

INSPECTION REPORT

THE CLARA GRANT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bow, London

LEA area: Tower Hamlets

Unique reference number: 100901

Headteacher: Susan Ward

Lead inspector: John D Eadie

Dates of inspection: 25th - 28th April 2005

Inspection number: 268047

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	464
School address:	Knapp Road Bow London
Postcode:	E3 4BU
Telephone number:	(020) 7987 4564
Fax number:	(020) 7536 3890
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mark Taylorson
Dates of previous inspection:	4 th - 7 th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Clara Grant Primary School is in Bow, a multi-ethnic area of Inner London. Nearly 90 per cent of the pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups, with over 70 per cent being Bangladeshi. The vast majority of these pupils of other ethnicity speak languages other than English as their home language, more than two-thirds of the pupils attracting extra funding to help the school to teach them English. There is significant deprivation in the school's catchment area, as indicated by the high proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below average, though the proportion of those with statements of their special needs is average. Most of these have speech and communication problems, with a significant minority having moderate learning difficulties and a few with a range of other problems. Attainment on entry over the years has been consistently low, with the school being in the bottom quarter of all primary schools in the Local Education Authority, which itself has well below average statistics in this area. The school won School Achievement awards in three successive years from 2001 to 2003 for performance in the national tests when compared with schools in similar environments. The school also won a Basic Skills Quality award and a school nutrition award in 2004. The mobility of pupils is generally rather above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20191	Mr J D Eadie	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship Music
14404	Mr A Rolfe	Lay inspector	
5565	Ms B Thakur	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Mathematics Design and technology
28686	Mrs E Walker	Team inspector	English Art and design Religious education
15015	Mr M Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education
1 - 4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10 - 15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15 - 16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17 - 30
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Clara Grant Primary School is a **very good school**. Much of the reason for this is the very strong leadership of the headteacher. She has created a team spirit in the school which is very much focused on the needs of all the pupils. Teaching is very good and the pupils therefore achieve very well, this despite the many changes in staff and pupils in recent years. The school has a high level of commitment to inclusion and is very popular with the local community, with very many more applications than there are places available. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- pupils are achieving very well through the school because of the very good quality of teaching and learning;
- the headteacher leads the school very well and she is supported well by all the staff, who work very hard to provide the best for all the pupils;
- the school's high commitment to inclusion leads to exemplary racial harmony, which is based on excellent relationships at all levels and also results in the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to their work and their school;
- the school makes every effort to provide a wide range of opportunities to enable pupils to enrich and enhance their lives;
- the quality of pupils' spoken English is not as good as their listening, reading or writing;
- some school procedures are not applied consistently, particularly those for planning and marking; and
- the roles of the subject co-ordinators are not equally shared and are not sufficiently well developed.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1999. All the issues from that inspection have been effectively addressed. For example, there are now clear plans to ensure that pupils' personal development and their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are developed effectively. Although standards in the national tests have not risen significantly, pupils' achievement has much improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 are achieving very well through the school. The Year 6 test results in 2004 were much better than other schools in similar contexts. Children enter the school with low levels of skills and achieve very well so that by the end of Reception they reach the expected levels in all areas of learning, except in their personal development, where standards are above expectations, and in creative development, where they are below. Pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are affected by the considerable number of pupils who either join or leave the school other than at the usual times. Standards in religious education and ICT are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.

The pupils' personal qualities are developed very well and this is a high priority for the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils are given every opportunity to learn how to live in and contribute to the multicultural society in which they are growing up. They are enthusiastic about their school and they work and behave very well. Attendance is significantly above the national average and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education. This is largely because of the **very good learning and teaching.** Teachers are particularly good at encouraging the pupils, which leads to their enthusiasm and keenness to work.

The curriculum is satisfactory, though it is enriched very well by a range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. All these contribute very well towards the pupils' growing sense of citizenship and their achievement. The pupils are very well cared for and this is based on the excellent relationships that exist at all levels. These relationships are based very firmly on the inclusive nature of the school, where each individual, pupil or member of staff, is valued for what they can contribute. Partnerships with parents are very effective. Links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and she is supported effectively by others with leadership responsibilities. The high commitment to inclusion is reflected in the very hard work of the deputy, who is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the policy. Management is efficient; evaluation is particularly strong, which is reflected in the areas for improvement in this report having already been identified by the school. The governance of the school is good and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about their school. Parents are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching and the high expectations that teachers have of their children. Pupils also enjoy their lessons and regard the other pupils as being friendly. The inspectors agree with all these views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

This is a very successful school and the following should be read with this in mind. These features have all been identified as areas for development by the school.

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

- to develop pupils' spoken English;
- to improve the consistency of planning and marking so that these meet the needs of all pupils; and
- to share subject co-ordinators' responsibilities evenly and develop their roles.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils are achieving very well throughout the school. By the time they leave they are reaching average standards compared with the low starting point when they start school. The school's high level of commitment to inclusion ensures that all groups of pupils achieve equally well. The school has conducted a careful analysis of statistics to show that pupils from all ethnic groups and those with special educational needs are progressing as well as each other. All this shows good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving very well through the school.
- Standards in the national tests in Year 2 in 2004 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics compared to schools in similar situations.
- Standards in the Year 6 national tests in 2004 were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science compared to schools in similar situations.
- Children make a very good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development.

Commentary

1. Standards in the 2004 tests at the end of Year 2 were below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were well above average in all three subject areas. These results are very commendable as children have low levels of skill and knowledge when they start school. Although the trend in the school's results is below the national trend over the years, this is largely because of very good results in 2001 from that particular group of pupils. A further factor has been the lack of the higher Level 3s gained in the tests. This is explained by the high proportion of pupils for whom English is not their home language. These pupils have difficulties understanding the questions in tests, although their progress in learning English is very good. The standards at this age have also been adversely affected by a number of changes in staffing, resulting in inconsistencies in provision.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.1 (14.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.5 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. At the end of Year 6, in the tests in 2004, standards were below the national average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Standards were well above average in mathematics and above average in English and science when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. When compared with schools whose pupils performed similarly in the tests in Year 2 four years previously, standards were below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. However, these grades do not provide an accurate picture as a significant number of pupils left and were replaced by others during these four years, many of whom came directly from abroad not speaking English. The results for those pupils who were in the school from the tests in Year 2 in 2000 to the tests in Year 6 in 2004, show that these pupils generally did better than expected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (27.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.5 (26.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.4 (28.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Children start school in the Nursery with low levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. They make a very good start to their education and achieve very well to reach average standards by the end of Reception in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They reach above average standards in their personal, social and emotional development, reflecting the very high priority rightly placed on this area of development by the school. Their creative development is below average by the end of Reception. This is not because they lack the opportunities to experiment with colour and texture or to try different sounds in music. Rather, it is because they lack the imaginative language to respond to these opportunities.
4. Very good achievement continues in Years 1 and 2 and average standards are maintained in reading, writing and mathematics. This is very commendable considering the mobility of pupils and the difficulties they have with mastering the English language. Standards in ICT and religious knowledge are average at the end of Year 2.
5. At the end of Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. This represents considerable progress since this time last year, particularly in science. The progress in science has been due to the school concentrating on a more experimental approach to the subject. Very good achievement continues through Years 3 to 6 across the range of subjects. Standards are average in ICT and religious education at the end of Year 6.
6. The school places a particularly high priority on inclusion. The result is that the individual needs of those pupils for whom English is not their home language and those with special educational needs are met very well. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) have limited speaking and listening skills when they join the school. Those who receive targeted support achieve very well, particularly in reading, writing, spelling and in their awareness of sounds. However, often their comprehension is not as good as their confidence and fluency in reading. This is generally because questions are not asked sufficiently frequently to check pupils' understanding, often assuming that pupils have understood everything they have read. From a low baseline on entry to the school, pupils with EAL make very good progress.
7. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress in relation to targets in their individual education plans, and achieve as well as other pupils. Those with statements of special educational needs make equally good progress. The school's good systems of support enable these pupils to achieve very well. This is one of the reasons why the number of pupils at the initial stages of SEN is lower than in other schools. Children in the Nursery and Reception make particularly good progress as individual needs are identified very early, and appropriate support structures are put in place to meet their needs. The school's records show that some pupils have come off the SEN register as a result of the level of progress they have made.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with others are very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour make a positive contribution to their learning.
- Pupils enjoy school; there are excellent relationships in the school community.
- The school's very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning makes a strong contribution to their personal development.
- Racial harmony in the school is excellent.
- Attendance is very good, and significantly above the national average.

