

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **TORRIDON JUNIOR SCHOOL**

London

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100707

Headteacher: Mrs M J McPherson

Lead inspector: David G Collard

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 268136

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	349
School address:	Hazelbank Road London
Postcode:	SE6 1TG
Telephone number:	(020) 8697 2762
Fax number:	(020) 8698 8675
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Smith
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Torridon Junior School is in south-east London. There are 349 pupils on roll. Children start in Year 3 and continue to the end of Year 6. The local area consists of predominantly rented and owner-occupied accommodation. Pupils' socio-economic background is average.

There is the normal level of mobility between Years 3 and 6. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (12.3 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high, although the majority are able to speak English effectively. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (24.5 per cent) is above the national average, as is the number of pupils with statements (2.2 per cent). Pupils' attainment on entry varies from year to year but is usually as expected nationally for their age.

After a long period of stable staffing the last two years have been very difficult. Almost all the teachers have changed within the last six terms and this has caused serious problems with subject co-ordination and the continuity of teaching and learning. Improvement measures are now being firmly re-established.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11122	David Collard	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education
8991	Pamela Goldsack	Lay inspector	
27602	Richard Perkins	Team Inspector	English Geography History
21334	Savi Ramnath	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language
22424	Kathy Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Special educational needs

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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 subjects

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

#### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

**10 - 14**

Teaching and learning

The curriculum

Care, guidance and support

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

#### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**14 - 15**

### **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

**16 - 25**

#### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

### **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

**26**

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education** having come successfully through a very difficult period of staffing changes. Standards, which had dipped, are generally back at the nationally expected levels and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is sound overall. Leadership is satisfactory and management is good. The school provides **satisfactory value for money**.

**The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- Standards are good in history, art and design, physical education and religious education but they are below the national expectation in mathematics and science.
- Teaching, while often good, has some inconsistencies.
- The headteacher has handled the staffing changes well and has built a new and coherent staff team.
- The leadership team have made a good start at tackling the school's recent weaknesses but many of the initiatives have not been in place long enough to evaluate their impact on pupils' achievement.
- The curriculum is enriched well through a wide variety of different activities and good links are made between subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes are good and the different cultures of the school mix well.

The few minor issues from the last inspection have largely been addressed. The better use of investigation in science, while still being developed, is starting to improve pupils' achievement in that subject. The governing body is better informed and all statutory requirements are in place. In the interim, staff turnover has been a major problem, and caused a downturn in standards, in 2004. These are now returning to those at the last inspection. The good management of the difficulties means that the school is now well placed to move forward again.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E\* – in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement through the school is satisfactory.** Test results were disappointingly low in 2004. The table above shows that compared to their prior attainment pupils did not do well enough, being in the bottom five per cent of schools in mathematics and science. This trend is being reversed. Pupils in the present Year 6, who entered the school with average attainment, have standards in English and information and communication technology (ICT) that are in line with those expected nationally but below in mathematics and science. In physical education (PE) they are well above age-expected levels, and in art and design, history and religious education they are above. Even though national comparisons are not yet available for 2005, this year's national tests results show an improvement from last year, with noticeably more pupils achieving standards in line with or above the national average. The reason for the better achievement is the joint planning that takes place, ensuring individual teacher expertise is being used to the full. In mathematics, however, this does not happen and so standards have not improved as much in that subject. Specialist teaching in physical education and art and design is having a very positive effect on pupils' achievement. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and a number manage to achieve

the national average standard in tests. This represents good progress from a low starting point. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress in line with all other pupils and when they are given specialist teaching, their progress is rapid. Literacy and numeracy are often used well in other subjects, allowing pupils to see the relevance of their studies.

**Personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Pupils feel part of a community and have respect for each other. Their views are valued and acted upon. The wide range of cultures is represented well in many activities. Pupils have good attitudes to school and enjoy lessons. Behaviour is generally good, although a small number of pupils have the potential to disrupt lessons. In a very small number of lessons, when the management of the class is weaker, this has an adverse effect on learning. Attendance is close to the national average. The school works hard to encourage an uninterrupted education for its pupils.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall,** although nearly two thirds of that observed during the inspection was good or better. Three quarters of the teaching staff have changed in the last two years and new initiatives have been started a number of times as key managers have taken on new responsibilities. Despite the good management of this situation there has inevitably been a problem with continuity in development, improvement and pupils' learning. The school has focused on those areas where change could be effective, for instance, in writing, where teaching is better and standards have improved. The legacy of staff changes is still evident in mathematics, where most of the unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In almost all other subjects, teaching is at least satisfactory, often much better and very good where specialists are involved. There are good opportunities to enrich and enliven topics and good links are made between subjects, demonstrating to pupils the relevance of what they are doing. However, the curriculum is satisfactory overall because in mathematics the full effect of the setting has not been analysed and in ICT pupils are not given enough opportunities to use the resources in class. Pupils are cared for well in a calm and orderly community. There are good links with parents. Staffing has stabilised. The foundations for change are established and the school demonstrates a good capacity for improvement.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** The headteacher provides strong and committed leadership and management and is ably supported by the new deputy. The restructured senior team has the expertise to move the school forward and has already made significant moves in monitoring the quality of provision and raising expectations. The governing body provides sound support to the rest of the team. Strengths lie in their ability to support but also to question and challenge decisions from their good knowledge of the school. Governors fulfil all statutory responsibilities.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are generally supportive of the school but have rightly been concerned about the high staff turnover. They feel, as does the inspection team, that the school has generally continued to function satisfactorily. The pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their work.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in mathematics and science.
- Raise the level of the weaker teaching to that of the best.
- Strengthen the process of monitoring of teaching and learning to provide more consistency in pupils' learning, particularly for the higher attainers.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in subjects

The standards pupils reach at the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally for their age. Pupils of all backgrounds and all levels of capability achieve satisfactorily overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement overall is satisfactory but is variable and has been adversely affected by the difficult staffing situation.
- Standards in physical education, art and design, religious education and history are better than those expected nationally for pupils' ages but they are below the national expectation in mathematics and science.
- Test results are starting to rise again after a downturn in 2004.

