

INSPECTION REPORT

POVEREST PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Mary Cray, Orpington

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101641

Headteacher: Mrs S Jeffries

Lead inspector: Fiona M Robinson

Dates of inspection: 20th - 23rd September 2004

Inspection number: 269107

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:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	276
School address:	Tillingbourne Green St Mary Cray Orpington Kent
Postcode:	BR5 2JD
Telephone number:	(01689) 816 060
Fax number:	(01689) 603 649
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Colleen Melmore

Date of previous 8th May 2000 inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Poverest Primary School is larger than most primary schools. It is located in St Mary Cray, Orpington in Kent. There are 276 pupils on roll, 159 boys and 117 girls. There are 14 children in the Reception class. The school includes a local education authority (LEA) designated special educational needs unit, which offers provision for 27 pupils from age 4-11, with severe and complex social and communication difficulties. The school serves an area of high social disadvantage and pupils come from a range of social, economic and academic backgrounds. Most are white British and there are a small number of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. Of these, there are a very small number of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition. The levels of knowledge and understanding of children when they join the school are below average. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs is above the national average. Twenty-four of these pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. The school won the Healthy Schools Award in 2000, the School Achievement Award in 2000 and 2003, and has applied for Awards for All in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22182	Fiona Robinson	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Personal, social and health education and citizenship
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22704	Garry Williams	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education
12394	Carole May	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History
22990	Christopher Furniss	Team inspector	Design and technology Geography Religious education English as an additional language
23411	John Baker	Team inspector	Special educational needs ASD Unit

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school that provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school because they are well taught. As a result, they achieve well in relation to ability. The headteacher provides very good, supportive leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best. This enables the school to make improvements at a good pace. Good teaching ensures that pupils' achievements are good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and physical education are above average by the age of 11.
- The headteacher provides very good educational direction to the work of the school.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with several examples of very good and excellent teaching.
- The quality of the extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The use of assessment and marking is inconsistent in some subjects.
- The outdoor area for the under fives and the library area are underdeveloped.
- Attendance levels are well below average.

The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection. Key issues have been tackled well. There is a new ICT suite and ASD Unit¹ in place. In particular, standards in English, mathematics and science have improved significantly due to the school's effective strategies. Governors contribute well to the work of the school and the partnership with parents is good. There are rigorous procedures in place to monitor teaching and learning and the quality of teaching has improved due to higher teacher expectations. The school is well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	C	A
mathematics	B	C	C	A
science	C	C	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is good. They enter school with below average standards and make good progress in the Reception class. By the end of this year, standards are in line with expectations with most children meeting and a significant minority exceeding the early learning goals². They make good progress over time in the infant and junior phases. They demonstrate good attitudes to learning. At the time of the inspection, standards were average in Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They were above average in art and design and

¹ A unit for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.

² The identified targets children are expected to have achieved by the end of their Reception Year.

physical education and satisfactory in other subjects. By Year 6, they were above average in English, mathematics, science and physical education. They were satisfactory in all other areas. Results in the latest unpublished tests, compared to similar schools, are well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average in science, which is an improvement on the previous year's results. Pupils are well placed to meet or exceed their current targets in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well in both the ASD Unit and the main school. Pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is good. This leads to the good behaviour, attitudes and relationships which pupils display. Attendance levels are well below average, which slows the rate of learning for those pupils affected. Punctuality is satisfactory. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Overall, teaching is good or better throughout the school. Very good teaching was seen in the Foundation Stage³, infant and junior phases. Excellent teaching was seen in English, mathematics and science. Pupils respect their teachers and are keen to do their best. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The use of assessment is good in English, mathematics and science, but it is inconsistently used in other areas to check pupils' progress. The curriculum is good overall and is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities in sports and the arts. All statutory requirements are met. However, library accommodation is limited and the school has identified the need to develop the outdoor area for the under fives. Partnerships with parents are good and these enhance pupils' education. Links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership, management and governance are good. Leadership by the headteacher is very good. She is given very good support from the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. There is a very clear vision and focus to the school's work. Teamwork is effective and support staff are used well to support the curriculum. The management of the school is good. Governors conscientiously fulfil all of their statutory duties and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are supportive of the school's work and monitor the work of the school well. They have a thorough understanding of the impact of teaching and learning on standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have good views of the school. They are very happy with the expectations of staff, the quality of teaching and learning, and the way in which the school is led. Most of their views were positive. Pupils like the school and are happy with the teaching they receive.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve consistency in the use of marking and assessment.
- Improve the quality and range of the outdoor area for the Reception class.
- Explore ways in which to improve the library and its use for independent learning.
- Maintain the good efforts made to improve attendance.

³ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the Reception Year.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS
STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

Pupils achieve well in relation to ability throughout the school and reach expected standards at the end of the Reception Year and Year 2, and above average standards by Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children receive a good start to their education.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by Year 6.
- Standards are good in physical education.
- Standards are good in art and design in the infant phase.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.

Commentary

1. When children start school in the Reception class, assessment data shows that their attainment is below average. They respond well to good or better teaching and make good progress over time. Most reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning and some exceed these.
2. Overall, standards have risen throughout the school, especially in the junior phase. There is a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group who achieve well in relation to prior attainment, due to good teaching.
3. The table below shows that in 2003, standards in Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. There were a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in this cohort. Incorporated into these results are the results of the pupils in the ASD specialist provision; therefore the benchmarking data against schools nationally and similar schools is not representative of the school's achievement. Current standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are good in physical education and art and design, and satisfactory in all other areas. They are in line with the expectations of the LEA Locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (13.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (14.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The table below shows that in 2003, standards in Year 6 national tests were well above average in relation to similar schools in English and mathematics and average in science. Pupils achieved well, given that a significant number had special educational needs. Results in the latest unpublished tests are an improvement on the previous year's results, especially in science where standards are now above average. This is due to the fact that the school has put in place a better curriculum in science with an emphasis on

investigation. Current standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Girls tend to achieve higher standards than boys; however the school has put effective strategies in place to narrow the gap. There has been good improvement in English and mathematics over time.

5. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is good because of the good provision made for the pupils' development. All pupils, including the higher achieving pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. Work is usually matched effectively to their ability and pupils are supported well in their learning both in the ASD Unit and throughout the school. Pupils achieve well in relation to ability and their progress is charted carefully in English, mathematics and science, and used well to inform planning.
6. Pupils are making good progress in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 with appropriate challenge for the higher achieving pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Currently, standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and physical education. They are satisfactory in all other areas. Parents are happy with the standards their children achieve, and inspectors agree with their views.
7. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well. Their ICT skills are well deployed in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science; and the school is developing the use of these more on the stand-alone computers in the classroom.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.9 (26.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.2 (28.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development, including their attitudes and behaviour, is good. Attendance rates are worse than those expected nationally, despite the school's strenuous efforts to improve them. Overall the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good, both in and out of lessons.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.
- Play at lunchtimes and playtimes is very well managed.
- Attendance is well below the national average.

Commentary

8. The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and activities outside the classroom. Behaviour throughout the school is good. Standards in these areas are at least as good as those previously reported. Attendance rates are well below national averages although the great majority of pupils arrive on time

each day. Standards of attendance have declined since the last inspection. Attendance is adversely affected by a few families who do not send their children to school regularly and by the number of families taking holidays in term time. The school continues to work hard, in co-operation with the education welfare officer, to improve attendance rates. This has not been successful so far, despite a wide range of sensible, consistently applied strategies to effect change for the better.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	7.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.4
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	250	6	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0

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

- Pupils enjoy school. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a good place to be and it provides a warm and caring environment for learning. Pupils behave well because their parents and teachers encourage and expect them to. Staff set a good example to pupils. Pupils understand the simple school rules and say that staff are fair and work hard for them. For example, Year 6 pupils explained clearly how important their final year at the school is for them and showed good understanding of the need to develop independent skills and to do their homework.

10. The great majority of pupils pay attention to teachers and to each other and follow instructions well. Pupils work hard and concentrate well. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher's high expectations of both behaviour and learning led to pupils achieving very well in a lesson that was briskly paced and well focused.
11. Behaviour at play and lunchtimes is good with proactive and enthusiastic supervision, particularly in the Key Stage 2 playgrounds. Lunchtime supervisors effectively plan games and activities that help to focus play and ensure that all children are included and enjoy their breaks. They are ably assisted by the Year 6 playground pals who are conscientious and keen to help manage the activities and lunchtime chores. Younger pupils think highly of the pals and really enjoy playing with them. Relationships are good throughout. Some bullying behaviour occurs at the school but parents and children agree that it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils trust their teachers and say they are approachable and kind. This is a strength of the school. Pupils make visitors to the school welcome; they are friendly and polite. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, mix and play well together. The school is well cared for, cloakrooms are tidy, there is no graffiti and little litter. There were six short term pupil exclusions at the school last year for minor incidents.
12. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted at the school. This continues the previously reported successful provision in this area. Social and moral development are very well fostered by the behaviour management policy, the simple school rules and ethos and the strong role models provided by all adults at the school. Pupils really enjoy participating in the school council which makes a good contribution to their understanding of citizenship. Cultural and spiritual development are soundly supported through the art, music and religious education curricula. Generous provision of extra-curricular activities broadens pupils' experiences and helps them to co-operate and share. Assemblies are well used to explore and develop principles behind the school rules and acceptable behaviour.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are effective and the curriculum is good with a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The use of assessment and marking is inconsistent in some subjects. The outdoor area for the under fives is underdeveloped and library accommodation is limited. Pupils are well cared for and the partnership with parents and the community is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but good in the Foundation Stage.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Lessons are planned well in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and science, and children are well motivated to succeed.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils are involved well in their learning.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well.
- Some excellent teaching was seen in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of assessment is good in English, mathematics and science.
- Assessment and marking are inconsistently used in some subjects.

Commentary

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school, and there have been good improvements in planning and the matching of work to pupils' ability since the last inspection. The scrutiny of pupils' work completed during the last school year shows evidence of good teaching quality.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4 (7%)	15 (26%)	28 (48%)	11 (19%)	0	0	0

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

14. Teachers plan their lessons well and work is usually matched well to pupils' ability. Their insistence on high standards of behaviour ensures that pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed. Where teaching is good, pupils have a clear understanding of what the next steps in learning are. Sometimes, it is less effective where tasks are not matched so carefully to pupils' ability. Scrutiny of work indicated this is sometimes the case in design and technology, history and religious education.
15. Teaching is good in the different subjects in school with examples of very good teaching seen in English, mathematics, science and physical education. The work of teachers is greatly enhanced by the work of teaching assistants and other adult support. Teaching assistants have responsibility for some aspects of work with pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. They fulfil these roles effectively. Pupils benefit greatly from this assistance, as observed in the use of computers to enhance work in English, mathematics and science.
16. According to the pupils, lessons are interesting and fun. Inspectors agree. The activities provided are interesting and varied. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. Staff are confident in teaching these areas. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through the use of skilful questioning and reading is well taught throughout the school. Writing skills are taught well and there is a current focus on improving the quality of writing, recording and presentation of pupils' work. This is proving effective, although sometimes the scrutiny of work revealed that presentation can be untidy with work left incomplete. Satisfactory use is made of homework and in English, mathematics and science there is good development of target setting. ICT skills are developed well in the core subjects. For example, it is used well in science to record results of experiments in investigative work. However, the school has rightly identified the need to develop the use of ICT on the stand-alone computers in the classroom to support learning.
17. Where teaching was excellent, the teachers were excellent role models. Excellent teaching was seen in English, mathematics and science.