Commentary

8. Pupils' very good attitudes to work make them eager to learn and the excellent relationships in the school mean that they do so in a warm and supportive environment. From their start in the Nursery and Reception classes, the great majority of children make very good progress in their personal and social development. They quickly adopt the well-established routines of the school and become independent in their day-to-day activities, such as finding the equipment they need to complete a task. Teachers and other staff throughout the school are very good examples for pupils. Discussions with pupils in all year groups indicate that they have very positive attitudes to learning. Almost all pupils say they enjoy coming to school, and identify favourite subjects. A significant number of pupils participate in the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers' instructions, maintain concentration and make a positive contribution to classroom discussions. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were keen to learn and showed obvious enjoyment in the work they were doing; there was a "buzz" of excited chatter when they found the correct answers, and therefore they made very good progress.
9. Behaviour is very good. In the majority of lessons seen, behaviour was very good and on occasions excellent. As a result of pupils' very good behaviour, the atmosphere in classrooms is pleasant, relaxed and friendly. This has a significant and positive effect on pupils' learning and rate of progress. Most pupils are fully aware of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. They have a good understanding of the school rules and readily accept the principle of sanctions as an appropriate response to the few instances of poor behaviour. Racial harmony is excellent; pupils from all ethnic groups are very well integrated into the life of the school. Before and after school, at breaks and lunchtime, pupils socialise and interact very well together. Pupils treat the school's accommodation and equipment with care and respect.
10. Bullying is rare. The school has good anti-bullying procedures that make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Parents and pupils have indicated that these procedures are effective. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, as are relationships between pupils. These very positive relationships promote pupils' social development and make a good contribution to their learning. In the last academic year, one boy was subject to a fixed-term exclusion; there were no permanent exclusions. Inspection of exclusion records indicates that the use of exclusion was appropriate in the circumstances.

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	41	0	0
White – any other White background	11	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	18	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	333	1	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	22	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	10	0	0
Any other ethnic group	9	0	0

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

11. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development; this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when pupils were found to have insufficient opportunities to develop their sense of independence and responsibility.
12. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Regular assemblies include time for prayer and thoughtful reflection. Through the school's personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), particularly in 'circle time', pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings and emotions and their relationships with friends and family. Spiritual links are also found in subjects such as religious education, science and music. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils become increasingly aware of the need for rules and codes of conduct. For example, in a Year 4 religious education lesson based on the Ten Commandments, pupils entered enthusiastically into discussions about the reasons for rules and why they should be obeyed. The pupils recognise that the school rules are there for the benefit of all, appreciate that they are responsible for their own actions and have a very good grasp of the impact of their actions on others. Relationships between staff and pupils and the pupils themselves are excellent. Staff provide very good role models and by openly valuing pupils' opinions and ideas effectively promote their self-esteem. Pupils are taught to share, help one another and show consideration for others. They work well together in pairs and small groups. Pupils' social development is enhanced by an extensive range of educational visits, visitors to the school and the extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Pupils are given very good opportunities to take responsibilities, for example, through the school council, playground friends scheme and acting as classroom monitors.
13. In religious education, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism are studied along with Christianity, effectively promoting the pupils' cultural development through a greater awareness of the beliefs and traditions of other major world faiths. Staff provide appropriate images in displays and in their choice of books and stories, which help pupils understand the multicultural nature of the society in which they live. Well-planned trips to museums, theatres and places of worship help to broaden pupils' cultural awareness.
14. Attendance is very good, above the national average, and punctuality is good. The school has excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Senior staff work closely with the education welfare officer. They jointly monitor pupils' attendance weekly, have a good

knowledge of the reasons for pupils' absences, and make contact with parents should there be any concerns about their children's attendance. Parents are provided with good quality support and guidance to help them to ensure their children's regular attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.5
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 very good quality of education. Teaching is very good and the pupils are learning very well. The curriculum is satisfactory, with some imbalance between subjects, although the school is aware of this and is planning to redesign. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of visits, visitors and well-attended extra-curricular activities. The pupils are particularly well cared for. There are very good links with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Pupils are learning very well because the quality of teaching is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Assessment procedures are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High levels of encouragement by teachers ensure that pupils' application and productivity is excellent.
- The pupils are acquiring skills and knowledge very well because of the very good levels of challenge and high expectations set by the teachers.
- The teachers' emphasis on equality of opportunity gives all pupils confidence and leads to very good levels of independence and collaborative working.
- Very thorough records are kept of pupils' progress in the long term. However, records kept in the shorter term are not as thorough.
- Teachers' planning is inconsistent.

Commentary

15. As can be seen in the table below, there was a very good proportion of lessons observed in which the teaching was very good and two in which it was excellent. It is unusual to find a school in which around six lessons in seven are well taught or better. The direct impact of this very good teaching is the pupils' very good learning and their very good achievement. The excellent lessons seen were typified by a very brisk pace to learning, which resulted from enthusiastic teaching with a wide variety of strategies used which fully engaged all the pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 54 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (4%)	18 (33%)	26 (48%)	8 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. The outstanding feature of the teaching throughout the school is the teachers' excellent use of encouragement to involve, challenge and engage the pupils. The end result of this encouragement is that the pupils' self-esteem and confidence is built exceptionally well. They

are therefore very keen to work and apply themselves very well, and levels of productivity are high. There is an excited buzz of activity in most lessons as pupils set to the task with a will. This buzz is enhanced by the very good use of 'talk partners' in lessons throughout the school to discuss responses. The short time allowed for these discussions adds to the pace of lessons. An excellent example of how these sessions can enhance speaking and listening skills as well as learning was seen in a Year 1 class. In this class, the teacher, instead of asking a child for the result of their discussions, asked "What did your partner think?"