#### Commentary

1. Achievement is very good in physical education, good in religious education and satisfactory in the rest of the subjects. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and ICT are at the levels expected nationally for pupils' ages. They are below but close to those expected nationally in science, well above in physical education, above in history, art and design and religious education but below the national expectation in mathematics. The variability in standards has been caused by a very high turnover in staff over the last two years, particularly in key areas of subject leadership, which has resulted in difficulties in the continuity of teaching and learning. There are significant signs, notably in the national test results this year, that indicate that the school's downturn in performance in 2004 has been stemmed and that achievement is again improving. The realistic targets set are now being reached and have been exceeded in English. However, as the school also recognises, the impact of these problems means that standards, while improving until 2003 have not returned to the same level as at the last inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (29.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.3 (28.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.7 (30.7)	28.6 (28.6)

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

2. Achievement in English is satisfactory. The strongest aspects are speaking and listening, where significant proportions of pupils make good progress and achieve well. Most pupils read fluently and talk knowledgeably about books they have enjoyed. Pupils use an increasingly wider range of vocabulary in their writing and apply the skills they have learnt when constructing reports, letters and evaluations in other subjects. The use of literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. The higher-attaining pupils find difficulty using more complicated descriptions and this is a reason why fewer pupils than might be expected reach the higher Level 5 in national tests at the end of Year 6. In 2004, the results of these were particularly disappointing and were below average overall. Prior to this, standards had been particularly high although the school acknowledges that the cohort of pupils in 2003 were of a generally higher ability. The school quickly targeted the fall in attainment and initial results suggest that the targets have been exceeded and the number of pupils achieving the higher levels has increased in 2005, indicating that their progress is now satisfactory.
3. In mathematics there is a similar picture. Results in the 2004 national tests were below average and when measured against similar schools were very low. In this year's tests,



however, more pupils have reached the average Level 4, which is a good sign of improvement. This represents satisfactory progress because internal tests indicate that these pupils entered the school with standards well below those expected for their age. Pupils throughout the school use mental calculation well but the progress they have made in other aspects of mathematics is uneven because there has been a high turnover of staff and the teaching has not always been consistent. The newly appointed co-ordinator already has plans to place a very high focus on raising standards and the teaching of the subject is to be restructured from September. This has the capacity to continue the improvement in a similar way to that seen in English during the past year.

4. In science, standards have improved since 2004 when they were below average. They are now close to those expected nationally for pupils' ages and this is confirmed by the 2005 test results. A good number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are beginning to use the skills they have learnt in earlier years much more confidently. The better use of investigation and experimentation is making pupils think more about what they are studying and they are better able to use their previously acquired knowledge in unfamiliar situations.
5. In information and communication technology, standards are also in line with those expected for pupils' ages and there are now much better links with other subjects than at the previous inspection. Computers are used well in lessons in the computer suite but not enough use is made on a daily basis because of the lack of equipment in class areas.
6. Pupils achieve at least satisfactorily in the humanities. Standards in history and religious education are above those expected because there is consistent planning in these subjects, and a wide range of different themes is taught using first-hand experiences such as visits to places of interest. From these, pupils see the relevance of what they are learning and develop a good understanding about how this is linked to their own experiences.
7. Pupils achieve very well in physical education as a result of the specialist teaching they are given, so that by the end of Year 6 they reach standards well above those expected nationally. From the limited evidence seen, pupils achieve satisfactorily in music and design and technology. In the latter subject this represents a good improvement since the last inspection. Art and design contributes well to the personal development of pupils and there are a number of talented artists. In all these subjects there are now good links with literacy, numeracy and science through measuring, calculations and evaluations of practical experimentation.
8. The school encourages children from all the different backgrounds and ability levels to do their best. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, in line with other pupils. In lessons where pupils are supported by teaching assistants or where teaching is good, they sometimes make good progress. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to one another. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and receive specialist support make good progress and attain standards that are comparable with other pupils in the school. The good progress made by these pupils results from their good attitudes to learning, which are encouraged by the school's positive ethos. The collaboration between class teachers and the teacher funded through the ethnic minority achievement grant (EMAG) is effective in promoting the progress of these pupils.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are lively, enthusiastic and enjoy school.
- Relationships within the school are good and there is a very high level of racial harmony.
- Pupils grow in maturity as they move through the school.
- Some pupils take family holidays during term which impedes their learning.

## Commentary

9. Pupils' good attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection and they make the most of all that the school has to offer. In lessons, pupils concentrate well and work hard to do their best. They are enthusiastic participants in the many clubs and extra-curricular activities. All pupils, whatever their ability, race or gender, are fully included in all aspects of the school. Pupils share equipment and exchange ideas well. Relationships throughout the school are good and the support pupils display for each other contributes well to their learning. For example, a whole-school assembly during the inspection included singing from a small group from the choir. During one girl's solo performance all pupils listened with rapt attention.
10. Overall, pupils' behaviour remains good and the school is an orderly community with a good atmosphere for learning. The school promotes pupils' moral development well, with a clear behaviour code and a system of rewards and sanctions that is supported by the pupils. Pupils are well aware of the difference between right and wrong and understand what is expected of them. However, there is a small minority of boys who misbehave regularly. The school is addressing this with strategies that are well suited to their needs. Lunchtimes in 'The Sanctuary' are aimed at pupils who have difficulties following the rules and tend to be disruptive. These sessions with a learning mentor and senior managers are effective. Throughout the inspection there was a clear link between interesting, well-taught lessons and good and sometimes very good behaviour. In lessons that lack pace and challenge, the behaviour of some pupils deteriorates and interferes with learning for the whole class. Pupils with special educational needs usually show good attitudes to their learning, work hard and concentrate well.
11. There were three exclusions over the last reporting year. These occurred because of unacceptable behaviour outside of school. The issues relating to the exclusions were resolved.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
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### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
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White – British	102	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	22	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	15	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	22	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	89	1	0
Black or Black British – African	28	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	40	1	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