Examples of outstanding practice

An excellent mathematics lesson for lower ability pupils in Years 3/4 on partitioning numbers before adding them.

Following an excellent introduction, pupils made excellent progress in counting in twos to 50 and then in fifties to 300. Their confidence was boosted through excellent use of praise by the teacher. In addition, excellent

use was made of time and a very clear explanation of partitioning numbers was given. They achieved very well due to the excellent use of questions, which was successful in taking their learning forward. For example, 'How do we partition numbers before adding them?' asked the teacher. 'Please show me.' Pupils responded very well and enjoyed role-modelling the answers for the other pupils on the whiteboard. There was excellent evaluation of their discussion before pupils were divided into three groups. They achieved very well in each of these groups as work was matched very well to their ability and their progress was monitored very carefully by each adult. Pupils demonstrated excellent attitudes throughout the lesson. This lesson was inspiring because of the excellent role models set by the teacher and support staff and the very good work on partitioning numbers which resulted from the discussion work.

An excellent science lesson for a Year 3, 4 and 5 lesson in the ASD Unit on carrying out investigations on trying to make the light burn brightly.

The quality of teaching and learning was excellent, owing to the teacher's skill of explanation and the pace and excitement of her teaching. Pupils were very keen and highly motivated to contribute to the lesson. The teacher made learning fun because of the challenge provided as they tried to make the light burn brightly. The pupils became fascinated as they carried out their investigative work. Excellent support was given to all pupils with special educational needs in this group by the teacher and two support staff. The teacher continually encouraged pupils to ask themselves the question 'Does it burn brighter now?' One pupil responded 'Wow, look at how brightly it glows'. There was plenty of challenge for the higher achieving pupils and excellent use was made of well prepared resources. By the end of the lesson, there was a lively discussion, in which all pupils were eager to discuss their findings. All pupils demonstrated outstanding progress in their understanding of this topic, due to the excellent challenge provided by the teacher.

A Year 1/2 English lesson for a mixed ability group where outstanding teaching resulted in pupils making very good progress and achieving good standards in developing storylines in creative writing.

The teacher inspired pupils from the outset and engaged excellent productive learning from all, including the higher achieving and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Pupils listened spellbound and were very keen to develop storylines. There was excellent co-operation between pupils in groups as they practised their drama and mimed their story. Learning was supported very well by the teacher and teaching assistant in the group work. There was skilful use of questioning. For example, 'How do you think your storyline should develop?' Pupils made very effective use of pictorial sequencing cards to support their learning. There was excellent consolidation of the pupils' work at the end of the lesson by the teacher. Pupils especially enjoyed performing their playlets for others. One group very competently mimed their story but forgot what happened next. The teacher involved the pupil audience very well by inviting them to make suitable suggestions. As a result, all remained very interested and highly motivated. Pupils soon realised that the atmosphere of a story can easily be changed through the appropriate choice of adjectives. The lesson was inspiring because of the outstanding challenge, pace and content of the teaching.

18. The system of assessment is good in English, mathematics and science, with some good procedures in place and a good programme of regular assessment. This was a key issue at the time of the last inspection and has been addressed well. There is a good system of assessment in place in the Foundation Stage which clearly identifies how well children are doing. Satisfactory procedures are in place across the curriculum; however there is inconsistent use of these especially in ICT, geography, history and religious education. The quality of the records of pupils' attainment is good in English, mathematics and science. Marking is inconsistent in some subjects such as English, geography and religious education.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities for the pupils with very good curriculum opportunities provided for the ASD Unit. Provision for curriculum enrichment through extra-curricular activities is very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is rich and varied, providing a wide range of well planned, stimulating experiences.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Enrichment of the curriculum is a strength of the school. There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Resources support pupils' learning well in the ASD Unit.
- The outdoor area for the under fives is underdeveloped.
- Library accommodation is limited.

Commentary

19. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well, and caters for the wide range of ability within the school. All statutory requirements are met. Effective curriculum planning ensures that pupils enjoy a broad and relevant curriculum and schemes of work ensure good progress in the development of pupils' knowledge and skills. However, the narrow scope of writing opportunities has tended to reduce the quality of presentation in religious education, history and geography. The school has recognised this and introduced a new scheme to improve writing. This is already impacting on raising standards in this area and improving presentation. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection, particularly in ICT and the ASD Unit. There is a new ICT unit in place which is effectively used by all pupils. However, the stand-alone computers in the classrooms are not always used enough to support learning, especially in English, mathematics, geography, history and religious education. The curriculum for Reception children is good overall. Staff plan a good range of activities to engage and interest the children, which is matched well to their age and experience.
20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good because the teachers plan effectively. The co-ordinator monitors progress closely and his good support for and regular liaison with teachers and other assistants, ensures an effectively co-ordinated approach to meeting pupils' individual needs.
21. The school provides good support for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Working in partnership with the English as an additional language support group, the needs of pupils are assessed very soon after they come to the school, and regularly afterwards to ensure good progress. Parents and carers are closely involved in the process and are kept informed about how well the children are doing. Extra support is targeted to those pupils who have little English and even when their language skills improve they are monitored.
22. The extensive enrichment activities ensure very good sporting, creative and aesthetic development. Pupils benefit academically and personally from the numerous extra-curricular clubs, which are well attended. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in musical activities, such as choir, bell plate ringing and in school productions. There have also been opportunities for pupils to join the family group of schools to sing in the Albert Hall. Older pupils take part in residential visits, which successfully enhance sporting activities, such as climbing and abseiling. It further provides the opportunity to develop and promote independence and interdependence as well as personal, social and moral

development. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 benefit from either specialist French and Spanish teaching.

