys and girls aged between three and seven. Children join Nursery and Reception classes in September or January, depending on the time of their birthday. Not all children joining Reception have previously attended the school Nursery. There is a wide range of pupils' attainment when children join the Nursery and Reception, but their attainment overall is above that usually found. The school is ethnically diverse, about two thirds of pupils are drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds. Afro-Caribbean is the largest ethnic group. A total of 28 pupils are supported through ethnic minority grant funding, including three pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Although a high proportion of pupils are from homes where English is not the first language, only three are at the early stages of acquiring English. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below that found nationally. Fifteen pupils are on the higher stages of the Code of Practice, including one pupil who has a statement of special educational need. These pupils' particular needs relate to their learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication, and autism. The social and economic backgrounds of pupils are generally good. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Pupil mobility is low. Since 2002 the school has gained a number of awards, which include the Healthy Schools Award, a School Achievement Award, Investors in People, the Eco Bronze

and the Eco Silver Award and NAACE Mark for ICT. The school is part of Excellence in Cities and the Primary Leadership Strategy.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22424	Kathryn Taylor	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Music Physical education Personal, social and health education and Citizenship
32698	Steven Barker	Lay inspector	
32106	John Zealander	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
32505	Michelle Coles	Team inspector	English Provision for pupils learning English Provision for pupils with special educational needs Religious education History Geography

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Stillness Infant School is a good school with some very good features. The headteacher's good leadership has generated strong teamwork. As a result, all staff work well together and with parents to meet pupils' needs. Standards are good and pupils achieve well academically and personally. The school is very inclusive and also promotes very good racial harmony. The senior staff, subject managers and governors make a good contribution to ensuring that the school is well led and managed. There is a strong focus on continuing to improve what the school offers its pupils. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is well led and managed and governance is good.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and there is some very high quality teaching.
- Children in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) are not always challenged.
- The provision for ICT is very good.
- The school provides very well for pupils who have special educational needs and it provides well for pupils learning English or who are at risk of underachieving.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very well. Pupils therefore behave well, develop very good attitudes to learning and form very good relationships.
- Staff organise a very good number and range of visitors and visits to extend pupils' learning. Links with the community are excellent.
- Although procedures to evaluate teaching and the school's effectiveness are in place, these are not yet critical nor robust enough.
- Further developments are needed to marking and assessments.
- The school gives very good attention to pupils' pastoral care, but other aspects of care are sometimes inadequate.

The school has made **good** overall improvements since its last inspection. Leadership and management are now stronger. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance have all improved very well. Teaching, learning and assessments are better than they were. Many improvements to the curriculum have taken place and stronger links with other schools and with the community have benefited children greatly. There have been some improvements to work in the Foundation Stage and more are planned.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, the children's achievements in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and they are good in Years 1 and 2. When children join the school, their previous experiences are quite varied, but overall their attainment and readiness for learning are good. Throughout their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, most children build steadily on their starting levels to reach and sometimes exceed the goals expected of them by the time they join Year 1. While achievement is overall satisfactory and is good in some areas, children could do better in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. The table below shows that, in 2004, test results in reading were very high and were in the top 5 per cent of similar schools and of schools nationally. Writing and mathematics standards

were well above those found in similar schools and in schools nationally. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the current Year 2 classes are above average, but are not as high as test results last year. Standards in science, physical education, ICT and history are above those expected and those in religious education meet those expected. Geography and art and design were not inspected in full. The evidence that was available indicates at least satisfactory achievements and standards. Music and design and technology were not inspected.

Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A*	A	A*	A*
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils behave very well and develop very good attitudes to school and learning. This is because the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Relationships and racial harmony are very good among pupils from a very wide range of backgrounds. Attendance is satisfactory, but too many pupils are brought to school late in the mornings.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good standard of education. Teaching and learning are good overall. The whole school curriculum provides a good range of interesting experiences for children and good links are often made between subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and the good support in class, alongside very good additional teaching, helps pupils to learn very well. Pupils often attain the expected standards as a result. There are strengths in all of the teaching, which encourage good learning. Teachers work hard, have good knowledge of subjects and teach the basic skills well. Some of the teaching in Years 1 and 2, and occasionally in Reception, is very good. In a few lessons in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1 teachers require further guidance about how to develop their teaching in order to extend pupils' learning. Assessment is satisfactory. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory and the new Foundation Stage accommodation is good. Standards of care are satisfactory with some good features, such as the good support and guidance and the very good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. There are, however, weaknesses in the supervision of pupils at playtimes, in monitoring accidents in order to reduce them and in ensuring that all who work in the school understand child protection procedures. All staff ensure that pupils are very happy at school. The school works very well with parents and parents contribute very well to the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She provides a clear educational direction, which ensures that the school is outward looking and continues to seek ways to extend what it offers its pupils. The headteacher has put in

place systems to develop all staff and to distribute leadership more widely. The assistant headteachers and senior managers support the headteacher well and make a good contribution to the way in which the school is led and managed. Staff with subject and other management responsibilities are effective. The governors are very supportive of the school, are fully involved and carry out their statutory responsibilities well. All of this has helped to bring about many improvements to the curriculum and the way that the school works with parents, other schools and the community. There is, however, sometimes a lack of rigour into the way that teaching and other aspects of the school's provision are critically evaluated.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school and feel that their children are getting on well. Most are happy with the standards that their children attain and the quality of teaching. They appreciate the way the staff make them welcome, but some feel that the school does not respond quickly enough to their concerns and views. Pupils really enjoy school and are very happy there. They say they enjoy all types of lessons. They like and trust their teachers and other adults. They feel they get lots of help from the staff. They say they are kind and fair and respond to their needs and concerns. Pupils have a reasonably secure understanding of what they do well and what they need to do to improve, but marking of pupils' work could sometimes do more to develop this aspect.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- develop a more critical approach to school self-evaluation that provides more regular feedback to pupils and teachers about how they might improve;
- improve standards of care, in particular the playground supervision and the way in which the school communicates information about child protection to all adults working in the school;
- strengthen the Foundation Stage provision by ensuring that teaching offers greater challenge and ensure that in their planning teachers are clear about what they want the children to learn.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' overall attainments are **above** average at the age of seven and pupils of all capabilities achieve **well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage do not achieve as well as they could in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and attain good standards in a number of subjects.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve very well in ICT and physical education.
- The very good support for pupils with special educational needs helps them to achieve well.