12. Any misbehaviour with a racist element, such as name-calling, is very rare and is addressed immediately. The local education authority is notified as required. Parents are pleased with the quality of behaviour found within the school. The very good level of racial harmony is a distinguishing feature of the school.
13. Pupils' spiritual development is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities they are given to reflect on relevant themes such as respect, responsibility, friendship and healthy living. They show empathy for those less fortunate and are keen to organise their own fund raising.
14. Pupils' social development is good and they play an active role in school life. They take care of equipment in classrooms and act as monitors during lunchtime. Playground buddies help younger pupils enjoy outdoor play sessions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from an annual residential visit, which further enhances their personal and social skills. The School Council meets regularly and is a good forum for pupils to bring forward ideas about improving the school. Pupils' desire to raise funds for the tsunami was put forward through the Student Council. Pupils also contribute ideas, for instance, to the design of the nature garden and by suggesting a ramp to ensure that pond dipping was accessible for all pupils. Pupils enjoy sport and their physical education lessons and participation in competitive sporting events instils good sportsmanship and a sense of fair play. Parents agree that the school helps their children to become mature.
15. Pupils' cultural awareness is good and the school celebrates different religious and cultural festivals throughout the year. There is a regular programme of visits to museums along with visitors such as professional storytellers. Pupils participate in dance recitals and the gospel choir performs at a local theatre. There are several displays of ethnic and religious diversity and pupils study the world's leading faiths and know they are well represented throughout the country. Pupils are well prepared for life in our multi-cultural society.

#### **Attendance**

16. Attendance is satisfactory but not as good as it was at the last inspection. Most pupils arrive promptly each day. The attendance rate is slightly below the national figure. The school's

ongoing efforts to remind parents about the importance of prompt, regular attendance are good. However, a few parents ignore the school's guidance and take family holidays during term time. The efforts of parents to ensure the attendance of their children are satisfactory. The school's monitoring of attendance confirms that pupils with high rates of absence achieve less well than those with good attendance. There is no truancy and unauthorised absences are accurately recorded when parents do not explain their child's non-attendance.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are both satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and the care, welfare and safety of the pupils are good. There are good links with parents, other schools and with the local community.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good in physical education and good in history and religious education. Consequently, pupils learn well. Good use is made of specialist teaching.
- The teaching of English is rapidly improving as a result of the greater stability in the workforce and this has led to improved achievement this year.
- Teachers plan well for practical, investigative and experimental work in science but subject knowledge and planning are more variable in mathematics.
- Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by assistants and specialists.

**Commentary**

17. While much teaching is good or very good, there are inconsistencies, most noticeably in the teaching of mathematics, where the majority of unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In contrast, the good teaching in religious education and the specialist teaching in physical education mean that in these subjects pupils learn well. Given these balances of strengths and weaknesses, teaching and learning are overall satisfactory. Teaching has remained similar to that at the time of the last inspection, although the proportion of good or better teaching has improved slightly.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	9 (22%)	17 (42%)	10 (26%)	4 (10%)	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.*

18. Teaching has not improved as much as the school had wanted because of the very high turnover of staff in the last two years. During this time a number of experienced teachers have left and it has been difficult to provide a consistent approach to the professional development of teachers. The school's documentation shows that some initiatives have been started and have then been interrupted two or three times as key staff moved on. Only in recent months has the teaching staff stabilised enough to provide a better thrust to ongoing development.

The teamwork witnessed during the inspection is a tribute to the way the management has worked hard at engendering a common purpose. However, the problems have inevitably caused disruption and account for many of the weaknesses in teaching and learning. Where there has been a better emphasis, such as in English, then results show that there has been improvement. The most significant impact of staff difficulties has been in mathematics where teaching overall is only just satisfactory. Leadership of the subject has been interrupted too often. The outcomes of the recent analysis of the impact of the setting arrangements on pupils' achievement have thrown up areas for development that the school has not yet had time to address completely, though it is working hard to do so.

19. Teachers have sufficient subject knowledge for the subjects they are teaching. Where it is good, such as in religious education and physical education, then learning is good because teachers have the confidence to try out innovative methods and ideas. All teachers plan conscientiously and, where this is then carried through carefully, the lessons move at a good pace. Most lessons are planned in year groups and this enables individual expertise to be used to good effect. In ICT, for example, a more knowledgeable teacher planned a very challenging lesson for another teacher who was not so confident. This approach does not work well enough in the setting in mathematics because teachers plan on their own. Thus, the work does not always match the ability of the pupils in the group because the teacher lacks the expertise to do this. This is the primary reason for the weaker teaching in this subject and means that some sets receive a much higher quality of teaching than others do.
20. In the best lessons the work is exciting, challenging to all levels of ability and provides many opportunities for thinking. These qualities were noticeable in science where a much higher emphasis has been placed on investigation and experimentation. This has improved the standards of pupils and is confirmed by the rise in test results this year. Where the school has given a higher emphasis on analysing teaching methods, there are noticeable improvements. In English, much work has been done to focus the work in writing on the use of literacy in other subjects. This has worked well in religious education, history and geography where there are examples of more extended letters, stories and descriptions. All these challenges help pupils learn better because they are motivated by what they are doing and behaviour is not an issue. Where this does not happen, teachers have to spend time controlling some members of the class and when teaching is weaker, behaviour deteriorates. Teachers give satisfactory attention to the needs of pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils with a statement of special educational need. Learning support assistants frequently provide good support for pupils and keep a good check on their progress. Teaching assistants are used well to support small groups. Good attention is paid to the individual education plans so that some pupils with below-average literacy skills come close to gaining the nationally expected level by the time they reach Year 6.
21. The quality of teaching for pupils funded under the EMAG is good. Specialist staff show good levels of awareness of pupils' needs and try to meet these through some withdrawal from class lessons, but mainly through in-class support. Support is good and enhances learning. However, when no specialist support is provided, class teachers do not identify the language demands of the activities and at times no specific provision is made for pupils who are the early stages of learning English. Nonetheless, these pupils are well supported in their speaking and listening during lessons because class teachers involve all pupils in discussion and because of the patient and helpful attitudes of classmates. Where teaching is good, teachers use a range of effective strategies, such as questioning, modelling language and reviewing what has been learnt, to develop English competence so that all pupils take part in the full curriculum.
22. The satisfactory procedures for assessment have improved since the last inspection, although the use of assessment information to improve individual progress is much more limited. The school knows in general terms how well its pupils are doing but the analysis of pupils' progress, until recently, has not been sophisticated enough. So, for instance, teachers can talk about the ability range of different classes but where they are new to this class cannot always identify underachievement and so take measures to address it. The school has now started developing data analysis procedures, which are indicating where the most urgent

attention is needed. Some impact can already be seen in the standards in English. Teachers' marking is now much better. It is undertaken carefully and often provides information about the next stage of learning even though there are still some inconsistencies amongst different subjects and members of staff.