23. The headteacher and subject leaders effectively monitor the curriculum and report findings to the governing body. Policies and planning documents are reviewed regularly and staff monitor the impact of these on teaching and learning. Subject leaders provide good support to their colleagues, ensuring good progression in pupils' knowledge and skills in all core and most non-core subjects.
24. Resources for learning across the curriculum in the ASD Unit are good and help to raise standards. Staffing is good and used efficiently to promote good learning. There has been good improvement in resources since the previous inspection, but the need to make better use of the library as an independent learning centre has not been fully resolved. The inadequate resources for ICT, identified in the previous report as unsatisfactory have now been resolved and may be seen as a major contributory factor in the significant improvement achieved in this area. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. There are good outdoor facilities for sporting activities, environmental work and for different types of play. However, the school has identified the need to develop the outside classroom area for the Foundation Stage children.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are good. The support, advice and guidance based on monitoring provided to pupils are good. The school values the opinions of pupils and respects their views. Arrangements for child protection are effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils form trusting relationships with staff and feel secure and cared for.
- There are good induction arrangements for new pupils throughout the school.
- The school is a safe and caring place.
- The use of the good assessment procedures is inconsistent in the non-core subjects.

Commentary

25. The arrangements for the care and protection of pupils at the school continue to be effective and monitoring of pupils' academic progress has improved since the last inspection. There are good procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, and satisfactory procedures in place for all other subjects; however there are inconsistencies in the use of these procedures across the non-core subjects. The governors have a suitable range of policies, procedures and checks in place to ensure the safety and care of pupils at the school. The buildings and grounds are subject to trespassers and intruders from time to time and the governors have made great efforts to ensure that the school is safe and secure. The caretaker checks the extensive site carefully each day before staff and pupils arrive. He fulfils his duties well. Child protection procedures are up-to-date and comply with requirements.
26. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported well throughout their life in school and in the Unit. There are good IEPs in place in the main school, and parents and outside agencies are involved well.

27. Teachers know their pupils well and respect their views. Teaching and non-teaching staff alike work hard to make the school a caring place where pupils, whatever their needs or backgrounds, feel safe and confident. Pupils know their concerns and ideas about school life will be taken seriously. This is a strength of the school. Staff have a depth of knowledge about pupils and their families and a genuine concern for pupils' welfare and progress.
28. There are good induction procedures in place to ensure that new families are fully informed about school life and their children will make a confident start. There is effective, appropriate liaison with transferring or secondary schools to ensure that pupils settle in well when they move on. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well integrated in the school. An example of this is a newly arrived pupil seen singing happily to herself in her home language as she ran down the steps into her classroom in the morning before school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are effective links with parents and carers with good information, support and access to teachers being provided. There are good links with the local community and with other schools. There has been good improvement in this area since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality information about the school's work is provided to parents and carers.
- Parents are very pleased with the school's work in this area.
- Links with local beacon schools and nurseries are well developed.

Commentary

29. Most parents at the school are very supportive of their children and are well motivated to support their learning at home. The exception to this is a small number of families taking holidays in term time and the failure of a few carers to bring their children to school regularly. This adversely affects attendance rates at the school, and the school works hard to improve on this.
30. There is an enthusiastic informal network of parents at the school who work hard to support teachers in class, provide social events and to fundraise for the school. These arrangements work well for the current parent body. Parents are keen to share events and performances at the school. During the inspection week a children's assembly was very well supported. They are very pleased with the school's work and report a significant improvement in provision recently. This view is generally supported by the findings of this report. Parents and outside agencies are also involved well in the learning of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, both within the school and in the Unit.
31. The school seeks parents' views about the school and it is an open and welcoming place. Teachers are available morning and afternoon for informal discussion and know their families well. The great majority of parents support their youngsters' learning well by sharing books, taking an interest in school life and encouraging positive attitudes to learning. Information to parents is well presented and freely available, although some parents would like more notice of events and activities. Annual reports to parents on pupils' progress are of satisfactory quality with all required information clearly presented. The governors' annual report, prospectus, curriculum information and newsletters are all of good quality.

32. There are good links with the local community through the parents' network, local playgroups, nurseries and sports activities. The links with nurseries and playgroups are good because of good staff liaison between the schools, and induction systems prepare children well for school life. The school works effectively with the local church, secondary and beacon schools, the local youth justice team and LEA community projects to enhance pupils' learning and broaden the curriculum. Parents' supportive attitudes towards the school and its open door approach foster pupils' good attitudes to school and their enjoyment of learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management of the school is good. The governance of the school is good. The headteacher, in partnership with the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, provide very effective leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best. This enables the school to make improvements at a good pace. Application of the principles of best value is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good focused leadership and a very clear vision for the school's work.
- The management of the school is good.
- Teamwork is good and all staff are doing their best for the pupils' education.
- Approaches to financial management are good.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are good.
- Staff performance management is very good.

COMMENTARY

33. The headteacher provides very good leadership and leads the school with the full support and confidence of the governors. She has established a supportive staff team who are fully committed to making good provision for the all round development of pupils. The headteacher is given very good professional support by the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher who manages the ASD Unit. There is a very clear focus on achieving higher standards, shared by both staff and governors. Key staff very effectively manage their areas in terms of regular monitoring of planning, pupils' work and teaching. The hardworking staff team work well together and are strongly committed to improvement. All members of staff feel fully involved and valued for their contribution to the life and work of the school. They carry out their roles well.
34. The management of the school is good and there are effective procedures in place to enable the school to run smoothly. There are effective strategies for evaluating how well the school is doing in order to plan for the future. The school makes effective use of its self-evaluation to inform the headteacher, staff and governors of the strengths and areas for development of the school. The experienced secretarial staff provide highly effective administrative and financial support. They make a significant contribution to the life of the school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good both in the ASD Unit and the school. Leadership and management of the provision are good.
35. The governance of the school is good. The chair of governors works very closely with the headteacher and provides a very good steer to the work of the governing body. They are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is achieved by personal visits

to see at first hand what is going on. They take a proactive role in monitoring the work of the school. The whole area of strategic planning has improved since the previous inspection.