17. The teachers set very good levels of challenge in lessons. Occasionally, this goes too far and the work is too difficult for some pupils. However, even in these lessons, the pupils persevere and keep trying, and most succeed in the end. These levels of challenge ensure that pupils are acquiring skills and knowledge very well. Teachers also set very high standards for behaviour in their lessons. This ensures a very calm and orderly environment in which the pupils find it easy to learn.
18. A further strength of teaching, and indeed a recurrent theme in all aspects of the school, is the equality of opportunity emphasised. In lessons, there is no difference at all in the way pupils of different ethnic groups, genders or abilities are treated. Teachers and support staff ensure that the contributions of all are equally valued and that all have access to the lessons. Part of the success of this is down to the experienced and well-trained support staff. They are almost always given clear direction about the pupils they are to be responsible for and what their tasks are to be. However, there are occasions when these support staff and other adults are not so well directed and sit listening, with the children, for too long.
19. Although most lessons are planned well, giving clear indication of what is to be learnt in the lesson, there are some inconsistencies. These are usually down to lack of detail about different learning objectives for different groups or pupils with individual education plans. In these lessons, although the teachers are well aware of the needs of all individuals in their classes, the progress of some pupils is not as good as it might be. There are also lesson plans in which other adults and their roles and tasks are not identified clearly. This gives rise to the shortcomings in the use of these adults.
20. Very thorough records are kept of the pupils' progress in the long term. These records are analysed carefully to identify pupils for whom there might be a concern. They are also evaluated very well to check on the equal achievement of different groups of pupils. Records kept in the shorter term are not as thorough. Although the teachers know their pupils and their capabilities very well, this lack of detail prevents them always knowing exactly what it is that all pupils need to learn next. It also means that pupils are not as aware as they could be of what they need to do to improve.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. A variety of approaches is used to ensure very good learning of pupils. The established systems of support work successfully. There is good improvement since the last inspection in enabling pupils to develop independent learning skills. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. There are high expectations of what pupils can do, and teachers give them appropriate levels of challenge to show this. Teachers provide good models of the spoken language, which helps them to understand the structure of the English language. Bilingual staff and parents are used to good effect in helping pupils to take part in activities and gain a better understanding. The school has identified the need to have a common format for assessing and recording the individual progress of these pupils. At present, two different scales are being used to measure pupils' progress. Changing from one scale to another causes some difficulties and confusion. Some time is occasionally wasted in finding out the levels pupils are working at in the different aspects of their language development, to know where teachers should focus next.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory, though it is enhanced very well with a very good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is satisfactory and there is a good supply of resources of good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very good range of opportunities to widen the pupils' horizons.
- Medium-term planning is clear and concise.
- There is good use of the resources in all areas of the curriculum, except ICT.
- Some literacy and numeracy lessons are too long; this impacts on other areas of the curriculum.
- Support staff are used very well to enhance all pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs and those who are at the early stages of acquiring spoken English.
- ICT is not used sufficiently to enhance and develop pupils' learning.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is planned well so that all pupils benefit from an innovative and effective programme to promote their literacy and phonic skills. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching assistants are an integral part of the team and respond quickly to helping and supporting pupils. Bilingual teachers lend good support to pupils who are at the early stages of acquiring English as an additional language. The school has introduced a number of initiatives to promote language skills. As a result, a number of very good practices have emerged. These ensure that pupils with special educational needs benefit from learning in small groups and continually use the skills they have learnt in all areas of the curriculum.
23. Teachers plan the curriculum together and decide how to manage and use the limited time which remains after literacy and numeracy lessons. This restricts opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding fully in some areas of learning. Curriculum planning, based on national guidance, is clear and concise. Short-term planning does not always reflect the next steps pupils may need to consolidate or reinforce their learning.
24. The use of ICT as support to the curriculum is not embedded. Research and data handling opportunities are limited. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use ICT resources as a learning tool. Religious education is taught according to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The planning includes a number of visits to different places of worship and this enriches pupils' experience and understanding very well.
25. Partnerships with local secondary schools are very good; the school engages in joint projects and shares expertise with the secondary school and other local schools. Older pupils learn to swim at various local pools, often walking there. There is a high awareness by the pupils of the need to be healthy. They avail themselves of the good opportunities to exercise and play in an interesting play area and eat appropriately in order to be healthy. A very good range of activities is provided during lunchtime or the end of the school day so that pupils can take part in music and arts festivals or pursue areas in which they have an interest. All pupils have the opportunity to visit a residential centre during their time in school and this valuable opportunity enhances their learning as well as their social development.
26. The very good use of a music specialist and the use of artists in residence enable the school to engage in a range of interesting and creative projects. Clear links are made between different areas of the curriculum. Careful thought is given to making links between the subjects so pupils can make use of their literacy and numeracy skills. There is a good range of resources in all subjects; they are used very effectively and stimulate pupils' interest in learning, except in ICT. Accommodation is satisfactory but does constrain the quality of display and organisation in some of the smaller classrooms.

Care, guidance and support

This is a very caring school, which provides a safe and secure environment where pupils feel happy and can learn and develop. Procedures for pupils' support and guidance are very good. The school actively seeks and values pupils' views of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for health and safety is very good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive and help to provide a very good standard of pastoral care and academic support.
- The school actively seeks pupils' views.
- There are very good procedures for the induction of children into the school.

Commentary

27. The school is committed to providing a very safe working environment for staff and pupils. The health and safety policy meets statutory requirements and is well implemented by the headteacher. Procedures for general risk assessments and fire risk assessment are in place and inspections are carried out regularly. Risk assessments for educational visits, including residential trips, are well established. First aid provision is good, the school provides well for individual pupils' medical needs and good records of accidents and injuries are maintained.
28. Overall, arrangements for child protection are good. The school follows the local child protection procedures and has its own specific policy. The headteacher is the designated officer and has received appropriate training. Some staff have received formal child protection training and all have received informal training at staff meetings.
29. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, contributing positively to the high standard of individual care, support and guidance, which ensures pupils feel happy, confident and secure. Staff and pupils know each other very well and they interact very well both inside and outside the classroom. Pastoral support for pupils is excellent; pupils feel confident to approach their teachers should they have any problems, in the knowledge that appropriate support and guidance will be forthcoming. Pupils are well supported academically, which contributes to their achievement. There is an extremely caring ethos in the school and pupils from all backgrounds are made to feel welcome. Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge of the individual needs of pupils, and work co-operatively to cater for these needs. Pupils' linguistic and learning needs are assessed as soon as they join the school, and achievements are recorded systematically. There are individual education plans, with clear targets for improvement in reading, writing, speaking and listening, both for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs. Progress on meeting the targets is reviewed regularly and this helps to ensure that pupils reach their maximum potential. The school provides very good care and support for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs, which has a positive impact on their learning.
30. The school has very good procedures for the induction of children into the school. Parents are given a wide range of information and guidance about these procedures and how they can help to prepare their children for school life. Parents and children have opportunities to visit the school and meet with their teachers prior to admission, including using the school toy library. The school has established very effective procedures for the induction of pupils who enter school at various points in the academic year. These procedures enable children to settle quickly into the school environment.
31. The school actively seeks pupils' views mainly through the school council, circle time and pupils' questionnaires. The school values pupils' views highly and, where practicable, takes them into consideration when reviewing policies and procedures. Discussions with members of the school council indicate that they are enthusiastic and take their responsibilities seriously. They consider that their views are important and are acted upon. This ensures not

only that pupils feel valued and fully part of the school, but also contributes to their understanding of citizenship and the part they play in a community.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed a very good partnership with parents, who have very positive views of the school and its provision. The school has developed good links with the wider community. Good links with other schools make a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' views of the school are very positive.
- The quality of information provided for parents is very good.
- Parental involvement in their children's learning is good.
- The involvement of the parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school's good links with the wider community enhance pupils' learning.
- There are good links with other schools.