### **The curriculum**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with a good level of enrichment. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-planned links have been developed between subjects.
- There is a substantial range of curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities.

### **Commentary**

23. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements. The leadership team is working to make the curriculum more interesting for pupils by developing links between subjects. Those between English and history are well developed, making a more creative curriculum. The use of computers to aid learning in all lessons is limited by the lack of permanent computers in each class. Lessons seen in personal, social and health education were of good quality and appropriate plans are in place to extend the programme of sex and relationships education to all year groups in September. Children leave Year 6 for approximately thirty different secondary schools and staff make a big effort to provide continuity between Year 6 and Year 7.
24. There is a good level of curriculum enrichment through a substantial programme of after-school activities in dance, singing, sports, yoga and instrumental tuition, among others. Sporting activities, including inter-school events, happen despite the lack of a playing field. The Sport England Active Mark Gold award was renewed in 2004. A good range of visits and visitors enhances the curriculum with residential outdoor visits to North Wales and Kent, involvement with theatre groups, visiting storytellers and much more.
25. There has been substantial turnover of teachers in recent years. Although not disrupting classes overmuch, this has made it difficult for the leadership team to train and plan with a stable staff year on year as well as creating discontinuity in subject leadership. Overall, provision for children with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is a good level of support staff and the best teachers have developed good systems for them in order to ensure that they understand clearly how to assist pupils.
26. The level of resourcing is satisfactory. The premises are clean and well cared for, with a good state of décor. Most classrooms are small and this makes variety in teaching style more difficult. Externally, much has been done to improve play facilities and play supervision and there is an attractive and accessible pond and garden area, the use of which has been planned into the curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good procedures are followed to ensure a safe and supportive school day for all pupils.
- Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas in a supportive and welcoming environment.

### **Commentary**

27. Pupils are happy at school and their safety and well-being have a high priority among all members of staff. Risk assessments are up to date and carried out regularly. The full governing body reviews health and safety matters at each meeting. However, whilst they review risk assessments, governors do not take the lead in carrying them out. There is an adequate number of staff trained in first aid and pupils are treated with care in a separate medical room. Arrangements to meet the needs of pupils with allergies or ailments are well planned and followed consistently. There is good record keeping on the medical needs of pupils and this information is shared well with class teachers and support staff as required. Pupils are well supervised at all times and move around this large site sensibly. The headteacher is the named teacher responsible for child protection and the school follows the guidance in its own policy. All members of staff are regularly updated about procedures in this area and are sure of their roles. The site manager has high standards and makes sure that fire safety precautions are all in place and records are precisely maintained.
28. Pupils are well known as individuals by their teachers and teaching assistants and the headteacher. Their personal development is recorded well by class teachers and shared with parents during consultation meetings each term. The headteacher plays a leading role in making sure that new members of staff are informed about the personal qualities of each pupil in their new class.
29. Academic monitoring is satisfactory. There is a good induction programme for new pupils entering Year 3 from the adjacent infant school. Pupils are confident when they begin Year 3 because they have already met their new teacher, attended an assembly and played on the junior playground.
30. Good relationships among pupils, teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff mean that pupils have at least one adult they can go to if they have a concern. The school values the views of its pupils. Displays highlight pupils' own work and assemblies regularly celebrate their best efforts. Parents who made their views known during the inspection feel that the school treats their children fairly.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school's links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is very popular with its parents.
- Good links with the community enhance learning opportunities.

### **Commentary**

31. The good partnership between the school, parents and the community has been maintained since the last inspection. Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and governors' annual report contain all of the required information in a parent-friendly format. Regular newsletters, letters from the headteacher and displays help keep parents fully informed about school life. The school has good arrangements to ensure that

information is conveyed to parents who do not speak English. Pupils' end-of-year reports are satisfactory and meet legal requirements, although not all provide parents with a clear view of what their children have achieved in relation to national standards. Consultation meetings between parents and teachers are scheduled very regularly and nearly all parents attend. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns and are given good information about various topics that might be of interest.

32. Parents are active in their support for the school and they enrich learning for all pupils well. The Torridon Friends Association is an active group of volunteers who organise fundraising and social events throughout the year. The funds raised help to provide extra resources for the school and their events promote a good sense of community among pupils, their families and the school. For example, the 'International Evening' received very good support from all parents and included a wide range of music, dance, singing and food to celebrate the diverse background of pupils and their families. Parents also help the school by assisting in class and on educational visits, and a group of volunteers meet on Saturdays to maintain the environmental garden. The school values the contribution parents make to learning and encourages them by providing workshops in specific subjects, such as mathematics. Often the same parents enrol in these sessions, although the school works hard to encourage all parents to participate. Teachers, the support staff and special educational needs co-ordinator work well to establish and maintain links with external support agencies and parents. Parents are invited to attend pupils' termly reviews.
33. The school has organised good community links by reaching out to the wider area. For example, the Gospel Choir performed at Broadway Theatre and an Excellence in Cities concert at Blackheath Concert Halls. The school's impressive list of sporting achievements includes London-wide leagues. Pupils benefit from school journeys to destinations such as the Science Museum, Haver Castle and Crofton Roman Villa. Visitors include wildlife specialists from Greenwich and Lambeth.
34. The headteacher organises a good transition programme for Year 6 pupils to prepare them for transfer to secondary school. This is a daunting task as pupils move on to so many different schools. Parents have individual appointments with the headteacher to help submit applications and answer questions. Further meetings are arranged to provide additional advice. A day is set aside where pupils meet with their new form tutor in the school and they have a day in their secondary school during the summer term. The school works in partnership with The Genesis Project to help meet the needs of pupils moving on to secondary schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership across the various levels of responsibility is satisfactory. The management of the school by the headteacher is good. There are weaknesses in the co-ordination of some subjects. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides all pupils with a caring and secure environment.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning and taking action to improve learning is underdeveloped in some subjects.
- Governors help support the vision and direction of the school because they have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The headteacher and governors manage financial resources well and focus spending where it is needed.
- The induction of teachers new to the school and professional development of staff are good.