36. Teachers are well supported by the teaching assistants. There is a good team spirit amongst the staff and they make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, attainment and development. Induction and mentoring systems are very good. There are high quality performance management procedures in place and the professional development of staff is very good.
37. The financial aspects of the school are well managed. The governing body's finance committee meets regularly, particularly when considering priorities and costings generated from the School Development Plan. The setting of the school budget is well supported by the school's finance officer, who regularly provides the governing body with financial updates in order that they may monitor expenditure and compare it with projected expenditure. The current financial balance is appropriate. At the end of the previous financial year, the carry forward figure was outside the recommended limit. The reason for this was to purchase equipment for the new ASD Unit. This has now been achieved. Best practice is successfully addressed. The recommendations of the most recent audit have been implemented and the finance officer manages her role effectively and efficiently. The other administrative staff are equally efficient and effective and 'front of house' management is courteous and professional.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,132,403	Balance from previous year	81,716
Total expenditure	1,133,122	Balance carried forward to the next	80,996
Expenditure per pupil	4,061		

SPECIAL PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS

What is the effectiveness of the ASD Unit?

The overall quality of the provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Across all school subjects and in pupils' personal and social development, the standards of achievement are good overall.
- The quality of teaching and learning within the special provision is good, with some excellent features, but IEPs are not always effectively used and strategies to support pupils' complex social and communication needs are not consistently applied.
- Although the new building is very good there are some shortcomings in the accommodation.
- The leadership and management of the provision are good and improvements since the last inspection are very good.

Commentary

38. The standards of pupils' attainments vary greatly due to the nature of their learning difficulties and severe and complex social and communication difficulties associated with their autistic spectrum disorders. Although most pupils in the provision are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum, they achieve well overall, taking into account their special educational needs. Work programmes are generally well matched to pupils' abilities and they make good progress across the subject areas, especially in literacy and numeracy, and in their personal and social development. For the few pupils whose attainments are much higher, very good opportunities are provided within the mainstream classes in the school for them to attend some of the lessons or to be fully included where appropriate with pupils in the rest of the school.
39. There are three classes in the special provision, each with their own teacher and support staff, with additional therapeutic input by the speech and language therapist for one day per week. There are 17 pupils at present on the roll. Pupils are organised into age-related classes and although class-sizes are small, each class has more than one year-group. These arrangements are appropriate and take into account pupils' curricular as well as their special educational needs.
40. The quality of the teaching and learning in the special provision is good overall, and at times very good or excellent. Lesson planning and IEPs are detailed and set out the main teaching and learning objectives and pupils' priority targets clearly. Although IEPs are reviewed regularly, these at times are not being used effectively in teaching and learning, and some of the targets have not been updated for a long time. Teaching and learning, as a consequence, are not always as tightly focused on the current individual needs of pupils as they could be.
41. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 hear stories as part of their literacy work and practise handwriting, using their names and other common words as a model. They begin to recognise 'big' and 'little', practise counting and learn about common two-dimensional shapes such as squares and triangles. Very good use is made of music, visual prompts and timetables, Makaton signing and relaxation techniques to ensure that teaching and learning are calm and purposeful and, where possible, free from distractions and stress.
42. Year 2 and a group of Year 3 pupils heard the Jewish story of Sukkot and helped to decorate a shelter in the classroom with flowers, fruit and branches. More able pupils can say the word Sukkot and know that the story is linked to harvest time. Lower attaining pupils practise matching letters to spell their own names and use zig-zag patterns as handwriting exercises. As appropriate, pupils fill in the missing words on worksheets and can copy short sentences correctly. They are able to spell simple consonant-vowel-consonant words such as bit, hit and sit. In numeracy lessons pupils begin to sort objects by shape and colour. They practise counting, using pennies and other objects. More able pupils can calculate simple addition sums and begin to measure in centimetres.
43. Other pupils in Year 3, 4 and 5 write, with support, their own news. Higher attaining pupils can read a range of texts, including storybooks such as *The Elves and the Shoemaker*. Their handwriting is neat and follows a joined-up style. Pupils continue to practise counting and can count in twos. Pupils do simple addition and subtraction sums and some with help can repeat the ten times table. They are also extending their knowledge and understanding of the properties of shape, and beginning to recognise pentagons, hexagons and octagons. All pupils in all the classes follow a broad and balanced curriculum that aims to meet each pupil's individual needs.

44. The special provision adopts a range of strategies to support pupils' complex social and communication needs, including Teaching and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children (TEACCH). In the best lessons these and other autism-friendly strategies are used and applied consistently and effectively to enable pupils to engage, participate and become involved in their learning. Although teaching is always satisfactory or better, it is less effective when these strategies are not consistently used by all staff, whether in the special provision or in the main part of the school.
45. The school has a new purpose-built building adjoining the main school which has direct access to the special provision. This building is very good and replaces the poor and unsafe accommodation at the time of the last inspection. However, due to the severe and complex needs of the pupils, more separate areas are required for individual pupils to work in and there is a need for a 'quiet' room where distressed pupils can be calm and refocus. Resources are good, but the school acknowledges that there is a need for more multi-sensory equipment and facilities to augment and support the complex social and communication needs of the pupils.
46. The leadership and management provided by the head of the special provision are good. She leads a very committed team of teaching and support staff and there is a very detailed and relevant action plan in place for 2004/05. A training programme is in place for all staff, including midday supervisors. Admission arrangements have still not been finally agreed with the LEA and this is having a significant impact on the school's ability to plan for inclusion opportunities and in ensuring the provision meets the needs of all its pupils. Although the lack of clarity in the division of responsibility between the school and the LEA has still not been resolved, improvements since the last inspection in the management, staffing and accommodation of the special provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders have been very good. The headteacher and the governing body provide very good strategic oversight of the provision.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and there has been good improvement since the last inspection in curriculum and resources.