Commentary

32. The parents think highly of the school. In particular, they are pleased with the quality of teaching, the expectation that their children will work hard and the way in which the school is helping children to become more responsible and mature. They are also pleased with the progress their children make, the way in which the school is led and managed and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school.
33. The quality of information given to parents is very good. The school brochure and the annual governors' report provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities and meet statutory requirements. Regular newsletters and letters about specific events, including information about what their children are studying, ensure that parents are kept up to date about current school activities. Parents are invited to two parents' meetings each year to discuss their children's progress. Attendance at these meetings is very good. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality; they give clear guidance on pupils' attainment and progress, but they do not always identify areas for further development. The school actively seeks the views of parents, primarily using questionnaires. Parents' responses are analysed and the findings are used when new or revised school policies and procedures are considered. For example, the school recently sought parents' comments on the school's proposed sex and relationships policy and, as a result of the concerns raised by some parents, arranged a meeting at which those concerns were discussed.
34. Parental involvement in children's learning is variable, but good overall. Parents were active in setting up the school's toy library and assist in its running. Most parents support their children's learning at home, and a significant number accompany pupils on educational visits. However, despite the school's endeavours, few parents help in school and there is no parents association. There are very good arrangements to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in the development and review of their children's individual educational plans, and many attend.
35. The school's links with the community are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. There is a very good range of visitors to the school, including artists, musicians and theatre companies, who enhance pupils' learning in drama, art and design, music and citizenship. The school makes good use of the local community; visits to local museums and art galleries support pupils' learning in art, geography and science; local field trips support pupils' learning in history, science and geography; whilst links with local sports clubs provide cricket and football coaching in physical education. The school's close association with the local parish Church and visits to a Synagogue, Mosque and Gurdwara support pupils' spiritual and cultural development very well. Links with local business and commerce supports pupils

in English and their personal development. For example, Year 6 pupils work with the Newspaper Education Trust to produce their own newspapers.

36. The school's links with other educational establishments are good. Strong links have been established with the local secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer. The school has developed good transitional arrangements, including effective liaison between staff, the use of Local Education Authority bridging units in English and mathematics that ensure continuity of learning, and the transfer of information relating to pupils' academic and social skills. Pupils have a full day's induction at the secondary school, when they meet their form tutor and experience a range of lessons. All of which helps ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to the next phase of their education.
37. There are good links with other primary schools, with interchange of teaching staff, joint subject co-ordinators' meetings and shared use of sports facilities. Links with a local special school have enabled joint discussions to take place on procedures to deal with disruptive pupils. Strong links with local colleges and universities enable work experience and teacher training placements to be a regular feature in the school. All these activities have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is ably supported by those with leadership roles within the school. Management is effective at all levels and the governance of the school is good. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is excellent provision for race equality and inclusion.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership.
- Most curriculum areas are led well, although there is an unequal sharing of these responsibilities and the school also recognises the need to develop the role of co-ordinators.
- Management is effective in ensuring the smooth running of the school and in planning developments.
- Governance of the school is good.

Commentary

38. The headteacher leads the school very well. She inspires and enthuses her staff and has a considerable sense of purpose and vision. The excellent provision for inclusion is embedded in all that the school does and the success of this is in no small measure due to the leadership of the headteacher. In this, she is very ably supported by her deputy, who very successfully carries out his role of monitoring and implementation of the policy for inclusion. This high priority ensures excellent race relations amongst the very varied community of the school, both staff and pupils. Parents speak very highly of the efforts that the school makes to ensure that all live in harmony and that any incidents are dealt with promptly and sensitively. The headteacher is ably supported by all who have leadership roles within the school, although, due to staffing changes, the work of the senior management team is only just getting under way again. There is very much a shared sense of purpose about all staff in the school and the teamwork is a significant factor in the school's success.
39. Subject co-ordinators lead their subjects well. However, one of the senior management team has a heavy workload of responsibilities. All co-ordinators have produced clear plans for development in their subjects and these form the basis for curriculum development in the school development plan. There are some inconsistencies in the way that co-ordinators have responsibility for managing their subjects and the school recognises the need to develop their roles.

40. There is a whole-school approach to helping pupils with EAL to overcome potential barriers to their language development and learning, which is highly successful. There is constant effort, and a shared commitment to high achievement through challenging work and support. Leadership and management of the provision are very good. There is an action plan for improvement and a clear vision of the priorities for the school. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good and the co-ordinator provides a good role model for others. The school is cautious about differentiating the language and the learning needs of pupils. Where there is an overlap, there is no assumption made that children's learning difficulties are resulting from not knowing English. There is a sensitive assessment of the children's needs through using bilingual specialists, who are able to communicate with children in their first language. Effective use is made of the specific funds that are obtained.
41. The school development plan is a detailed document and is a clear aid to moving the school forward. It contains elements of all the areas for development noted in the inspection and self-evaluation is very good. Professional development is closely linked to areas noted in the plan and staff are given opportunities to receive training not only targeted at items in the plan but also for their own personal development. Monitoring of performance data is thorough and a great deal of information is gathered. This is used well to determine trends, to identify pupils who might have individual needs and to ensure that all groups are achieving equally. Management of finances is vigilant. Although the school has a much higher than usual carry forward figure, this is because monies are having to be retained for specific purposes. The school operates a balanced financial situation when budgeting.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,785,438	Balance from previous year	214,809
Total expenditure	1,783,782	Balance carried forward to the next year	216,465
Expenditure per pupil	3,939		

42. Governance of the school is good and all statutory requirements are met. The governing body has adopted and monitors a very effective race relations policy. The school is fortunate to have the services of an experienced clerk to the governors who is able to offer very good levels of support and advice. Although many of the governors are new to their roles, they have a good awareness of their responsibilities and, particularly, of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They are a valuable support for the school, whilst challenging when appropriate.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Foundation Stage provision has improved out of all recognition since the previous inspection. The changes that the school has made have been particularly effective in creating a well-defined ethos of learning through structured play. Staff share their ideas in planning and all activities are very well suited to the needs and interests of the age range in the classes. The curriculum is particularly well balanced over the six areas of learning. The heavy dominance on literacy based on Year 1 schemes is a thing of the past. The initial collection of information about the Nursery children's attainment is now carried out less formally than in 1999. The formal recording of attainment at the end of Reception is more precise and is in the form of the national profile. The school is now working to ensure that the two sets of records are directly comparable, so that there is a quick reference format for judging the value added by teaching over the two years.

The children's skills are low in all areas of learning on entry to the Nursery. The children make very good progress overall. By the time they leave the Nursery, most children are at the expected level for their age. In personal and social development, they are ahead of the level, and in creative development, they are below the level. Progress continues at a very good rate and by the end of Reception, children are well in line with the expected early learning goals, again ahead of this level in social and below in creative development. This is very good achievement. The Foundation Stage provides an excellent preparation for the children's next stage of learning.

The quality of teaching is very good in all areas of learning. A strong feature is the way the teachers and their support assistants plan and work together to create a distinct feeling of a Foundation Stage unit. The teachers use their assessments well to group children according to their attainment, enabling tasks to be tailored to individual needs. The children who have English as an additional language are very well catered for. The children who have special educational needs receive intensive individual support. Resources have been significantly upgraded since 1999, and children view their environment with wonder. The very good outdoor play facilities are in constant use as children explore the curriculum outside as well as in the classrooms.