### **Commentary**



35. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher is strongly committed and has been successful in creating a school that provides good pastoral care for all its pupils. Although she has had to work against a background of frequently changing staffing, she has successfully shared her vision for the school and all staff have helped form new aims, values and an ethos for learning.
36. The headteacher's management of the school is good and everyday procedures are clear. The relatively rapid and frequent staff changes have been successfully managed so that disruption has been minimised. Response to staff changes has led to a stronger management structure which is clearly focused on providing a better quality of education. The lines of management are clear. The roles of the relatively new senior staff are now becoming more established to enable them to carry out their duties effectively in relation to improving the quality of the school's provision. The new deputy ably supports the headteacher. Many subject managers have only been at the school a short time and have yet to get to grips with the development of their subjects. In recent years, there have been a number of special needs co-ordinators. The temporary co-ordinator now in post is well informed and leads this area satisfactorily. She is working effectively so that the statutory requirements in relation to pupils with Statements of special educational needs are met, and that all pupils' individual education plans are reviewed.
37. Governance is satisfactory, with good features. The governors are able, active and very supportive of the headteacher and are much more involved in the school than at the time of the previous inspection. The weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been rectified and governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They have a good understanding of what the schools does well and where it needs to improve. Governors are involved appropriately in the school's financial affairs through reports, relevant discussions at each of its meetings, and through the work of its committee.
38. Financial planning is good, and governors are fully aware of the implications of the budget. The school makes good use of the allocated funds to meet the needs of the whole school and individual pupils. Additional funds available for the school's work in supporting pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. The carry-forward figure was built up in the past years to fund specific building projects to improve the accommodation, and the money has been used wisely and efficiently.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,367,782	Balance from previous year	58,965
Total expenditure	1,323,164	Balance carried forward to the next year	103,583
Expenditure per pupil	3,769		

39. The school believes strongly in maintaining a high level of staffing and is justly proud of the quality of support staff it provides for pupils experiencing a wide range of difficulties. Systems for evaluating the performance of teachers are effective, and link with the whole-school priorities and to professional development. New staff, including those new to teaching, are introduced to the school and supported well. The school has introduced reforms to help reduce the work of all teachers and the emphasis on staff training and development is positive.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS**

### **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2**

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Despite the good lessons seen during the inspection, standards remain satisfactory overall.
- Pupils' attitudes are good and sometimes very good.
- There is a good level of assessment data to aid lesson planning.
- Teachers' planning is good, especially where there are links with other subjects.

## Commentary

40. Results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 (2004) showed standards were well below the national average. They and pupils' achievement have varied greatly over time. Results for this year's tests show signs of improvement, especially at the higher Level 5, and the English targets have been exceeded.
41. The standards seen during the inspection show that pupils listen well and understand their teachers' comments and questions. This is especially so where teachers encourage speech and open-ended discussion in good lessons. They speak satisfactorily so that by Year 6, many pupils express themselves well using an increasingly wide vocabulary. Writing has been weak over time and teachers have worked hard to improve standards. Pupils express themselves increasingly appropriately in their writing. They are given good opportunities to use the conventions of how to write in a wide range of different subjects such as in history. They write accounts, lists, stories, instructions and letters well. Most pupils know much of the workings of the language, including the use of punctuation, parts of speech, figurative expressions and ways to make their writing more interesting. This demonstrates that pupils' knowledge of English grammar is appropriate. Pupils spell common words accurately but some lack the strategies for spelling less familiar ones. Handwriting and standards of presentation are satisfactory. There are signs of some improvement and pupils achieve well in the best lessons.
42. Pupils read appropriately, often with good expression and understanding of the text. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of reading materials but display is not always easy because of the lack of space, and this restricts the amount of independent study that can be undertaken. Pupils' ways of finding information are limited by their lack of library skills. Although most could use a reference book efficiently, few could explain how to find a reference book quickly in a library.
43. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although during the inspection there were several better lessons. Scrutiny of work, however, presented a more average picture. In the best lessons, pupils were well motivated, given interesting activities, occasionally involving drama, and consequently learned well. Termly and weekly planning is of good quality. Pupils generally have good relationships with their teachers and most respond well, work hard and want to succeed. Pupils are praised appropriately for their efforts and responses. The best teachers take care to engage as many pupils as possible in discussions and to value all contributions. Classroom assistants provide good, unobtrusive help in lessons so that all pupils, including the less confident pupils, can join in open-ended tasks and paired work to discuss solutions to problems. Teachers' marking is generally good and explains to the pupils how best to improve. Targets are set for improvement in aspects of writing and pupils participate in recording their progress towards them.
44. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There has been no English co-ordinator during the current school year and the headteacher and deputy headteacher have fulfilled that role with the inevitable pressure it has brought to bear. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Lessons are observed, pupils' work scrutinised and progress tracked well, providing information on ways to improve. However, although teachers are working hard at developing assessment, the information is not used effectively enough in planning to meet the needs of all groups of pupils in each class. Writing skills have focused strongly in the school improvement plan and standards have risen this year as a result.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. As part of the drive for a more creative curriculum, the use of pupils' language and literacy skills in other subjects is developing. The use of history, information and communication technology, geography, design and technology to generate writing tasks is at an advanced stage of development and curriculum leaders are looking to improve this further.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- During the past two years high teacher turnover has impacted negatively on standards and pupils' progress.
- There is too much unsatisfactory teaching.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The subject leader and deputy headteacher have started to make some positive improvements to the provision.