Children enter Reception in the September or January before they are five. At the time of the inspection there were 14 children on roll. Standards on entry are below average. All children achieve well, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, due to good teaching. Good systems identify how well the children are doing. They are supported well in their learning. Work is comprehensively planned and is pitched at the right levels for the children's capabilities. The good curriculum is planned around the early learning goals. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides good direction for the work in this area. Parents are fully involved in helping their children. They are pleased with the progress their children make and the quality of the provision.

The classroom celebrates all areas of learning. It is bright and welcoming, stimulating and spacious. It is used well to support learning. However, the outside area has been identified by the school for further development and to enhance learning in the physical area of learning. There is no large fixed equipment and resources are shared with the youngest children in the Unit.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop good levels of personal independence.
- Their achievement is good due to good teaching.
- Relationships are very good with both adults and peers.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's confidence and independence.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and, as a result, children achieve very well in their social development. Most are on course to meet the early learning goals, and a significant minority to exceed these. This clearly reflects the emphasis the school places on developing the whole child. The class teacher has established very secure routines so that the children feel confident and safe. They have many valuable opportunities to work alone or in small groups. Very good role models are set by adults and children are encouraged to be independent. They have a very good sense of right and wrong and are very co-operative, friendly and polite. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and use every opportunity to praise children's independence, for example, in the exciting and stimulating Poverest surgery area.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through an interesting curriculum.

Commentary

48. Most children are on course to meet their goals in this area of learning and a significant minority are on course to exceed these. Good teaching ensures good coverage of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Children are making good progress through the many valuable opportunities they are given to talk and listen. The teacher takes every opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary through probing questioning and the children are encouraged to answer in sentences. For example, when talking about Poverest surgery the teacher asked 'What is wrong with the patient?' 'Where are the bandages?' and 'Is she better now?'. These searching questions resulted in stimulating dialogue, for example, 'She is hurt' and 'I am bandaging her arm'. Children enjoy books and listen attentively when a story such as *Little Red Riding Hood* is read to them. Children have made a good start at reading and by the end of the Reception Year most are on the early stages of the reading scheme. They are making good progress with their writing. Most can write their name and good use is made of ICT to support their learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through a good practical curriculum.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical development.

Commentary

49. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's skills both formally and informally. Children achieve well and most are on course to meet their early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. A significant minority are on target to exceed these. The children are enthusiastic and confident. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Teaching and learning are good. The children readily recognise numerals 0 to 9 and are beginning to solve number problems. They especially enjoy finding out which number Tommy the Teddy has landed on. They spot the missing number on the washing line and can explain clearly which number comes before and after a given number such as five. They understand early addition and what doubling means and happily use numbers to ten in familiar situations. They enjoy singing songs to practise their knowledge of numbers such as *Five Currant Buns*. They can sort and name two-dimensional shapes. Children's interest is sustained well and practical activities prepare the way well for future learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching, which is focused on developing children's skills through a practical curriculum.

- Children have valuable opportunities to use computers.
- Good use is made of visits in the local area and visitors.

Commentary

50. When children enter Reception they have good experiences to draw upon. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Staff build up children's confidence in using the computer. As a result, they have good attitudes and display good skills. Most are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. A significant minority are on course to exceed these. Children learn about festivals and cultures such as Harvest and Diwali. They are gaining a good knowledge of nature and wildlife and enjoy looking for Autumn leaves and insects. In science, the children learn the meaning of making a prediction. Visitors to school make an effective contribution to children's achievement in this area of learning. Good links have been made with a local pizza shop and children enjoy designing and making a pizza.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

51. Because there were no opportunities to observe the work, it is not possible to make a judgement about the provision or standards in this area of learning. The good records kept by the teacher show that the children achieve well. They use increasing control touching, patting, following, catching and throwing. Children have limited opportunities for outdoor play and resources are shared. The school has plans to improve the outside area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because they experience a good range of creative activities.
- The imaginative play area is used well to encourage children's creative response.

Commentary

52. There are many daily opportunities for children to develop creativity. Children have access to a good range of materials, with many opportunities to mix colours to paint their self-portraits and create lovely collages of their talking partners. They enjoy using different painting techniques and have created leaves with glitter printing and blow art fish. Teaching is good and most children are on course to meet or exceed their learning goals by the end of the year. They enjoy dressing up in colourful costumes and role-play in the Poverest surgery. They achieve well in singing and percussion work.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- School initiatives have raised standards.
- All pupils achieve well and make good progress because the quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject. They are enthusiastic in lessons and want to participate because lessons are interesting.

- The quality of the school library limits opportunities to promote an interest in reading and to develop research skills across the curriculum.
- The quality of presentation is sometimes untidy and marking across the school is inconsistent. Teachers do not always provide clear guidance about how to improve the quality of pupils' writing.
- There is good leadership and management by the subject leader.