The very good links with parents have been maintained, enabling the smooth transfer of information and the efficient settling in of the children. An increased level of opportunities is provided for parents to get to know what the Foundation Stage is about and how to help children at home. Assessment of children's progress is thorough and teachers are able to give parents good information about their children, in home languages when necessary. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is very effective. There is a clear vision of exciting developments for the future, although the co-ordinator has been absent recently. A detailed evaluation has resulted in an effective action plan to guide the course of the Stage and monitoring of teaching and learning is a key area selected for development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of effective learning.
- Very good planning creates opportunities and routines for children to interact and mature, while maintaining a high level of independence as they select their own preferences.

Commentary

43. This area of learning is central to the Foundation Stage ethos. Everything is geared to enabling children to grow in confidence and social skills in an atmosphere of calm routine. Children are not forced but develop at their own pace. They love to explore the wide range of learning areas, developing interests and beginning to make friends. When they start, they are low on confidence and do not all mix easily. Bit by bit, they gain confidence and begin to share, take turns and, with patient oversight of the staff, they extend their ideas of right and wrong and become ready to co-operate in pairs. At first, their interests come and go rapidly, but, as time passes, they gradually develop more concentration in activities like play in the Nursery flower shop and home corner.
44. Later in the year, children can sit and listen with attention, move about in an orderly way and relate to each other and to adults in a mature way. Later again, in Reception, the children are ready to act as good role models for the new starters, and as good helpers for the staff. They learn responsibility by doing jobs around the classrooms and are happy in helping to tidy up. This level, which is so much better than at the previous inspection, has been reached by very good, unobtrusive teaching, feeding in particularly high expectations for behaviour. The teachers record children's progress regularly, so that they can give a boost to any children falling behind. Most children are likely to exceed the early learning goals for this area by the end of the year. The few children who have special educational needs are particularly well monitored and are making similar gains from their own level.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading is taught well and children's listening is developed effectively.
- Role playing is a strength, giving children opportunities to develop their speaking, and is one of many activities that act as a spur to writing.
- Children struggle a little with pronunciation.

Commentary

45. Teachers plan carefully to provide a structured range of activities specifically to develop the children's language skills, which are of a low standard when they start in the Nursery. Children make very good progress through the Stage and achieve very well. Most reach the early learning goals as they start Year 1. About a quarter exceed the goals. Children achieve very well in most aspects of reading, particularly with linking letters and the sounds they represent. Children love stories and learn to relish new words in the exciting or humorous books that teachers read to them. In the regular reading sessions, the children handle books, turn the pages and follow the story through pictures. Bit by bit, they learn to recognise words and begin to follow the sense of the tale. In discussions about books, and many other things, the teachers encourage children to listen to each other with increasing attention.
46. There is a good focus on the basic skills of speaking. The staff ensure that the children have interesting things to play with and study, for instance, the art activities, minibeast hunt or the Reception 'motorhome'. The teaching is very good because the adults throw themselves into activity and join the children in the play. They model the language the children might use, but at an intense level, so children learn fun and expression – "I'll throw you off the bloomin' plank!" These skills develop further in the more formal literacy lessons, as children engage in question and answer sessions. However, some opportunities are missed to get the full quality of speech vocabulary from some of the outdoor activities. In the Nursery, some children have difficulty with accurate pronunciation, and staff do not always model this sufficiently. Reception staff do not always ask for whole sentence structuring; they could do so without risking the excitement of the activities.

47. Writing develops well as the children's mark-making gives way to carefully formed letters, words and, for an increasing number of children, short sentences. Children are gaining much confidence and are proud of their skills with very positive attitudes to their learning, and mostly excellent behaviour. Inclusion is very good and the additional provision for special needs and for children who have English as an additional language enables them to feel comfortable in strange surroundings and achieve particularly well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching enables children to learn well through practical activities.
- Mathematical skills are put to good use across many areas of learning.
- Children are very good at counting but not so sure of simple problem solving.

Commentary

48. The staff use a wide range of practical activities well to help children's understanding of number and related mathematical ideas. Consequently, children achieve very well as they move from a low starting point into the Nursery. Most attain the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. About a quarter exceed these goals. The teachers use interesting and exciting mathematical and play equipment to allow children to explore number, pattern and shape. In the Nursery, children are counting to ten, and recognising the shape of the numbers. Staff use incidental opportunities well, like counting the legs on minibeasts. Children often select their own moments to go to role-play areas like the Nursery flower shop, checking the money in the till and selling bunches of flowers to passing classmates. Reception children enjoy the estate agent's office where they sell quite cheap houses for big numbers like £78. The teachers create very good learning conditions, and guide the children to use an increasingly wide range of mathematical terms. Skilled questioning helps children develop their own thinking, curiosity and confidence. Mathematics extends to science as they measure their growing plants, or check the miles to Paris.
49. In short numeracy lessons, the Reception teachers have high expectations for children to begin to rely on their own thinking strategies. Nursery children are not yet secure on handling simple problem solving, but Reception children are beginning to see the inevitable patterns in numbers. All the children love the construction equipment and are gaining a good sense of position, shape and space from it. Staff use precise assessment observations well, that guide them in preparing the next steps for the children. They bring more fun into the lessons by singing number rhymes and jingles.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching provides children with numerous opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- The staff provide a great variety of resources, visits and visitors to enrich the learning.
- The children's computer skills are developing well.

Commentary

50. Very good teaching and learning enables children to make very good progress. This is an area in which children enter school with low levels of experience; therefore, they achieve particularly well to reach the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Many opportunities are provided for children to select their own interests, exploring the classroom and the many displays in it. They are following the topic of new life and growth, and are enthralled by the process of planting seeds and watching them grow, like Jack and the Beanstalk. They observe the plants growing by looking closely through the hand lens, and keeping a diary. Therefore, they develop a strong sense of curiosity.
51. This curiosity is harnessed further outside as the children go looking for more signs of Spring, mini-beasts or flowers. They talk about families and are filled with wonder at the baby brought to visit them. This creates a good sense of the passage of time. Children do well in computer skills. They start school with little idea of how to use computers and over the two years the teachers ensure they get much quicker with the keyboard across a wide range of software, linked to other work in art or mathematics. They are excited by the new electronic whiteboard, and often go to practise on it. The staff celebrate a wide range of festivals, enabling the children to learn simple religious ideas about special places and people. Since 1999, the place of history and geography has become strong in the Reception curriculum, with realistic role play about campervan trips to France that captures the essence of touring and French culture.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching provides children with many opportunities to develop co-ordination and finger control.
- The children's skills in climbing, running, jumping and balancing are developed very effectively in the exciting outdoor area play space.

Commentary

52. Children start Nursery with physical skills well below the expected level. By handling a wide range of small items and tools, their finger control is gradually refined to the point where they can handle writing and drawing tools to express themselves more precisely. In the creative area, they make models with a precision that satisfies them, such as the delicate Spring flowers made out of clay. They handle brushes well enough to paint a recognisable still life. Very good teaching provides more opportunities than during the previous inspection, and resources have improved and are used well. Children make very good progress and by the end of Reception, the finger control skills are transferring to clear formation of letters for writing. They reach average standards, a very good achievement, given their starting points.
53. The development of physical skills with large equipment is also low on entry. Children's eyes light up when they see the exciting range of play facilities in the outdoor areas. Here, children have opportunities for gaining an awareness of space and learning to develop control in running, jumping and balancing. They receive good tuition while still exploring the equipment and investigating its potential at their own level. During free choice times, children can opt to use the bikes and buggies and have fun in the supervised area. Teaching is very good and children make very good progress in this aspect to attain the early learning goals for physical development. Children's achievement overall in physical development is therefore very good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good direct teaching of skills is combined with very good opportunities to learn through play.
- Staff provide an exciting range of activities that enhances the children's imagination.