Commentary

The Foundation Stage of Learning

1. The children's attainment levels when they start in both the Nursery and Reception cover the full ability range, but are overall above those usually found. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from some good teaching in certain areas and as a result most achieve well in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development children, and particularly the higher attainers, are not challenged enough, with the result that they tend to under-achieve. By the time children are ready to start in Year 1, most are on course to have at least achieved the goals that are expected of them in each area of learning. In their personal and social development children exceed the goals expected because provision in this area is very good.

Years 1 and 2

2. Overall standards by age seven are above those expected and pupils of all prior attainments achieve well. This is because teaching in Years 1 and 2 challenges pupils of above average capability. In addition pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English, or are at risk of underachieving, receive good additional support. As a result, most attain at least the expected levels by age seven.

Test results at age seven

3. The table below above shows that between 2003 and 2004, overall standards in the reading and mathematics tests improved, while those in writing fell. National comparative data shows that in 2004 test results in writing and

mathematics were well above the national average and similar schools. In reading, test results were very high and in the top 5 per cent of all schools. Science results, which are based on teacher assessment, were good. Almost all pupils attained at least the expected Level 2 and a proportion well above the national average attained the higher Level 3.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.4 (17.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	16.5 (17.0)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	18.0 (17.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 89 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In the current Year 2 classes standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science, although above average by age seven, are not as high as those attained in the tests last year. The proportion of pupils reaching both the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 is lower in the current Year 2 classes than in previous years. Senior managers judge that this is because the current Year 2 is a weaker cohort of pupils. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening, in mental calculations and in scientific enquiry are all good.
5. In religious education standards and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. In history standards are above those expected and pupils achieve well. In physical education and ICT standards are above those expected and pupils achieve very well. As geography and art and design were sampled, there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on overall standards, but the work that was seen was at least in line with that expected. Music and design and technology were not inspected. Standards of work and pupils' achievement have overall improved well since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **very good** and their behaviour is **good**. Overall, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' attendance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and school.
- Excellent relationships between pupils create a very harmonious school community.
- The school's curriculum and range of enrichment activities make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Behaviour during morning break is not as good as that during the rest of the school day.
- Too many children are brought to school late.

Commentary

6. This area of the school's work has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils are happy to come to school but, although the majority arrive punctually and enthusiastically, too many parents bring their children to school after lessons have started. Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils are a strength of the school. Pupils show great respect to all of the staff and to each other. During the inspection, many pupils were seen giving support and helping each other without being asked by an adult. In lessons

pupils consistently show a keen interest in their learning and work hard. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and commitment to learning and pupils consistently meet them.

7. All pupils quickly identify with the school's strong ethos of care, understanding and tolerance. The school is a community where staff and pupils alike work in an atmosphere of harmony and are genuinely free from all forms of harassment. The school community is socially, ethnically and religiously diverse and these differences are celebrated and valued.
8. The curriculum, the very wide range of activities that support pupils' learning and the school's ethos all make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The school very effectively promotes self-knowledge and spiritual awareness in pupils, principles which enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and gives them a very good appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions. The school is particularly active in instilling in all pupils the responsibilities of being part of a community. The very impressive work that the school has done and the recognition it has achieved for its ecological education and active community participation is well known to all pupils. They all take a pride and an active interest in the many community projects underway in the school and the local community.
9. There have been no exclusions as the table below shows. Behaviour in lessons is very good. At lunchtimes, pupils are now able to participate in a range of suitable activities which are well organised and led by the school's mid-day supervisors and in all aspects of school life. However, during morning break, when the range of activities that are available at lunchtimes are not there, pupils' behaviour is often quite boisterous and at times can represent a potential risk to their health and safety.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

<i>Categories used in the Annual School Census</i>	<i>No of pupils on roll</i>	<i>Number of fixed period exclusions</i>	<i>Number of permanent exclusions</i>
White – British	55	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	17	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	14	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	41	0	0
Black or Black British – African	9	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	8	0	0

Chinese	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

10. The school effectively promotes regular attendance and punctuality at every opportunity. Although the table below shows the school's attendance rate is slightly below the national average, what absence exists is due to short-term childhood illness and occasionally some families taking extended holidays. The school monitors attendance and punctuality well and where necessary involves the educational welfare service.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.0	School data:	0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is **good** with **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**. The provision made for pupils' care, welfare and safety is **satisfactory**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **very good**. Links with parents and other schools are **very good** and those with the community are **excellent**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are overall **satisfactory** in the Foundation Stage and **good** in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All teachers promotes pupils' personal development very well through their teaching.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is frequently challenging and interesting.
- Pupils with additional needs are taught well and are supported well in class.
- The teaching of ICT is very good and staff use the interactive whiteboards well to enhance pupils' learning across a range of subjects.
- The use of marking and the school's approach to corrections sometimes limit feedback to pupils.
- Teachers use too many worksheets.

Commentary

11. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, but the inconsistencies between teaching in different parts of the school that were noted then are still evident. Teachers and support staff from across the school enjoy very good relationships with their pupils and promote their personal development very well. Adults know pupils well, are very kind and supportive to them and give them lots of praise and encouragement. Displays are used well to motivate pupils and to celebrate their achievements. All of this impacts on learning by helping pupils to enjoy school and develop very positive attitudes and self-esteem.
12. There are strengths in the Foundation Stage teaching and some good teaching is evident. Staff work well as a team and nursery nurses, teaching assistants and other adults who are helping there usually make a good contribution to

children's learning. Staff plan interesting activities that are well linked to common themes that cover a number of areas of learning. The direct teaching of skills is often good. This was seen, for example, in focused teaching during parts of lessons and in the whole class teaching in physical education and ICT lessons. A weakness, especially in the Nursery, is that there is sometimes not enough adult intervention to engage with children and challenge them. This in part arises from the fact that teachers' planning is not detailed enough. It identifies what activities are to be offered and set up indoors and outside, but it does not make clear what children are actually meant to learn through carrying these out. This leads to a lack of urgency for staff to move pupils' learning on at a faster rate, as well as posing difficulties in assessing what the children have actually learned.

13. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and was very good in about half of lessons seen. Teaching seen was overall better and more consistent across Year 2 than in Year 1. Particular strengths in teaching in Years 1 and 2 include the staff's good subject knowledge, their high expectations of pupils and a good pace to teaching. Teachers' use of open and closed questions is often very effective. Teachers make many good links between subjects, and tasks and activities, including visits, are well chosen to make learning interesting and frequently exciting. This results in pupils being very interested and well motivated. Staff ensure that pupils regularly record what they have learned. They do, however, use too many worksheets which, although usually of reasonable good quality, limit opportunities for children to write independently or to devise their own ways of recording. All of the staff are very inclusive in their teaching and they ensure that pupils of all capabilities ask questions and are invited to contribute. They use ICT and the whiteboards well to stimulate pupils' interest and provide lots of additional information and visual clues. This supports all pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and a small number of pupils who are still learning English.
14. The specific, focused teaching of pupils with special educational needs and of pupils who are still learning English or who are at risk of underachieving is consistently good or better. Teachers carrying out this work are well trained and experienced and lessons and pupils' learning proceed at a good pace. Teachers are skilled in breaking learning down into small, manageable steps and they continually assess and review individual pupils' learning so as to build on it. As far as possible staff link pupils' work with their class work and they often provide homework and additional tasks for them to work on in the time between lessons. In class lessons pupils with additional needs are also well supported, both by class teachers and teaching assistants.
15. The direct teaching of ICT skills was consistently very good and examples of very good teaching were also seen in most subjects inspected. What made this teaching particularly effective was often the teachers' ability to move pupils' learning on at a very fast pace, while also keeping a firm eye on whether all pupils were following and understanding. If some pupils did not at first understand, the teachers very quickly simplified their teaching and re-explained concepts. Where teaching had weaknesses, these most often related to a slow

pace to teaching or teachers talking for so long so that pupils were inclined to stop listening.

16. Assessment has improved well since the last inspection and is now satisfactory, with strengths. There is still some work to be done to develop assessment in the Foundation Stage, which will also support the school in developing a good system to set reliable targets for pupils in Year 2 and track their progress from entry until the time they leave. Teachers and support staff in Reception and Nursery keep ongoing records of children’s achievements, which they record in children’s profiles. However, because not enough attention is given to outlining at the planning stage what precisely children will be expected to learn, assessing children’s learning is much more complicated for staff here than it needs to be. In Years 1 and 2 teachers assess pupils’ learning well in lessons and at least satisfactory procedures are in place for regularly assessing pupils’ attainment in all subjects. Teachers use the results of assessment well when planning future work and to identify which pupils will receive additional support through specialist provision. Marking could support ongoing assessment better. Teachers’ comments are almost exclusively those that tell children what they can do. Marking provides a limited record of what pupils could not do, about how much help pupils had with their work or how many attempts they made before getting it right. Work in books shows very few errors and no evidence of where corrections were needed because children rub out their mistakes and then correct them.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	13 (37%)	13 (37%)	7 (20%)	1 (3%)	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. There is **very good** curricular enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum caters well for all pupils and very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school makes very good use of visitors and visits to places of interest to provide pupils with rich and challenging opportunities.
- Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good.
- Teachers make good use of relevant links between subjects.
- The school has gained a number of awards for its good work in developing the curriculum.

Commentary

17. The statutory requirements to teach the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum, religious education and pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education in Years 1 and 2 are met.
18. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage ensures that children attending full-time and part-time have full access to an interesting curriculum that gives satisfactory attention to all six areas of learning. Children benefit from many visitors who come to talk to them, as well as those who come to help in school. The key weakness in provision is that children are not being introduced to more demanding work once they have achieved the early learning goals. This weakness was also identified at the last inspection.
19. All pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, have full access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. There are very good opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 to take part in a large number of stimulating extra-curricular activities. These include school productions and music tuition. The staff also make very good use of links with the community, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school to provide children with rich and challenging experiences that make their learning more meaningful, fun and exciting. These include, for example, trips to the mosque to support work in religious education, to Horton Kirby to support work in geography and trips to the local shops and other nearby facilities. Numerous visitors from the local community and further afield include visiting artists, theatre groups and musicians. The school participates regularly in initiatives designed to improve the curriculum. The school has won several awards and competitions including those for art, ICT, Black History month, Eco schools and Healthy Schools. These enrichment activities have the effect of raising the status of particular aspects of the curriculum and enhancing pupils' learning. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very good. As part of their work in physical education and science, for example, pupils learn about healthy living and the importance of safety, rest, exercise and healthy eating. The school places considerable emphasis on promoting pupils' social development. Pupils are consistently encouraged to respect one another, to work well together and to take on responsibilities commensurate with their age.
20. In Years 1 and 2 well-planned links between subjects ensure that skills and knowledge learned in one subject can be used effectively in others. Literacy and numeracy skills especially are often used well to support their work in other subjects. Good examples were seen in science, in history where pupils used the timeline to calculate how many years had passed and also in religious education where pupils developed their speaking and listening skills well in a drama about the Good Samaritan. The overuse of worksheets, however, can limit opportunities for pupils to write independently. Very good use is made of ICT in the suite and the interactive whiteboards in the classrooms to aid pupils' learning in a number of subjects.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The very good links between class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator and special needs teacher enable staff to plan effectively for these pupils. When pupils are withdrawn for small group lessons, these are very well focused and

matched to pupils' specific needs, as identified in their individual education plans. Provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good. Pupils at risk of underachieving are also supported well through ethnic minority achievement grant funding and the support of the learning mentor. The support that these groups of pupils receive from their teachers and teaching assistants in lessons is also good and helps them to achieve as well as their peers.

22. The very well equipped computer suite and the interactive whiteboards in each classroom are a significant improvement in the school's accommodation and resources since the last inspection and these are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Three new Foundation Stage classrooms were recently opened. These provide good, attractive accommodation including covered areas outdoors. In addition, small group rooms, a library and the ICT suite have also been added, all of which have significantly improved the quality of the accommodation, but the ongoing building work has severely restricted the use of the already limited outdoor space. A further programme of building and refurbishment is taking place to improve the premises. The school is very clean and well maintained. Overall there have been good improvements to the curriculum, resources and accommodation since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure children's care, welfare and safety are **satisfactory**. The school's provision of support, advice and guidance for children is **good**, as are the steps taken to involve children in the work and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care is very good.
- Very strong relationships between staff and pupils make a significant contribution to the caring ethos.
- Informal procedures for monitoring health and safety and child protection can leave the school exposed to unnecessary risk.
- Strong links with partner schools ensure a smooth transition into school and on to Stillness Junior School.
- The views of the pupils are regularly sought, valued and acted upon.