### Commentary

46. The school has rightly identified that high staff turnover is a key factor that has impacted negatively on standards and pupil progress over the past two years. From 2001 to 2003, test results improved well, but in 2004 they fell sharply. Results in 2004 were below average when compared to similar schools and to all schools nationally. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average and as such are similar to test results last year. Test results over time show that overall boys attain higher standards in mathematics than girls. This is also the case in the current Year 5 and 6 classes. There are, for example, more boys than girls in the top ability set in Year 6, and in the lower ability set in Year 5, most pupils are girls.
47. Throughout the school mental calculations are the strongest aspects of pupils' attainment and are overall in line with the national expectation. When taking account of pupils' attainments on entry to Year 3, their progress over time is satisfactory. It is, however, uneven across year groups and ability sets and the school's own tracking data also shows this to be the case. The school has addressed this weakness to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should. This also underpins the school's clear intentions to make individual teachers more accountable for their pupils' progress.
48. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Work in pupils' books shows sound learning throughout the year. Teaching seen during the inspection, however, ranged more widely and was unsatisfactory in three lessons. Where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, this was either because teaching was factually incorrect or because pupils were expected to listen for far too long, so that they lost concentration and had little time to practise and develop their own skills.
49. Where teaching is good, it is lively, confident and challenging. In the better lessons, the teachers' good subject knowledge showed in their ability to adapt plans during lessons in response to their pupils' developing understanding, questions and responses. Teachers give good attention to teaching strategies for calculations and for solving problems. This was the case, for example, when pupils in a Year 5 set were taught how to use the least number of coins to make a given amount.
50. In all lessons seen where teaching assistants were present, they made a good contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and pupils still learning English. They

keep pupils on task and provide good additional input, questions and directions. Pupils who have a statement of special educational need are particularly well supported by their teaching assistants, who also keep good records of their ongoing progress.

51. The school has satisfactory systems to assess pupils' progress and pupils are regularly set individual mathematics targets. As yet, however, the results of assessments are not consistently used to address weaknesses and to raise standards. Pupil self-assessment is being introduced effectively in some classes, but not in others. Marking is inconsistent in relation to how much guidance it gives pupils and the extent to which pupils' mistakes are explored. On occasions, pupils' work is not marked at all and there is little evidence of pupils repeating examples for further practice, when they have made mistakes. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are overall satisfactory. Where teaching is good, pupils respond positively, but where it is unsatisfactory pupils sometimes lose interest. In some of the lower ability sets, pupils lack confidence in their own ability, and on occasions pupils with behaviour and concentration difficulties distract others.
52. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The more recently appointed subject leader is a good practitioner. She has a good knowledge of the subject and a good capacity to make improvements. New teachers to the school are provided with induction booklets and the achievement of pupils is linked to performance management targets. Assessments are analysed and appropriate support given to those who need it. However, she has not yet had time to monitor and evaluate provision to identify precisely where improvements are needed, why pupils' progress is uneven and why there are gender imbalances in test results and in the composition of sets. She has, however, monitored samples of pupils' work against teachers' planning. Despite standards improving until 2004, overall improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory, as teaching is inconsistent and pupils' progress is uneven.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

53. Satisfactory links are made between mathematics work and that in other subjects. Some good examples were seen of pupils using ICT to support work in mathematics, as for example in Year 4, when pupils learn to use spreadsheets. Pupils are also proficient in using calculators. They have sound opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to their work in design and technology, history, geography and science.

#### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers place a good emphasis on investigative work.
- Good use is made of pupils' literacy and mathematical skills.
- Marking does not explain to pupils how to improve work.
- Too little is done to check on the quality of teaching and learning, so that the weaknesses can be identified and tackled.

##### **Commentary**

54. Standards are below national expectations at the end of Year 6 but are slightly better than those reported in the 2004 National Curriculum tests. Nevertheless, achievement is satisfactory given the slightly below-average level of attainment with which many Year 6 pupils began Year 3. Inspection findings are not as high as those reported in the last inspection. This is partly because there are fewer higher-attaining pupils and there have been frequent, unavoidable changes of staff, some of whom were less confident in teaching science. As a result, many pupils have not consolidated their learning systematically over time. Although

some girls do not readily offer to answer questions, there is no evidence of significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are not yet fully fluent in English, achieve satisfactorily.

55. Since the last inspection there has been an increasing emphasis on learning through enquiry and practical investigation. This 'hands on' approach is evident in pupils' recorded work. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to plan, make predictions, conduct and record experiments in a logical manner, as seen in the many opportunities provided, for example, when investigating friction over different surfaces. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunity to carry out investigations independently and so extend their skills. In many sessions, all pupils complete the same work, guided by identical planning and recording sheets. This does not always provide sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. In work on materials, pupils find out how to separate mixtures, and investigate solubility, comparing the amount of different solids needed to make a saturated solution. Many explain clearly what they think will happen and why. Pupils understand why the test must be fair and that, if certain parts of the experiment were to change, their results would be different. They make good use of their knowledge of electrical circuits when designing and making motorised vehicles. Most pupils confidently measure and compare forces in Newtons, and make good use of tables to present findings and graphs to display information. Literacy skills are well used to produce reports.
56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good practice in Years 3 and 6. Where teaching was very good, as evident in a Year 6 lesson on presenting a creative science experiment, learning intentions were explained carefully to pupils. By the end of the session, they knew what they had been expected to learn. The teacher's good subject knowledge and enthusiasm enabled her to deliver the subject matter confidently, answer questions from pupils correctly and make the relevant teaching points. Carefully phrased questions pushed pupils to explain themselves and good use was made of pupils' responses to help others learn and keep interest high. By contrast, where teaching is satisfactory, work is not as well matched to pupils' prior attainment and higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Across the school, teachers do a lot to help pupils understand scientific concepts and they use discussion well to develop scientific thinking. This emphasis has a very beneficial effect on the progress of pupils who are not yet fully fluent in English and those with special educational needs.
57. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed subject leader is knowledgeable and experienced and is quickly developing a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject through scrutinising pupils' work. The co-ordinator has successfully encouraged teachers to provide pupils with more opportunities to undertake practical science. Nonetheless, there remain some areas for development. For example, the monitoring of teaching and learning and the analysis of statistical data has not been sufficiently rigorous to identify particular weaknesses in pupils' performance. Assessment procedures are not fully established and are rightly identified by the co-ordinator as an area for development. The use of ICT to support and enhance learning is limited and little computer-generated work was seen in pupils' books. Teachers' expectations of pupils' written work are not always high enough and the marking of pupils' work does not concentrate sufficiently on giving guidance on how to improve work. Overall, the school has shown satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. This is because the curriculum has improved significantly, with the much greater emphasis on investigative work, a weakness identified in the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The new computer suite is already having an impact on the progress that pupils make.

- All areas of the subject are covered but some are not covered in enough depth.
- The teachers are planning together well and this is raising the level of expectation.
- The use of classroom computers is not developed well enough.