Commentary

54. Most children start Nursery with a low level of creative skills and little confidence to use their imagination. The Nursery is set up to allow them to meet new ideas and experiences and build these into their play, which grows steadily more imaginative. They enjoy stories and like to dress up and act them out in their play. There is a wealth of opportunities for imaginative play in the 'flower shop', home corner and other role play situations. The teaching is very good and provides many situations and resources to draw children out of themselves and begin to experiment with exploration of paint and other media, losing the fear of getting their hands dirty. Children love to try different mixes and observe the effects. The success of this programme can be gauged by the three little girls, clutching decorating rollers, running with glee round the outside area singing "We're painting the rain!"
55. Music, too, is frequent throughout the day as children sing songs, dance 'the bear hunt' and explore sounds with musical instruments. The specialist teaching they receive builds skills steadily. Children achieve very well in the Nursery. The Reception staff continue to model the sheer fun of creativity with very lively teaching. Their wide range of stimulating and fun activities enables the children to build further on these talents, at times using the computer as an aid. The children's play in situations like campervans extends their ability to pretend. They also achieve well, but by the end of Reception, fall just short of the early learning goals because of limitations in the spoken language criteria.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well.
- The school's focus on raising standards through the use of a well-structured phonics programme is improving pupils' reading and spelling skills significantly.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation skills are good.
- Some lessons are too long.
- Literacy skills are used very well in promoting discussions in other subjects.

Commentary

56. By the end of Year 2, overall standards are average and by the end of Year 6, they are still average and in line with those expected for their age. Standards are slowly beginning to rise and they have improved since the time of the last inspection and from the national tests last year. The school is working hard to raise standards for the more able pupils through extending resources and the use of technology. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well throughout the school.
57. The school is constantly striving to raise standards. The focus is very much on improving the quality of pupils' speaking and listening skills in all lessons. This aspect of teaching and

learning is very good. Recent initiatives have addressed the quality of pupils' writing and improving their phonic and comprehension skills, particularly those of the younger pupils.

58. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory in Year 2. In Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. They are well developed through the teachers' very good use of questioning techniques, sharing information and ability to promote the use of good discussions. In a very good lesson, pupils recognised the importance of the General Election and the ballot procedure. They were using their literacy skills very effectively. Pupils listened carefully to each other, challenged each other's ideas and contributed to the overall discussion in a mature and reasoned way.
59. Younger pupils are taught in smaller ability groups and those with special educational needs are very well supported. They make good progress because of the high quality support they receive from the teaching assistants. They are very aware of letter sounds. The good use of 'talk partners' throughout the school allows all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, to play a full and active part in the lessons.
60. Pupils read from a variety of good books and different texts. They are encouraged to share their reading with each other. The teachers work hard to ensure pupils are involved in a variety of reading tasks and pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs are supported very well by classroom support. Pupils read and take books home to share from an early age. Pupils who find reading difficult are very well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. Older pupils are confident about their use of the well-ordered library. They are conversant about how to use books to research and find information. In Year 6, pupils are developing effective reading skills, selecting books themselves and using their reading skills to review and discuss the books they have read.
61. Pupils' written work throughout the school is good; from an early age they are developing a clear well-formed cursive handwriting style. Their writing is structured well but the lack of imaginative experiences and vocabulary limits the development of in-depth pieces of imaginative writing. Pupils in Year 6 are supported well both by the teachers and the good use of writing frames. Where pupils work together, interesting and perceptive ideas emerge as they develop a plot around a series of illustrations. Pupils use their writing skills to express a complex story line and develop their ideas about different characters. Their work is presented with a degree of pride and their handwriting styles are very good.
62. Pupils are taught well and their behaviour in lessons is very good. They enjoy and achieve very well because they are constantly busy and interacting with each other very well. Lessons are planned to ensure all aspects of literacy are covered and in line with national guidance. The plans do not always take into account whether previous lessons have achieved their objective. The length of some lessons, particularly for younger pupils, is too long, they sometimes lose interest and find it difficult to concentrate.
63. Pupils' work is not marked consistently throughout the school and in some classes they receive little guidance on how to improve their work. Marking is good in Year 6. This provides older pupils with very clear guidance on how to improve the quality of their writing by measuring progress against individual targets. They are encouraged continually to use their spelling and handwriting skills across all areas of the curriculum.
64. Pupils' progress is assessed on a regular basis. The results are used to measure how well pupils are achieving as they move through the school. Pupils are aware of their personal targets. The assessments do not always inform them of how well they are doing against these targets. Assessment is not used consistently to modify lesson plans.
65. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has responded well to the necessity of raising standards in reading and writing. The well-developed training plan has enabled all staff to avail themselves of the innovative and imaginative techniques to promote literacy across all areas of the curriculum. The good improvement since the last

inspection lies in developing pupils' language experiences. Pupils have confidence to express their ideas using the very good experiences and partnerships the school has put in place which provide additional language and vocabulary skills.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. There are good opportunities to use language and literacy across all areas of the curriculum. 'Talk partners' are used to good effect in many lessons. In a very good lesson on citizenship, pupils used research skills, note-taking and discussions very well. They recorded their findings clearly and accurately and were fully involved in the lesson.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good.
- There is improvement in raising attainment at the higher NC levels.
- Teaching is generally very good throughout the school.
- There is a good emphasis on using a variety of strategies to improve mental recall of number facts and increase the speed of calculation.
- Pupils with both language and learning needs are supported very well.

Commentary

67. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and in Year 6 are average. This is an improvement since the national tests last year. Achievement is very good for pupils at all ability levels. Pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well in relation to their prior attainment, and in line with targets in their individual educational plans. This is because of the good encouragement and support they are given. There is improvement in the achievement of the more able pupils since the last inspection as a result of the teachers' high expectations and more challenge in their work.
68. Some work was seen during the inspection where ICT was used to good effect in the presentation of lessons to support pupils' understanding of work, for example, on fractions, decimals and percentages and in problem solving activities. Generally, there is limited use of ICT by pupils to support work in mathematics. However, ICT is sometimes used well to support individual work, which is based on pupils' own education plans.
69. Teaching and learning are very good overall. There is good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Pupils are well motivated to learn and they enjoy the challenge that is presented in tasks. Pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitudes to the subject are very positive. There is a high expectation of what pupils from different backgrounds and abilities can achieve. Pupils respond well and rise to their teachers' expectations.
70. In an otherwise very positive picture, there are some small areas for improvement in teaching and learning. Progress was rather slow in two lessons seen. In these lessons, although most of the pupils made good progress, the more and less able pupils did not achieve as well. Although there was a good level of support available, some of the activities offered were too challenging for the lower attaining pupils. The written planning lacked detail about how tasks would be modified for pupils having their own individual action plans. Opportunities are sometimes missed in written work for providing problem-solving activities, alongside number work, using real life situations in a variety of contexts and levels of complexity. There is some reliance on using published worksheets in place of giving pupils opportunities for carrying out their own investigations.