Commentary

23. Pastoral care is very good throughout the school. All members of staff go to great lengths to ensure that pupils feel emotionally secure, happy, valued and are individually well cared for. Although pastoral care is a strength of the school, the informal nature of many of the school's procedures for monitoring health and safety and child protection, lead to care, welfare and safety being satisfactory overall. The procedures to monitor morning break sessions and pupils' movement into and out of the school sometimes lead to boisterous behaviour. This has the potential to put pupils at unnecessary risk of accidents. In addition the induction procedures for new staff do not consistently ensure that everyone immediately knows who the school's named child protection

officer is. Child protection and health and safety procedures are otherwise satisfactory.

24. Relationships at all levels ensure that all pupils feel safe, secure and happy in school and contribute to the strong ethos of the school. Pupils are confident that if they are unhappy or concerned, for whatever reason, there is always an adult to whom they can turn for help and support. Because staff stay with their class for Year 1 and Year 2, they know the pupils well and are able to provide good support and guidance to them for both academic and personal development. The care and support provided for pupils with special educational needs is of the same high quality, based upon the in-depth knowledge all staff have of pupils and their individual needs.
25. The school works hard to ensure that all children benefit from the thorough induction programme. Children in the Nursery are regularly involved in the life and work of the school. On entering the Reception classes they are excited and enthusiastic about school and show a genuine desire to learn. Parents are involved in the variety of induction events that the school has in place and these contribute to the sense of security that their children feel when starting at school. Strong links with the partner junior school ensure a smooth transition for pupils to the next stage of their education.
26. The school has a number of formal and informal procedures in place to ask pupils for their views on a variety of issues and these are used to shape the life and future of the school. The school's Eco Council makes a major contribution to pupils' sense of involvement in their school and supports the very strong work that the school does to ensure pupils have a very thorough appreciation of the responsibilities of being part of a community. All pupils are valued and have a genuine appreciation that the school cares very well for them. Teachers regularly encourage the development of listening and speaking skills, which not only makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development but also provides them with the confidence and self-esteem to want to participate and contribute to shaping their school. Overall judgments about this aspect of the school's work are similar to those found at the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has developed an outstanding range of partnerships with many community groups and organisations.
- The school has very effective procedures in place to seek out and act on the views of parents.
- Parents are actively encouraged to get involved in their children's learning.
- Very strong links with other schools make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.

Commentary

27. The school's outstanding links with the community are highly impressive and make a very significant contribution to the taught curriculum and to children's personal development. The school very successfully harnesses much that the local community offers and the imaginative and extensive links with environmental groups, the police and fire services, local and national charities, musicians, artists and many other community members make a sustained and exceptional contribution to the pupils' achievement. Pupils are in no doubt that they belong to a wide and diverse community in which all members have responsibilities and this secure knowledge is evident in the caring nature of relationships throughout the school.
28. Parents play a very active role in the school and in their children's learning. Many parents volunteer to help in school on a regular basis and many more come into school to share musical or artistic skills with the pupils. Parents receive regular newsletters and curriculum information. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are both very well written and contain a range of very useful information for parents and carers, including that on the curriculum. The end of year reports to parents about pupils' progress provide very detailed information. They reflect the good knowledge staff have of every pupil in the school. However, they focus on what pupils have done and can do, but do not provide much information about what children find difficult.
29. The parents' forum provides parents with a clear opportunity to interact regularly with the school and raise any issues that are of concern. The forum is always attended by governors as well as the headteacher and parents and gives parents a strong voice in influencing the future direction of their children's school. Similarly procedures to ensure parental concerns are responded to are effective. A small minority of parents expressed concerns at the pre-inspection parents' meeting regarding the provision of free fruit for their children. This issue was discussed at the parents' forum and the school responded by putting in place plans to launch the scheme in September once adequate storage and washing facilities could be identified.

30. The school's links with other schools are many and varied and make a very significant contribution to smooth induction into the school from nurseries other than the school's own and the transfer on to junior schools. The very strong partnership with other schools, including the junior school on the same site, enhances the curriculum and extends the learning opportunities for children in this and other schools. Teachers come from other schools to observe good practice in key areas and the school is rightly very highly regarded for its active role with partner schools. The school's links with parents and other schools have improved very well since the last inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are **good**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's good leadership has resulted in many improvements since the last inspection.
- Senior managers and subject leaders contribute effectively to the leadership and management of the school.
- Governors know their school well and support it well.
- Procedures for school self-evaluation and the monitoring of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough.
- Finances are managed well and administration is very efficient.

Commentary

31. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She has been very successful in promoting developments to the curriculum and further links with other schools and the community. She is ably supported by the assistant headteachers and together they form a strong team. The school's aims and values are reflected in its work and staff share senior managers' vision for continuous improvement. The school is managed well and runs smoothly. Senior managers work hard to create a strong ethos of care and inclusion that permeates all aspects of the school's work. This is evidenced in the appointment and work of a number of staff to support pupils with additional needs.
32. Most staff with subject and management responsibilities are not only hard working and knowledgeable but also proactive in seeking ways to bringing about further improvements. They therefore lead and manage their subjects well. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. They regularly monitor pupils' work and provide good support and guidance for staff. The provision for ethnic minority achievement is well led and managed. That relating to special educational needs is very well led, organised and managed. Documentation is up to date and individual education plans are very good working documents that are regularly reviewed and updated. The assessment coordinator's work has been very effective in bringing about improvements. The current Foundation Stage leader is new to this role. Over time management in this area of the school has been satisfactory, but leadership has not been

strong enough to ensure that provision here is as good as that in the rest of the school.