Commentary

53. Inspection evidence shows that standards in all aspects of English are average in Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 they are above average. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress and demonstrate a good attitude to learning. This is because teachers deliver interesting lessons which address the needs of all pupils.
54. Standards in speaking and listening are average throughout the school. However, the school has recently introduced a greater focus on drama to help with the development of this aspect of English. There has been a good improvement in developing fluency and accuracy in reading which was a key issue in the last report. Standards in reading are rising especially in the junior phase because there is a carefully structured reading programme, and staff are deployed effectively to support those pupils in greatest need. As a result, standards in reading are now above expectations by the age of 11. New books designed to appeal to boys have been put into classrooms and the gap in the standards achieved by boys and girls is closing. However, the school library is drab and unappealing. Book stock is more limited and some reference books are out of date. Following the recent attendance at a training course, many teachers are combining music, art, dance and drama to provide a stimulus for creative writing; the effect of this coupled with the systematic teaching of writing for a wide variety of purposes is beginning to raise standards in writing. However, the presentation of some pupils' work is untidy and the newly introduced handwriting scheme has not yet had time to take effect. The marking across the school is inconsistent; however the school is addressing this through the consistent use of formative assessment.
55. Teaching overall is good, and during the inspection, both excellent and very good lessons were seen. All lessons are interesting. In the best lessons the teachers used a range of resources and teaching strategies to suit pupils' different learning styles. This was evident in the two excellent lessons seen in the Year 1 and 2 classes. Both these lessons involved pupils using most of their senses in active learning to help reinforce the ideas being taught. In these lessons, pupils' enjoyment was clearly evident. Throughout the school, pupils of different abilities are given good support. In the phonic lesson given to a small group of Year 2 pupils with special educational needs, the work provided was carefully structured and the tasks and pace of the lesson helped them all to achieve well. When pupils with special educational needs are working in the classroom they are given valuable help from able teaching assistants.
56. In many lessons, the teachers skilfully used the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate various skills and techniques. Teachers have high standards of both behaviour and work, and as a result, most lessons progress at a good pace. Some teachers in Years 5 and 6 encourage pupils to evaluate how well their own work and their partner's work met the standard expected. As a result of good teaching, by Year 6 pupils are adept at writing for different purposes. However, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and sometimes it does little to help pupils know what they need to do in order to improve.

57. Leadership and management are good. The national test results are analysed each year and adaptations made to the curriculum where gaps are found in pupils' knowledge. This analysis also identifies individuals and groups of pupils who would benefit from additional support. This helps management to deploy staff effectively and is a contributory factor to raising standards. Individual targets are in place and this is also helping to raise standards. There is an appropriate focus on raising standards in writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The school has a curriculum which emphasises the use of writing skills across the curriculum. Teachers often incorporate learning from other subjects in their literacy lessons. Word-processing skills are often used to present writing in different formats and for illustration. Also, techniques learned in design and technology lessons were used to make moving pictures to increase the enjoyment of the readers. History provides a suitable context for descriptive writing, as pupils investigate historical objects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are good and often very good. They are encouraged to apply their knowledge and skills to real life problems.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good with examples of very good teaching.
- Pupils display positive attitudes towards their work.
- The leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinator are effective.
- Assessment procedures are very efficient, well established and used effectively to set targets in order to improve pupils' learning.

Commentary

59. The standards attained by Year 6 pupils in the 2003 national tests, were well above the national average compared to similar schools. They were in line with the national average in Year 2. Incorporated into these results were the results of the pupils in the ASD Unit; therefore the benchmarking data against similar schools was not representative of the school's achievement. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are reaching standards which are in line with those expected for their age, whilst those in Year 6 are reaching standards above those expected nationally. Overall, standards have improved from below average at the time of the last inspection, due to the successful implementation of the numeracy strategy and effective teaching strategies. Achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good overall. Mathematical concepts are reinforced with real life situations. Throughout the school, pupils have a good understanding of numbers, shape and space, data-handling and establishing relationships of patterns.

60. The good use of practical investigation and problem solving offers a positive transference from theoretical learning to practical application. This systematic approach has a positive impact on helping to raise the levels of pupils' mathematical understanding. This indicates an improvement from the previous inspection when this area was judged to be underdeveloped. They show confidence when using mathematical vocabulary and this together with their confidence to apply mathematical learning to different everyday situations, is a strength of the school's practical approach in mathematics.

61. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and is a significant factor in helping pupils reach expected and above expected standards. Teaching is delivered at a brisk pace with high expectations. Teachers use quick-fire probing questioning to gauge pupils' understanding and management of pupil behaviour is always good. They use different methods to explain new work and often use the newly acquired interactive whiteboard effectively to support mathematical learning, making the best use of a visual approach. However, more use of the stand-alone computers in the classroom has been identified by the school to further support mathematical understanding. Day-to-day assessment is used well and provides an effective strategy to inform future planning and teaching. The good quality additional support given to those pupils who are identified as having special educational needs assists them to achieve the expected levels and many of them reach them successfully. Pupils are always aware of what they are expected to learn through identification of learning objectives. This encourages and promotes good pupil – teacher interaction. Many lessons are lively and capture pupils' interest so they are able to explain in their mental sessions, what strategies they use to perform complete calculations and arrive at a solution. There are examples of very effective teaching and pupils clearly enjoy their mathematics. In these lessons, achievement is very good. In a Year 3/4 lesson, the quality of teaching and learning was excellent because of the excellent way in which the lesson was structured, and the outstanding support for pupils in their group work.
62. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in mathematics lessons are good. Pupils are very attentive and keen to learn. As they work their way through the school they are becoming increasingly self-assured. They work independently and collaboratively, showing respect, consideration and support for their peers, as well as the support staff who offer all pupils help, guidance and care.
63. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Data is analysed to provide pupils' general performance in relation to strengths and weaknesses. This information is used effectively. The subject co-ordinator sets targets which are used efficiently to monitor progress on a regular basis. This provides accurate information in order to help pupils, whose attainment is borderline, to achieve the higher results. Planning is carefully monitored to ensure that coverage is according to statutory requirements. Effective planning ensures that pupils of all abilities are able to make good progress as they move throughout the school. The subject co-ordinator is very effective and self-analytical, which helps improve target setting to continue the current upward trend in standards now being experienced.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The pupils' skills in mathematics are used well in other subjects of the curriculum and this helps reinforce their understanding of mathematical concepts by using them in practical and relevant ways. Links with ICT are in place and it is used well to support learning in most mathematics lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in science by Year 6.