## Commentary

58. At the time of the inspection the new computer suite had only been operational for two weeks and so pupils were still getting used to the hardware. More importantly, the software uses a completely different operating system but despite this, the pupils were still coping very well. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
59. Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected for pupils' ages and they make sound progress during their time at the school. Provision in the subject has been maintained since the last inspection, although the quality of hardware has been improved in the interim and this is starting to provide much better opportunities across a wider range of themes. Links with other subjects have also improved so that most work set is now linked to other studies. This is giving pupils the opportunity to see how ICT can be used as a tool for learning.
60. The youngest pupils have built up a good set of skills. They confidently open and close programs and know how to use different software. This means that they word-process effectively as well as using the computers to undertake research or paint pictures. In one lesson seen, the pupils successfully navigated through websites and so learned new geographical facts from the information they gathered. These are all the skills that are expected for their age. The majority of pupils in other years also had skills at a similar level but in Year 6, in particular, pupils talked confidently about more advanced programs they had used. They also explained clearly how the hardware they are using now differed from the old machines and quickly adapted the skills from one to another. In contrast, some strands of the subject, for example, control technology, have not developed as well because, until recently, the school did not have enough peripheral equipment. Pupils are not confident about using technology to control movements such as by programming traffic lights or robotic toys. They do, however, understand that this can be done and they know the rudiments of the procedures that make it happen.
61. Satisfactory teaching is enabling the pupils to make appropriate progress and there is a willingness by teachers to move the subject forward more rapidly. After some training they feel confident with the new computers in the suite, although they are still coming to terms with the differences in the approach. Subject knowledge is secure across all staff and the technician, timetabled specifically for individual lessons, provides good support. Planning follows a detailed structure, ensuring all strands of the subject will be covered in enough depth. In a Year 4 class, for instance, the work being undertaken on spreadsheets was above the level expected for the year group but the majority of pupils were able to deal with the tasks set for them. This indicates that teachers' expectations have increased and pupils are being given much more challenging work which is improving their progress. In addition, teachers are combining the planning across similar age classes, which ensures that all pupils have the same experiences.
62. Behaviour in the computer suite is generally sound, although the teachers have to work hard to keep up the momentum. A small number of pupils, mostly those with special educational needs, quickly lose concentration if there is not an adult in close proximity and so other, better behaved, pupils do not always get the full benefit of the adult support. This restricts what can be covered and means that more able pupils do not progress as quickly as they might. In general, however, most lessons move at a satisfactory pace and reach the expected outcomes laid down in the planning.
63. The satisfactory leadership of the subject has successfully concentrated on improving the overall provision. The developments have been managed well, ensuring pupils have a balanced programme in the subject. Although overall assessment procedures are satisfactory, pupils' progress is not tracked closely enough.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. The school works hard to link many other subjects to work in ICT. There are examples of work linked to geography, history, science and mathematics but the majority of these have to take place within whole-class lessons in the computer suite. Unfortunately, the use of computers in the classroom is not developing newly learnt skills well enough. While the school uses a set of portable laptops and opportunities are planned carefully, these are not permanently in the class base. Consequently, the spontaneity of being able to use a computer as an integral part of other lessons is not possible. There are clear plans to improve this situation in the near future as a second phase of the development.

## HUMANITIES

65. **History** and **geography** were not inspected in full but there was sufficient evidence from teachers' planning, the small number of lessons seen and in discussions with pupils to show that provision in both subjects is at least satisfactory, with some good lessons seen in history. The evidence is stronger for history and there are indications that standards are above the national expectation in Year 6. For example, Year 6 pupils discussed in great detail the changes in people's lives since World War 2 and the impact the war had. They understood the dangers of bias in secondary sources of information such as the Internet. The quality of presentation is good by the time children reach Year 6. Progress gathers momentum towards the end of this year and achievement is good as a result of strong teaching in that age group. This is from a slow start in Year 3 where, despite some good levels of knowledge, pupils had difficulty in making connections between different periods of times when discussing the Romans and Celts.
66. In both subjects, a good range of visits and visitors plays an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. Pupils discussed with enthusiasm the Year 3 visit to Crofton Roman Villa and the Year 6 environmental study of the local Forster Memorial Park in geography. The quality of planning is good, with increasingly strong links with other subjects. History is frequently and successfully used for teaching material in the literacy hour. Although pupils complete end-of-topic evaluations in both subjects, assessment is under-developed in meeting individual needs and the data is not yet used in evaluating achievement. Pupils enjoy both subjects and the real-life stories from history bring the subject alive, particularly for the older ones.
67. The relatively new subject leader is responsible for both subjects and, as yet, her level of monitoring is limited, with no opportunities for classroom observation. This limits her ability to influence and develop the subjects. She has had no opportunity to date to make a contribution to the school development plan for these subjects, and her role has been one of maintenance. However, a number of audits, conducted by senior managers and external consultants have taken place, which have resulted in improved provision.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those expected for pupils' ages.
- Pupils achieve well because of the consistency of teaching approaches.
- Pupils produce a good range of detailed, well-presented and comprehensive written work.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school with few weaknesses and so pupils learn well.
- The co-ordinator leads the subject well.