33. School self-evaluation, through monitoring and critically evaluating strengths and weaknesses in subjects and in other aspects of the school, is satisfactory but is not yet rigorous. This is why, in its self-evaluation form, the school judged several aspects of the school to be better than they are and is perhaps why issues relating to playground supervision may go unnoticed. Furthermore the time given for senior managers and subject leaders to observe teaching and learning, and to identify strengths and where further improvements are needed, is somewhat limited. In instances where staff themselves identify that they need support, colleagues provide this well. A very good example of this is in ICT, where standards have risen as a result of staff training which has enabled all teachers to develop much more confidence and good skills.
34. Governors provide good support to their school and fulfil all their statutory duties. They have a very good range of professional expertise that is well used for the benefit of the school. They influence the school's direction and planning and are actively involved in school life, which gives them a thorough insight into all aspects of the school's work. The governing body has a commitment to its own training and development and constantly seeks to identify ways in which governors can improve the impact they have on pupils' achievement. Although a number of governors are recently appointed, the chair of governors has provided them with very clear guidance and direction in developing their strategic role. Her experience has been instrumental in helping to drive forward the agenda for school improvement and in establishing governors' role in that process.
35. The administrative staff are efficient. This assists with the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis and ensures that finances are managed well and purchases are made in accordance with best value principles. The table below shows a very large carry forward of money from last year. This results from delays in making payments for building works as the building programme is behind schedule. Taking account of the good improvements since the last inspection, pupils' good academic and personal achievements, the good quality of education, governance and leadership of the school, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,030,432
Total expenditure	1,020,033
Expenditure per pupil	3,138

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	191,002
Balance carried forward to the next	201,401

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

36. The Nursery offers part-time places to 25 children in each of the morning and afternoon sessions. Children who join the Reception classes are drawn from a variety of pre-school providers, including the school Nursery. They enter Reception either in September or January, depending when their birthday falls. There is a fairly wide range of attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception, but only a small proportion of children starting school are at the early stages of learning English or have special educational needs. The youngest children, however, have less time in full-time Reception than older children, which does affect overall attainment levels by the start of Year 1.
37. The Nursery provision gives children a good start in the development of social skills. However, although teaching is satisfactory in the Nursery it does not have sufficient focus to enable all children to achieve as well as they could in every aspect of their learning. The teachers and non-teaching staff set out a range of activities from which the children choose and the children persevere well in them, but adults do not always take sufficient opportunities to develop children's learning in depth or challenge them to extend their understanding. Planning is not detailed enough to help staff to identify not only what activities pupils will have access to, but what they will be expected to learn from them and how adults will make this happen.
38. Teaching and learning in the Reception class are satisfactory overall and there are a number of examples of small group and sometimes whole class teaching that is good and occasionally very good. The proportion of time in which children work under the direct intervention of an adult is greater in the Reception class than in the Nursery. However, opportunities for the older and more able children to extend their learning and embark on National Curriculum learning objectives, once they have achieved the early learning goals, are too limited.
39. The newly built Reception classrooms are spacious and have good outdoor space. The covered areas provide good opportunities for children to use resources outdoors, even when it is raining. The outdoor areas are increasingly well used to develop children's learning across each area of learning. The children's physical skills are also developed well through using a range of play equipment.
40. There have been some improvements to Foundation Stage provision since the last inspection. Children's behaviour and social development are now much better than they were, as is the accommodation. Weaknesses previously highlighted that related to some lack of challenge are still evident. This means that standards are not as high as they could be in children's communication,

language and literacy and in their mathematical development by the time they join Year 1.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in this area means staff consistently promote good behaviour and help children to develop good attitudes.
- Children work well together on activities that they plan for themselves.

Commentary

41. Teachers work hard to make sure their rooms are attractive and children are made welcome. This ensures that children enjoy coming to school. At the start of the day they settle quickly into the activities set out. They initiate their own learning in a variety of ways, some reading, others writing or doing a task that involves co-operation with one another. A calm and ordered atmosphere is established that supports the children well to become confident about school. Children respond well to staff and to each other. They listen attentively, are keen to learn and behave well. They play well together, make a wide circle of friends and share ideas and equipment well in play. This has a positive impact on their development and sets a good tone for the rest of their time in school. Children develop good levels of independence. Throughout the Foundation Stage there are plenty of opportunities for them to plan and organise their own activities in the classroom and outdoors, which they do very well. Children can wash their hands and change for physical education unaided. They achieve well and, because of the consistent and good routines, most are likely to exceed the standards expected by the time they start in Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area of learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers successfully extend children's vocabulary and promote their speaking and listening skills.
- The focused teaching of reading and writing skills in groups is often good, but this does not happen often enough to challenge all children to do as well as they could.

Commentary

42. By the end of Reception attainment is about average. Most of the older children and the more able will meet the expected levels in speaking and listening and reading and writing. Some of those who are younger and have had less time in school will still be working below the expected level in their writing. Children achieve satisfactorily, but could be challenged to achieve even better if teaching was more demanding and staff took more of a lead in guiding and actively encouraging children to work on reading and writing activities. Children are keen to talk about things that interest them. They use a wide range of vocabulary and most children converse at a good level. A few children are still

developing clear and accurate speech, but teachers have good strategies to promote the development of a wide range of vocabulary, for example by having key words on display to which adults refer. All adults in the class work sensitively to help children use the correct vocabulary and grammar, gently but firmly correcting mistakes, prompting and asking questions to help children develop their skills in language. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers, support staff and helpers try to ensure that children develop good listening skills and in vocabulary work listen carefully to the sounds of words and letters. A range of writing activities on offer encourages children to write to convey meaning. This is especially true in the Nursery class.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop mathematics as part of their work in other areas of learning.
- Although children learn well in focused group work, more able pupils are not challenged fully.

Commentary

43. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing mathematical vocabulary and use practical demonstrations to ensure that children understand key ideas and achieve well. For example, in developing the children's understanding of patterns of numbers, the teacher used a story and children were encouraged to say how many eyes would be found on a given number of birds. The more able show that they have a good understanding of number relationships. In their written work children write numbers correctly and have a developing understanding of shapes and measures. They count accurately and identify missing numbers in a sequence. Children develop their understanding of capacity and shape in practical activities with sand and water and construction toys. Charts and posters on display also help children develop their understanding of number and shape. Most children are expected to meet the early learning goals in mathematical development by the end of the Foundation Stage and their overall achievement is satisfactory. However, pupils are not challenged well enough through more direct teaching of mathematics to ensure children achieve as well as they can.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use is made of the ICT suite to teach skills to the children.
- Good teaching and a wide range of activities extend children's knowledge and awareness of the world and means they achieve well.

Commentary

44. Children have good opportunities to develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They therefore achieve well. The very good number of visits and visitors to school supports this aspect very well. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make good use of the school grounds to help children recognise signs of new growth and ensure that they continue to pursue their interests in the classroom. They use questions carefully and support children's responses through good use of praise and sensitive correction where there are mistakes. Photographic evidence of work done throughout the year shows children learning about the main Christian festivals and celebrating the Chinese New Year. Displays show past work that represents children's growing understanding of the different seasons, with children taking a real interest in the growth of their cress seeds under different growing conditions and the development of the tadpoles. They are encouraged to develop careful observations and develop their skills in a wide variety of activities. A lesson in which teaching and learning were very good was seen in the ICT suite. This showed that children can listen carefully to instructions and they produced very good results using an art program to make a picture of a scene from 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Their control of the mouse, ability to use features and functions and evaluate their work were very good. Children achieve well and are likely at least to reach the expected standards in this area of learning by the time that they join Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in Nursery and Reception have many opportunities to develop their physical skills and fine motor skills.
- Whole class teaching of physical education is good.