71. Mathematics is led and managed well by the new subject co-ordinator, who is supported well by the senior managers. Evaluation is good and is ongoing. There is an appropriate action plan to move forward. An area identified for improvement is 'using and applying mathematics' in daily contexts and in solving problems, for which staff training is intended. There have been insufficient time and opportunities to monitor teaching and learning across the school, and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. Good use is made of mathematics in other subjects, and pupils develop a good understanding of the practical uses of mathematics in different contexts. There is good use of graphs, tables and charts in presenting data and interpreting information in subjects such as science. Younger pupils make equally good use of mathematics in other subjects. They present their findings in tables, charts and graphs, and make sound sense of the information presented.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress.
- Teaching overall is good, with particularly high expectations in Years 5 and 6.
- Inclusion is very good; all pupils are very well supported.
- The new approach to practical investigation gives pupils considerable opportunities to rely on their own thinking and decision-making.
- Computer and numeracy skills are not used consistently to support investigations.
- Pupils do not use the technical vocabulary enough in their discussions.

Commentary

73. The school has experienced a dip in standards in the last two years in the national tests. The co-ordinator has therefore introduced an entirely new approach to science planning and teaching. This has been effective in enabling standards at the end of Year 2 and 6 to return to the levels expected for pupils of 7 and 11. Pupils make very good progress and achieve very well from their low starting point on entry to school. The school's strong commitment to inclusion means all vulnerable groups are very well identified and supported in lessons. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs do well with patient classroom assistants to make things clearer for them. Pupils who have English as an additional language also achieve very well with help in interpreting the technical terms. They tend not to use the terms in their speech in lesson discussions and insufficient attention is paid to this.
74. Teaching and learning are very good. The teachers use the new 'investigation sheets' very well. These structure the learning in a very practical way. Teachers supply interesting equipment and materials. Often, lessons start open-ended, with pupils having to work out what it is likely to be about. So all lessons place the responsibility for thinking out solutions, and spotting connections, squarely on the shoulders of the learners. Year 6 pupils particularly relish the challenge of "sorting out hard problems", as one boy put it. In the best lessons, there is a buzz of excitement as pupils discuss with their partners and try different approaches. Year 6 pupils persevered well in handling several variables to come up with a fair method to test the absorbency of various makes of kitchen towel. Most lessons get off to a very quick start, and pupils are alert and involved right through. In weaker lessons, pupils are asked to sit too long on the carpet, listening. Even though the demonstrations are good, pupils would rather be active and doing the tests themselves. In these situations, the pupils' attention, behaviour and attitudes remain commendably good.

75. Teachers know the pupils well, and realise that they come with relatively little experience on which to base their scientific learning. In these cases, teachers provide the basic experiences that pupils can identify with and use in their later thinking. Year 2 pupils, for instance, enjoyed their exploration round five different centres of push-pull activities. They appreciated that forces occur in different varieties and can be great fun. The leadership and management of science is good because of the impact of this powerful learning in the school. Teachers are anxious now to keep a secure record of pupils' progress and a systematic tracking process has started. The oldest pupils are becoming involved in this process as they are learning about levels, and this spurs them on, wanting to move from Level 3 to 4, and then, of course, to Level 5. The whole school data and targets are collated by senior staff, and this is a gap in the co-ordination. Pupils do not use the computer or numeracy skills enough. They are fully capable of working out their own formats for recording results just as well as they design formats for testing. This objective is one of the items for attention in the subject's action plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good progress has been made since the last inspection.
- Standards in word processing are above average.
- Computers are underused.
- Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum.
- Good use made of digital cameras.

Commentary

76. At the last inspection, there was a key issue regarding the planning for ICT to ensure that skills were learnt systematically. This has been addressed well as all aspects of the subject are planned with clear progression of learning. Standards are average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, though there are strengths and weaknesses within this picture. Skills in word processing and presentation are better than other aspects. Good use is also made of digital cameras throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 have used them to illustrate their class rules with relevant photos. They are also used in art and design, where some interesting altered images were seen. However, work in control technology is less well developed. Bearing in mind their lack of background, and the small minority of homes in which the pupils have access to a computer, the pupils are achieving very well to reach these standards.
77. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and support staff show confidence in their knowledge both of the computers and of the subject matter. Pupils respond very well and a notable feature of their response is the working in pairs that happens in most lessons. They are very happy to share and to take their turn and assist their partner without ever being overbearing or dominating.
78. The subject is led well and the co-ordinator is very well aware of the strengths and areas for development. She has produced a clear action plan to address the latter. Good quality training has been organised for teachers and support staff. Support staff are used well so that classes can be split for teaching skills in the ICT suite. These short sharp sessions are effective in that pupils are learning relevant skills very well as they have more attention due to the reduced numbers in the suite. An area for development not yet established by the school is to put computers to greater use. The suite is not timetabled fully, being used for only half a day on one day of the inspection and for little more on another. Computers in classrooms are also underused. Regular checks showed no more than three classes using them at any one time. Pupils are therefore not having as many opportunities as they could. There is also a

problem with the interactive whiteboards in Year 6, which have been mounted too high to be used by pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

79. Computers are used well across the curriculum. In almost all ICT lessons, the skill to be taught is used to address a topic being covered in another subject. For example, newspapers have been produced by Year 6 in conjunction with their work in literacy; bar charts connected to their mathematics work have been completed by Year 2; Year 4 have included photos of evacuees in their history work; some imaginative use has been made of digital cameras and painting programs in art and design.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. It was not possible to observe any lessons in history and only a limited number in geography and no overall judgements on provision are therefore made in these subjects. Scrutiny of work in pupils' books and other evidence indicates that standards are meeting those expected nationally.

Geography

80. Pupils in Year 2 reach standards appropriate for their age. They achieve very well and make good progress from quite a low starting point. It is difficult to judge the standards of Year 6 pupils on the small quantity of work they have done so far this year. Linking geography with history topics is not effective, and the geography skills and content are very slim. Part of the problem is so much time is spent on English and mathematics, and part is that the co-ordinator's priority has been on history to link this with the school's centenary activities. It is part of the co-ordinator's action plan to review the humanities curriculum to create a more ambitious scheme that gives greater attention to content and skills development expected in each year, with more creative links with literacy, numeracy and ICT.
81. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were good. Teachers use interesting strategies to make difficult aspects clear. Year 4 pupils gained a good idea of a bird's-eye view by studying the surrounding area from the vantage point of the school's roof playground. Back in class, they were able to make more sense of the aerial photographs of the seaside resort they had visited last year. Teachers are aware that pupils benefit from independence and hands-on learning. The pupils respond well to geography lessons. They are interested, have very positive attitudes and work hard. Teachers do not, however, let the pupils know their levels, so that they are unable to judge for themselves the progress they are making. Sound leadership is beginning to raise the profile of geography and has encouraged teachers to experiment with different methods.

History

82. A study of the pupils' work indicates that the curriculum is reasonably broad, except that the amount of work tackled in Year 2 so far is limited. This is because the subject is going to be linked with the centenary of the founding of the school, later this year. The medium-term planning sets out a reasonable expectation of pupils to use study skills such as reading, writing and numeracy, but is not linked creatively into the time set aside for those subjects. Some links between history and ICT are laid out, but not as close a connection as expected. It is part of the co-ordinator's action plan to strengthen this. Teachers use the school site and visits further away well for practical studies. These make the subject more interesting, and give pupils appropriate experiences to use in their work. Teachers assess the pupils' history work at the end of topics, and the co-ordinator is monitoring this to see if the system is effective in tracking progress. History is popular. Many pupils say it is their favourite subject. Year 5 girls, for instance, are particularly fascinated by the Tudor King, Henry VIII, and his many wives. They enjoy finding out facts and the reasons why he did what he did. Pupils' sense of chronology, however, is not strong.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and promote their speaking and listening skills.
- Teachers use discussion effectively to develop pupils' understanding about different beliefs.
- Visits to many different places of worship are planned well and stimulate pupils' interest in the subject.