## Commentary

68. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above those expected and achievement is good because of the well-balanced curriculum that is offered in each class. From the scrutiny of work it is clear that pupils enjoy their lessons, think hard about what they are doing and produce plenty of good quality written work. In different year groups, a wide variety of themes is studied across a range of different religions. In Year 5, for instance, the work on Hinduism contrasts well with that in Year 6 where Judaism and Christianity are compared. This approach helps pupils understand the specific traditions and festivals of their own beliefs and starts pupils thinking about the need for respect for and understanding of others. The transition programme for those about to leave the school is well thought through, dealing with other issues such as respect, and links well with work on citizenship.
69. Themes are planned using the locally agreed syllabus. This is aimed well at encompassing the main religions represented at the school and offers good opportunities for teachers to use the expertise of those within the class to discuss and compare each other's cultures. Discussions and written work are enhanced by the teachers' good subject knowledge. A piece of work looking at Divali, for example, had been explained well by breaking down the word to show how it meant a row of light. Each topic is covered in detail with many different methods used such as mindmaps, discussions, extended pieces of writing or description. All of these provide good links to literacy. There are also other good subject links such as a study about the impact of violence as part of an integrated project on World War II.
70. The extensive range of work in pupils' books is well presented, detailed and provides pupils with a way of reinforcing what they have talked about during the lessons. Teachers give good comments to help further the pupils' understanding and in the best cases, pupils check each other's work, giving suggestions about how to improve it. This provides yet another way of reinforcing their knowledge and understanding and contributes effectively to the good standards.
71. Extra-curricular links are strong, with a number of visits and visitors as well as a range of different and interesting stimuli such as videos and research using computers. Pupils use discussion well but teachers try to encourage even more thought using innovative techniques such as poems and raps. Pupils respond very well to the work they are given because they can see some reason for what they are learning. Those with special educational needs are also helped to raise their own self-esteem because they have tasks in which they can achieve well. In one class presentation, for instance, a number of lower ability pupils were enthusiastic about contributing and were praised both by their teacher and the rest of the class. The high mix of different religions within the school enables discussions to be focused around real-life examples and pupils contribute well to each other's understanding of the different faiths and traditions represented in the school.
72. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She has effectively ensured that resources, the quality of teaching and the consistency of approach have been at the core of improvement.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about **music** provision. Only one lesson was seen, in which teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. However, from discussions with pupils and staff, this is not representative of the quality of other lessons. Pupils say they enjoy music and learn a lot. This was supported by observations in assemblies where they sang enthusiastically. In addition, a number of pupils benefit from instrumental tuition, including that provided by the specialist visiting teachers, both during school hours and after school. There is a lively school band and a gospel choir and the subject does have a good profile within the school.



74. Not enough lessons were observed in **art and design** to enable judgements to be made about provision and teaching and learning but standards in artwork seen around the school are above the national expectation. There are good links with other subjects and art and design contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
75. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The work of the highest-attaining pupils is of very high quality. This was demonstrated in the work seen and displays around the school, which show a wide range of work, with particular strengths in sketches, drawings and paintings using different media. For example, there are clear improvements between the youngest and oldest pupils. Year 3 pupils have learnt about colour mixing techniques when creating attractive paintings linked to the story the '*Myth of Narcissus*' and by Year 6 the pupils show good attention to these basic skills, as well as being able to express their ideas. Pupils can look closely at photographs and discuss how the camera can capture a movement. Then, using pastels they can skilfully transfer these techniques to show movement in their own work. Across the school, art and design is taught by specialist teachers who have high expectations of pupils and good use is made of an artist-in-residence to further enhance learning.
76. Effective use is made of sketchbooks to develop different skills and techniques and to provide a useful record of individual pupils' progress. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their skills through other subjects. For example, linked to the history topic of the Tudors, pupils in Year 4 have created striking portraits of a Tudor boy and have created attractive collages using a wide range of materials to show '*The Benin Creation Story*'.
77. Only one lesson was observed in **design and technology** during the inspection and this means that it is not possible to judge provision, standards, achievements or teaching. Planning shows that the basic skills of designing, planning, making and evaluating are emphasised and that pupils experience a wide range of materials and techniques through designing and making a variety of products. Samples of work indicate that there are particularly good links with mathematics, literacy and science. This was seen, for example, in Year 3, where pupils measured pieces of wood to ensure that they were of the same length when making band rollers. Older pupils in Year 6 make very good use of their knowledge and understanding of electrical circuits when making controllable vehicles, and of their literacy skills when evaluating products. The regular review of the subject has led to good improvement since the last inspection.

## Physical education

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialist teaching is very good.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour help them to attain good standards and to achieve very well.
- Many pupils take part in a very good number of lunchtime and after-school activities.

### Commentary

78. The very good provision ensures that pupil participation in physical activity is high. Standards are above the national expectation in Year 6 and all pupils achieve very well, irrespective of

their starting point. Pupils show good levels of skill, fitness, energy and co-ordination. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. Pupils with particular talents are challenged to realise and extend their skills and they often attain very good standards.

79. The school has a strong sporting tradition and is very successful in inter-school and borough-wide tournaments, for example, in rugby and football. About two thirds of pupils take part in a wide range of after-school clubs, and most pupils engage in lunchtime games and physical activities. The high level of participation in extra-curricular activities best exemplifies pupils' enthusiasm. After-school activities include coaching sessions run by a wide range of providers. Specialist staff also teach every class for at least one of their two physical education lessons each week and this contributes in great measure to the pupils' very good achievement.
80. It is not possible to comment on class teachers' teaching, as none was seen. However, the specialist teaching in dance, games and athletics is very good. The staff's very good expertise and very high expectations lead to a high level of challenge for all pupils. Pupils learn very well as a result. The basic skills are taught very well, and staff participate fully and show pupils how to improve their performance. They assess pupils' ongoing progress as an integral part of their teaching. A particular strength in athletics lessons is the way that the coach both encourages pupils to be competitive, whilst also stressing the importance of good sportsmanship and participation. Teaching is very inclusive so that all pupils participate fully, irrespective of their ability or prior attainment. Indeed, several individuals who were seen fully and confidently participating in physical education activities had in some other lessons been observed to hold back, as they lacked confidence.
81. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good and the subject makes a very good contribution to their personal development. Pupils are very keen, listen very attentively and work very hard, individually, with partners and in groups. They appreciate each other's contributions and efforts and many pupils say that physical education is one of their favourite lessons.
82. The good provision for physical education found at the time of the last inspection has been built on and improved well. Although there is currently not a subject leader, over time the subject has been well led and managed. The school makes very good use of its satisfactory resources and accommodation. Swimming is provided in Year 4 and the school's records show that about three quarters of pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

83. The opportunities for developing a wide variety of life skills are good. Pupils learn about how to be safe and about the need to work together harmoniously. They are expected to be tolerant of each other, to respect each other and to consider the needs of others. The effects of this are evident in the good relationships in the playground where pupils of different ages and cultures mix well together, with only the normally expected disagreements. Planning for this area of work is considered carefully, taking into account the expectations of the nationally recognised document 'Excellence and Enjoyment'. Citizenship is promoted well and is particularly good in the last term of Year 6 when the pupils' transition programme concentrates exclusively on issues such as praise, tolerance, respect and peace. This all provides pupils with a very good opportunity to think about the society of their school as well as preparing them effectively for the wider world.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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