Commentary

45. Children's skills are generally good. Children are encouraged to improve these through the good teaching and learning. This was evident in a dance lesson in Reception in which children demonstrated a good sense of rhythm and movement and the ability to work well in pairs. The improvements to the outdoor learning areas mean that children now develop their physical skills well through using large and small apparatus, including a variety of wheeled toys to ride, push and pull. Staff also provide good, regular opportunities for children to learn to control small pieces of equipment, hold pencils, brushes and scissors correctly. Children show good control when threading patterns and their writing shows that most have acquired a recognised way of holding pencils. Children achieve well and are likely at least to reach the expected standards in this area of learning by the time they join Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations of children and good teaching lead to good standards of work and effort.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are good. All adults who work with the children have high expectations of children's achievements in this area. In a lesson seen, the teaching assistant worked hard with the children on an activity that required blending of colours, ensuring that the children were also introduced to a rich vocabulary. All children worked carefully whilst also extending their language skills well. Children respond very well to creative activities and achieve well. Their artwork shows good attention to detail and colour. When adults support such activities, children are encouraged to play well together in role-play situations, for example in the 'Bear's Cave' which is part of the homes project and 'Travelling on the bus' outdoors in the Nursery. Well-organised resources help children learn to choose which role they will play. Children achieve well and are likely to meet the expected standards in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of reading and writing helps pupils to achieve well.
- Good opportunities help pupils to develop and extend their speaking skills.
- The subject leader has been effective in raising standards in English.
- Good links with other subjects mean that pupils have opportunities to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Marking does not always help pupils to know what they have to do to improve.

Commentary

47. Standards in Year 2 are not as high as test results last year, but are above those expected. All pupils achieve well and no differences in achievement were noted for pupils from minority ethnic groups, those for whom English is an additional language or between boys and girls. English has a high profile in school. Pupils therefore enjoy a good range of reading, writing and speaking and listening activities and they use and develop their skills well as part of their work in other subjects. All pupils benefit from daily English lessons, which are long enough to allow teachers to spend time exploring topics in depth and also to give pupils time to practise and finish their work. This helps pupils to develop confidence to attempt reading and writing activities independently.

48. Standards are good across the school because of consistently good teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they plan work that is both

interesting and challenging. Subject content is taught in a logical sequence so pupils are able to build new learning on to what they already know. This makes it easier for them to acquire and use new skills. Activities are well matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities and this motivates them to work hard and to learn well. Because the planning is good, teachers keep the pace of lessons brisk and pupils remain very interested. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because work is well planned for them and they also receive good individual or small group support from the specialist teachers.

49. Pupils' speaking skills are developed very well. Teachers give a good amount of time in lessons for pupils to ask and answer questions and discuss their work with each other. This enables them to learn well. Teachers also plan for pupils to work collaboratively on projects. As a result pupils express themselves clearly in a range of situations, listen to others' contributions with courtesy and respect and ask and answer questions politely and confidently. The subject therefore contributes well to pupils' personal development.
50. The good leadership and management of English have helped to improve teaching and learning. The subject leader is knowledgeable and she supports colleagues well by offering guidance, monitoring planning and observing lessons. She has analysed the information from assessments, identified where pupils did not do so well and introduced strategies to improve standards. As a result, she has led the school in a successful project to improve the quality of pupils' writing.
51. Assessment in lessons is good. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is nearly always a comment confirming what they have learned, rather than also telling them about what they should now be working towards or how they can improve. Pupils are given personal writing targets which are updated regularly, but they are not always reminded to look at these before they start writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Pupils have regular opportunities to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills through work in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' good literacy skills also support their learning across other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' skills in mental calculations are good.
- Pupils achieve well because they are very keen to learn and because teaching is often lively and interesting.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are developed well through their work in other subjects.
- Work in pupils' books and marking do not identify where pupils experience difficulty or need extra help.
- The good leadership and management have enabled work in the subject to continue to develop.

Commentary

53. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests pupils' attainment was well above the national average and that for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 2 classes are not as high as those attained last year, but are above average. By the time they leave the school almost all of the pupils will attain the expected Level 2 and about a third of pupils are set to exceed this. Pupils' skills in mental calculation are good by age seven and pupils are confident and competent at carrying out simple, age-appropriate, problem solving activities.
54. All pupils, irrespective of their ethnic background, starting point or any special educational needs, achieve well over time. Pupils' very good attitudes to their work and the way that all the staff help pupils to feel positive, confident and happy about their learning have a significant impact on pupils' achievements. Children really enjoy lessons and work hard. Many say that mathematics is their favourite subject.
55. Teaching and learning over time, as evidenced from samples of work, are good. Examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection, in lessons in both Year 1 and 2 classes, but in one lesson teaching was unsatisfactory because the lesson lacked pace. General strengths in most of the teaching are teachers' good subject knowledge, good teaching of the basic skills and strategies and the way that mathematics is linked to pupils' real-life experiences. Teachers know their pupils well and their skilled questioning targets pupils of different capabilities and ensures that all are included in lessons and are learning. Pupils are taught good strategies for calculating and solving problems. Teachers explore pupils' thinking well and frequently challenge them to extend their thinking by posing questions such as, '*Why* do you think that?' and '*How* do you know?'.
56. Two areas for further development in teaching are sometimes making better use of teaching assistants during the whole class teaching input and the use of marking and corrections. Although teaching assistants make a good overall contribution to lesson preparation and to pupils' learning, they could on occasions be even more effective if they sat with pupils to provide extra input for them during whole class teaching sessions. Marking is very regular and identifies that the learning objectives have been met. However, it provides little information about how much support pupils needed to complete the tasks or whether pupils had to repeat the task several times to get it right. When pupils have made mistakes, they rub them out and then correct their work. This makes it difficult for those other than the class teachers (parents and subject leaders, for example) to see quickly where the strengths and weaknesses in individual pupils' attainments lie.
57. The good leadership and management of the subject have enabled the good provision found at the time of the last inspection to be built on. Better assessment systems have been established and the school is beginning to use them to track pupils' progress from entry to school to Year 2. The subject

leader supports staff well. She regularly monitors pupils' work and teachers' planning. Some, but not enough, monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons takes place. This hinders continual improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to their work in other subjects. For example, they make good links between mathematics and science, design and technology and history. All teachers are using ICT well to enhance their teaching and pupils' learning. The use of the interactive whiteboard provides many visual clues for pupils and very positively enhances their learning. Pupils' good skills in mathematics support their learning in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well and develop good skills in investigations and scientific enquiry.
- Teachers provide interesting activities that motivate pupils.
- Pupils are very keen to learn and behave very well.
- Strong leadership has resulted in good improvements to the provision.