Commentary

83. Pupils in Year 6 reach standards that are in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are achieving very well through the school. The curriculum is planned so that pupils can acquire a clear understanding of the beliefs and key features of a variety of different religions. Pupils are positive when comparing differences between the different beliefs, drawing on their knowledge of Islam and recognising facts they have learnt in an assembly on Passover and Jewish traditions. They use the information and experience they have learnt in previous lessons to good effect. A local minister supports the teaching of religious education very well. His sharp interaction and the good pace of this lesson enabled the pupils to reach perceptive conclusions about the need for rules to structure their lives. Their ideas were discussed sensitively so that all opinions were valued and developed positively.
84. The visits to a variety of different places of worship enable all pupils to have good first hand experiences. The pupils in Year 1 recalled the visit to the local church and were eager to share their knowledge and use the photographs they had taken to name different features of the church. They used their own experience and recalled both naming and marriage ceremonies within their family lives very successfully. These experiences promote high quality discussions and add significantly to the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are planned to ensure the focus of the lesson is met, but opportunities are missed to allow the pupils to understand, recognise and interpret fully the meaning of a parable. For example, the use of role play in a Year 3 lesson was good but the essential element of the teaching was not fully explored. Teachers use the high-quality resources available in the school in order to give pupils an opportunity to handle a variety of sacred objects correctly.
85. The new co-ordinator is confident about her subject and has a clear understanding about how the subject should develop throughout the school. Her leadership and management are good. The clear action plan presents a focused view on how the subject should develop both in the short and longer term. The school is awaiting guidance on how to assess the achievement and progress of pupils which at present is not in place. There is a good range of resources to support learning about all faiths. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

None of these subjects was a focus for the inspection and little first hand evidence was available, so no overall judgements on provision have been possible.

Art and design

86. The displays around the school and the work in pupils' sketchbooks suggest that standards in art are good. Pupils have the opportunity to explore a series of techniques and skills which contribute to the high quality of work which is on display. The display of pupils' work is limited by the constraints of the building.
87. Artists-in-residence projects have enhanced the pupils' opportunities to utilise their expertise and techniques in a series of interesting prints in the style of William Morris, mosaics and pattern making linking art with the centenary of the school. They make use of colour and tactile materials very well from their own initial designs. They work carefully with clay to produce fearsome gargoyles which provides a clear link with their work in history. Pupils, by the time they are in Year 6, have a clear understanding of the design and make process. The school has ensured pupils have good opportunities to evaluate their work and discuss the results of their efforts. Very good use is made of pupils' sketchbooks. Pupils are constantly reviewing their own work, comments often reflecting their enthusiasm, their precise attention to detail and the meticulous execution of their work.

Design and technology

88. Discussions with the subject co-ordinator, pupils and teachers showed that pupils are gaining experience of using a range of materials and techniques, and developing the expected skills through designing and making. There are good opportunities for making cross-curricular links with other subjects and for enhancing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. In the lesson seen in Year 5, in which the teaching was good, pupils showed their enthusiasm in investigating and evaluating bread products according to their characteristics. Pupils tasted a variety of breads that are used by people across the world and cultures, and described their sensory experiences through using a good range of interesting vocabulary.
89. The subject does not have a high enough profile in the school's curriculum. There are good examples of the medium-term plans, but planning as a school has not yet been reviewed. Consequently, breadth and balance in the subject have not been assured. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are not yet developed and there is lack of a clear view of how pupils' knowledge and skills are progressing over the longer term. There has been a recent change in the co-ordination of the subject, and there is sufficient expertise in the school to provide training for teachers and give the subject a higher profile. There is an appropriate development plan and a clear direction for moving forward. Resources are adequate and pupils benefit from using the food technology room.

Music

90. Only one lesson and a singing session for Years 3 to 6 were observed and it is therefore not possible to make overall judgements. However, the teaching in the lesson was very good and the singing session was excellent. All classes are taught by a specialist, who has only been with the school since January. She provides high levels of expertise and excellent knowledge of her subject. The singing session was characterised by the teacher's enthusiasm, which was infectious as all the pupils joined in with gusto. The exercises – rhythm, breathing and voice - at the start of the lesson were carried out very briskly and were enormous fun, whilst at the same time preparing the pupils for the task. In practising the song being learnt, the teacher showed her knowledge by giving very clear instructions in a light, humorous way to improve the quality of the singing. An enormous amount was achieved during the session and the pupils sang very well, with very good reference to pitch, tone and dynamics.
91. There are a number of opportunities for being involved in music in the school. One teacher runs a guitar group and the school is involved in a schools' music workshop. This involves the pupils composing and performing a song in connection with the London Olympic bid. Composition has a high priority, as was demonstrated in the lesson seen. Here, the pupils composed a 'soundscape' to illustrate a story they had written. Groups worked very enthusiastically to create the sounds they required from ordinary classroom materials and their bodies. The performances were very good and were sensitively evaluated by their

classmates. The school also holds an annual music appreciation week, with live musicians visiting and a variety of other events. Music makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Physical education

92. The one lesson observed indicated that the quality of specialist teaching is an asset to the school. The leadership and management are good, having built up a wider range of in-school and extra-curricular activities that feed into pupils' skills than is usually found. With this input, overall standards are at least in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. The majority of Year 6 pupils can swim the required 25 metres. In the subject action plan, the standard is being raised each year. The current target of 75 per cent of pupils has been raised to 80 per cent for next year. The pupils are much impressed with the splendid facilities of the Mile End Stadium. Consequently, pupils' skills in athletics are improving rapidly, and they achieve very well. The school's commitment to inclusion means that all pupils get a chance at these activities. They are particularly valuable for pupils who have special educational needs, because they can achieve the success that they often find more difficult in other areas.
93. Pupils' attitude to PE continues to be very positive. Year 4 girls like cricket best. They have their sights set on being included in the mixed team, to try to repeat the success in the Championship Award, like the current Year 6, at Lord's cricket ground last year.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a clearly planned programme for pupils' development.
- The whole provision is firmly embedded in school's ethos.
- Good use of links with the community and parents enhances provision.
- Improvement since last inspection is very good.

Commentary

94. At the last inspection, there was a key issue concerning planned provision to give pupils increasing levels of independence and responsibility. This has been very successfully addressed and progress since that inspection has been very good in this subject. Not only is provision now clearly planned, with pupils' personal development at its centre, but a number of other initiatives have been put in place to encourage responsibility and independence. Pupils are now very independent and thoughtful members of the school community, taking responsibility not only for their own actions, but for the community as a whole. This encouragement was well exemplified in an ICT lesson where the teacher realised that the 'talk partner' of one pupil was absent. Instead of allocating him another, she turned the situation round so that the class should take responsibility by reminding them that all should be included. The two groups nearest to the lone pupil immediately invited him to join them.
95. The programme for health education is very carefully planned, taking into account parental views, particularly on sex and relationships education, and making good use of expertise from outside school. The current topic for younger pupils is healthy eating and pupils show good knowledge of what constitutes a healthy diet. This is aided by the tasty and very healthy dinners put on by the school cook, who has won an award for their nutritional content. Substance and alcohol abuse education starts appropriately early, with pupils in Year 2 making a start at identifying good and bad drugs. The subject is led well with the co-ordinator showing a very good commitment to inclusion and having clear ideas about how to take the subject forward, including plans for a system of assessment.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).