Commentary

59. Inspection findings show that, although standards in Year 2 are not as high as teacher assessments for last year, they are above national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well.
60. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a good understanding of the curriculum. For example, they sort materials according to their properties and can say why certain materials are best suited to a particular purpose. They know what animals and plants need to live and grow and can classify plants and animals according to specific criteria. Pupils learn about healthy eating and lifestyles. Pupils' investigative skills are good. Pupils in Years 2, for example, show good observation skills. They understand how to carry out a fair test, make sensible predictions about what is likely to happen. They give reasons to support their predictions.
61. Teaching and learning are good overall. The teaching and learning seen in lessons during the inspection period ranged from satisfactory to very good. Inspection evidence indicates that more regular monitoring of teaching would help the school to highlight and share best practice and address any weaknesses.
62. All teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain scientific concepts and ideas clearly and use lots of visual clues, including ICT, to help pupils to learn

well. Both teachers and the support staff are well prepared for lessons and they plan many interesting and practical activities. This enables pupils to develop good skills in observation and in scientific enquiry. Pupils are taught how to collect and record their findings in a variety of ways, including using charts, tally charts and graphs, for example. The main weakness seen in lessons is that teachers sometimes talk for too long and beyond pupils' ability to listen. This is what resulted in potentially very good teaching being judged good and potentiality good teaching being judged satisfactory. The school has developed satisfactory systems to assess pupils' progress throughout Years 1 and 2. This has yet to provide a firm basis for staff to track pupils' progress and set reliable targets.

63. Pupils' attitudes to science are very good. Pupils are keen, interested and work hard in lessons. They work well independently and in groups. They take pride in their finished work, which is neat and well presented.
64. Leadership and management of science are good. This has led to good improvement to provision since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning and pupils' attitudes are better now than they were and the investigative aspect of science has improved very well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well.
- Key skills are taught very well and pupils are provided with a wide and varied range of learning activities.
- Lessons are well organised and planned so that the best possible use can be made of resources in the computer suite.
- Leadership and management of the subject have contributed significantly to the improvements since the last inspection.

Commentary

65. Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2, and for some pupils well above. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is very good. ICT was judged to be good at the time of the last inspection but good improvements since then have ensured that it is now even better. This has resulted in the school receiving an award for its work in ICT and being recognised as a source of expertise for other schools to draw upon.
66. By the time pupils leave the school they have acquired a good range of skills, are keen to use computers and are confident users of ICT. They retrieve work they have saved before with ease. They show good motor skills in controlling the mouse and recognise the different icons in programs on screen, using and experimenting with them very sensibly. They can change the size and colour of different fonts and are already confident at merging pictures and text in a

variety of contexts. Higher attaining pupils know how to access the Internet to research information and how to use a search engine to locate information. A group of gifted and talented pupils were observed using this tool to develop their knowledge of tarantulas very effectively under the guidance of the ICT technician. Pupils are competent at inputting a sequence of commands for a programmable toy and are developing an increasing awareness of how computers are used in the wider world.

67. Teaching and learning in the ICT suite are consistently very good. Teachers provide a very good and varied range of learning activities that cover all aspects of the subject, as well as keeping pupils highly motivated, committed and showing a real desire to find out about new things. Most, if not all, teachers have good or very good subject knowledge and the ICT technician is used very effectively to support teachers in lessons and to deal with any problems that occur without time being wasted. The school has a well-equipped computer suite with sufficient computers for paired use. Teachers introduce key learning points through the projection of programs onto the screen in the suite before pupils move to the computers. Teachers ensure that children understand these and can apply them in meaningful and relevant tasks. During the past few years interactive whiteboards have been installed in the classrooms and they are used well to assist teaching and to bring another dimension to pupils' learning. There is, however, little evidence of pupils using computers in class throughout the day to support their learning in lessons across the curriculum.
68. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Two very keen and very competent teachers of ICT share responsibility for leading and managing the subject. They are eager to see that work in ICT continues to develop and to have an even greater impact on pupils' learning. They work closely with the ICT technician who supports all teachers and this has a very positive impact on raising standards. Together they all have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and are aware of the need to continue to develop the confidence and competence of all staff. They do this by modelling teaching, sharing ideas and supporting with appropriate resources for teachers to use in their lessons. They are developing an annotated portfolio of work that gives good guidance to teachers about what pupils need to do to attain at different levels across varying elements of the subject. Assessment procedures are good, with teaching assistants focusing on particular skills with certain children during lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. The examples seen in the portfolio of work show that children use ICT well to support their work in most other subjects, producing work of high quality throughout but especially in science, art and literacy where the attention to detail is very good.

HUMANITIES

Religious education and history were reported on in full and geography was sampled.

Geography

70. No lessons were taught during the inspection so secure judgements on the overall provision, pupils' achievement or on the quality of teaching and learning cannot be made. The subject manager's file, teachers' plans, pupils' work, photographs and displays indicate that the curriculum is now satisfactory and is therefore better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Displays of work show there is a good focus on environmental issues. The school is involved in several initiatives designed to improve the local environment and has received recognition for this by receiving the ECO schools award.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of enthusiastic and imaginative teaching.
- Good links are made with literacy.
- The school participates very well in Black History month.
- There is sometimes too much reliance on worksheets.

Commentary

71. The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well as a result. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to interpret the curriculum in an enthusiastic and imaginative way so that pupils enjoy finding out about the past. Pupils in Year 2, for example, thoroughly enjoyed their 'visit' to the Great Exhibition, while pupils in Year 1 were very effectively engrossed in identifying which toys children would have played with in Victorian times.
72. Teachers make some good links with literacy by emphasising pupils' speaking and listening skills. They provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their research skills, by finding information from a range of sources about people and events of the past. There is not enough opportunity for pupils to develop their own recording skills as part of their work in history as there is too heavy a reliance on worksheets. Furthermore the worksheets do not always match pupils' needs and abilities well so that some find them too hard while others find them too easy.
73. The history curriculum is used well to acknowledge the important role and contributions made by black and ethnic minority peoples from around the world. This has a positive influence on pupils' understanding and appreciation of diversity as well as their learning. The school participates in Black History month and has won the local education authority competition four times. The leadership and management of history are satisfactory. There is currently no subject leader, which limits sustained development.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show a good level of respect for others' beliefs, based on their understanding of several world religions in addition to their own.
- Teachers link work in religious education with other subjects well, including pupils' personal, social and health education.

Commentary

74. Standards across Years 1 and 2 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and statutory requirements are met. All groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily.
75. The good teaching effectively supports pupils' positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils are developing a healthy respect for the beliefs, traditions and lifestyles of people who follow faiths other than Christianity. Planning is good in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. Analysis of pupils' work and teachers' plans shows, for example, that pupils in different classes within the same year group have similar learning experiences and make equal progress.
76. Good links are made between religious education and other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 studied stories from the New Testament which included work on how to be a good friend. This supported work in personal, social, health and citizenship education. Several examples of work on display showed good links to art, English and music. These enrich pupils' experiences and help to develop their spiritual and cultural knowledge and understanding.
77. Leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. The subject leader satisfactorily reviews and updates the policy documents and ensures staff are kept informed about any changes to the locally agreed syllabus. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education was inspected in full. Art and design was sampled. Design and technology and music were not inspected, but inspectors met with the subject leaders. No lessons were seen in art and design so it is not possible to make a judgement about overall provision.

Art and design

78. Work seen around the school shows that all pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills and techniques in a variety of activities in art and design. In Years 1 and 2 the good skills developed in Reception are built on progressively and successfully. This was seen, for example, in the weaving with paper that pupils do in Year 1, which is then developed more fully in Year 2 when fabrics are introduced and pupils produce work of a high standard. Around the school there is plenty of evidence of pupils having many opportunities to produce artwork linked to other subjects, including that linked to stories and books they have shared. Information and communication technology is used to develop pupils' experiences well through considered use of design programs. These show that pupils develop good skills in creating pictures and the stained glass windows created by pupils in Year 1 show good care and attention to detail. Children have good opportunities to develop their skills in observational drawings, to learn from artists and to find out about art from other cultures. The available evidence indicates that the standards are in line with national expectations and that the subject is well led and managed.

Design and technology

79. Design and technology were not inspected. Discussion with the coordinator shows that the subject is regularly taught and the curriculum has been developed to take account of national guidance and to ensure it is well linked to work in other subjects.

Music

80. Pupils' singing in assembly was good. The gospel choir singing was very good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provides good support to colleagues. During the current year he has introduced a scheme of work for music which was specifically chosen to support non-specialist teachers. The music provision is enhanced by peripatetic teachers who provide tuition in piano, recorders and guitar and by visiting musicians who come to school to play for pupils.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Pupils achieve very well.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are high.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are very good and are sometimes outstanding.

Commentary

81. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well in physical education and attain standards that are above and sometimes well above those expected. In all classes there are some very able and talented pupils whose attainments are very good. In one gymnastics lesson seen in Year 2, standards were very high: pupils showed excellent poise and control, both when working on the apparatus and in their floor work. The key factors that contribute to pupils' good standards and their achievements are the very strong leadership of work in physical education, pupils' and teachers' enthusiasm and the fact that all pupils have three lessons each week.
82. A good scheme of work supports all teachers to teach effectively and in the very best lessons teachers confidently adapt and build on the scheme of work. Lessons have a good structure, with good attention to vigorous exercise at the start and to cooling down activities at the end. Teachers usually join in well and model good practice. Teachers' own enthusiasm is inspiring and they often appear to enjoy the lessons as much as the pupils do. A few pupils at the school have special educational needs that result in them needing extra support in physical education lessons. These pupils are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants, which ensures they are fully included. In the very good and occasionally excellent lessons, teachers make very good use of opportunities to assess and evaluate pupils' work regularly. They quickly share it with others, which help all pupils to learn by example and endeavour to perform even better.

83. Pupils behave very well in lessons and their attitudes are very good. In all of the lessons seen, pupils were keen and interested and clearly thoroughly enjoyed their learning. They listened well to their teachers' instructions and understood the importance of working safely. Although space in the hall is limited, pupils make very good use of it and are careful to avoid bumping into and hurting one another. They work very well independently and with partners when required to.
84. Teaching and learning in lessons are good overall, and are often better. In a very good dance lesson in Year 1 the teacher used a high quality taped programme well, frequently stopping it to model the correct postures, actions and movements as well as to highlight pupils' good work. In one lesson taught by the subject leader, teaching and learning were outstanding. From the start pupils performed to a high level. The teacher nevertheless constantly challenged pupils to work hard and to improve further by demonstrating and highlighting good practice and skills. When pupils waited to take their turn on the apparatus, no time was lost, as they practised their movements, stretches and balances on the floor.
85. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject leader supports staff very well, sets high expectations for everyone and ensures that physical education is taught frequently and maintains a high profile in the school. Her own teaching serves as a model of good practice. The good provision at the last inspection has been strengthened.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**. Pupils achieve very well in this area. The school works very well to promote pupils' personal, social and health and citizenship, both informally and through its curriculum and its teaching in a number of subjects. Pupils have many opportunities to benefit from meeting and working with members of the community. They also contribute very well to the local community, for example through fundraising, by supporting local charities and as part of their work on recycling projects which has included addressing problems of litter within their neighbourhood. As part of their day-to-day activities, teaching and assemblies, pupils have opportunities to explore their feelings. They also learn how to relate well to one another, deal with conflicts and to value and celebrate their own and others' achievements.
87. The school places considerable emphasis on promoting pupils' social development, self-esteem and confidence and this is implicit in everything that the school does. Pupils are consistently encouraged to respect one another, to work well together and to take on responsibilities commensurate with their age. As part of their work in subjects such as physical education and science pupils learn about healthy living and the importance of safety, rest, exercise and healthy eating. They learn in simple terms about growth and reproduction and that certain substances can be harmful. Specific lessons are also taught regularly, largely based on a commercially produced scheme of work. This explores relevant topics and issues. There is insufficient evidence to judge the overall quality of this teaching, as only one lesson was seen.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	4
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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