- Investigative skills are developing well.
- Teaching and achievement are good.
- The quality of the curriculum is good.
- Science is very well led.
- The use of ICT in assessment is being developed.

Commentary

65. In the 2003 national tests, standards in Year 6 were average in comparison with similar schools. At the time of the inspection, standards were in line with expectations by Year 2 and above by Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were found to be below the national average in Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of the curriculum has also improved and is now good. In addition, there has been more emphasis placed on investigative work. Achievement in science is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Skills and knowledge are built on well throughout the school. Work is matched well to ability and adults support pupils well in their learning. The higher achieving pupils are challenged well in their learning.
66. Examination of pupils' work and discussion with them shows that investigative skills are developing well. Pupils throughout the school are developing a good understanding of fair testing. In Years 5 and 6, pupils gained a good understanding of electricity and circuits and the function of the heart. All pupils were conscientious and fully involved in setting up and conducting their own fair tests into what affects the brightness of a bulb and how exercise affects our heart. They achieved well through very good teaching and very good resources to use in their investigative work.
67. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. A Year 4 teacher encouraged pupils to make good use of data they recorded following an investigation into forces. They were highly motivated and enjoyed conducting a fair test to see if surface affects friction when kicking a football. Pupils showed a good eye for detail and used ICT well to support their learning. Their progress was monitored well by the teacher.
68. The quality of the curriculum and the planning is good and there is good development of pupils' investigative work throughout the school. The subject co-ordinator is providing very good clear educational direction for work in this subject. Effective use is made of ICT to support pupils in their learning. Particular attention is paid to developing pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary. With good systems in place to monitor and improve the provision, the school has a good capacity to improve further. There has been good improvement in monitoring progress since the previous inspection and the quality of the curriculum has improved. The current focus is to make increased use of ICT to monitor pupils' progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Good leadership and management by the subject co-ordinator have made sure that the subject is well resourced and teachers have the necessary skills and support.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.

- Where interactive whiteboards are available in classrooms, these are used well across the curriculum. However, computers in the classrooms are not always used often enough across all subjects of the curriculum.

Commentary

69. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national averages. This represents a good improvement on the standards seen at the last inspection. All pupils achieve well and make good progress in their acquisition of basic ICT skills.
70. Although it was possible to observe only three lessons, analysis of pupils' work, the use of ICT in other lessons and discussions with pupils indicate that teaching overall is good. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of how to use ICT. In conversation, they confidently use subject-specific vocabulary. They demonstrated their ability to access, create, modify, save and retrieve data and programs and they have the opportunity to use digital cameras and electronic microscopes.
71. Teaching of ICT skills in the computer suite is consistently good. For example, in a good Year 6 ICT lesson the pupils were able to make good use of the fact file program to find out useful information about Orpington. They achieved well because the teacher had made effective use of the website at the outset of the lesson, and gave clear explanations as to how to use websites for their research. Teaching assistants support pupils well in their learning especially those with special educational needs. Where interactive whiteboards are in place, these are used well in all subjects of the curriculum, but, the computers in the classrooms are used less frequently to practise ICT skills across the curriculum. An appropriate system of assessment is in place but as yet this is not used to address individual pupils' needs or to set targets for improvement.
72. Leadership and management are good. A well-constructed and managed programme of development has made sure all issues raised at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The subject is now well resourced and staff training has given teachers the necessary skills. Management is not complacent and is seeking further to develop ICT. There is an appropriate action plan that includes updating the school's policy for use of the Internet and the purchase of more interactive whiteboards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. The use of integrated whiteboards has proved to be a powerful teaching tool in other subjects especially when introducing lessons. During the inspection, clear evidence was seen of pupils word-processing skills by Year 5 and 6, to present writing in different formats and for different purposes, as when creating class poetry books and when writing stories for younger pupils. Effective use of fonts, size, colour and the addition of illustrations are used in history and to provide impact and emphasis to lessons learned in science and in personal, social and health education. ICT applications are frequently used in mathematics as, for example, when making graphs and working out mathematical problems. Pupils in Year 2 used a digital camera and word-processing to illustrate and describe how they made moving monsters. However, the use of ICT to support some subjects across the curriculum is not yet used consistently on stand-alone computers in the classroom.

HUMANITIES

Geography

74. Only two geography lessons were seen, both in Year 6. A review of pupils' work and discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 shows that standards are about in line with national expectations through the school. Discussions with pupils show that they have positive attitudes and enjoy the subject.
75. It is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching but some issues did emerge from the scrutiny of work. Teachers are not always planning together as effectively as they might do. Teachers are not always following the marking policy and they do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils should do. The assessment procedures are not being consistently followed to monitor pupils' progress and help identify areas of need.
76. Good use is made of the local area in field studies. In the lessons seen, for example, pupils were looking at Orpington High Street and planning a field study. There was effective learning of geographical skills and good use made of ICT to support the subject.
77. The subject co-ordinator has a clear awareness of what needs to be done to improve standards. For example, the action plan recognises the need to improve assessment.

History

78. No overall judgement was made on the provision in history because this was not a major focus of the inspection. However evidence from the lessons seen, the work in pupils' books and gained from discussion with pupils, indicates that standards achieved are average at both Year 2 and Year 6. In all lessons seen the relationships were positive. Pupils behaved well and were responsive to teachers. However, the work in children's books is sometimes untidy and incomplete. Tasks are not always differentiated according to pupils' ability.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recently appointed co-ordinators have a good vision of what needs to be done to improve provision and raise standards.
- A recently published new locally agreed syllabus has just been introduced which should help to raise standards.
- Marking and assessment procedures are not used consistently to improve learning.
- There has not been sufficient monitoring, which has led to lack of continuity across the curriculum.

COMMENTARY

79. Only one lesson was observed but this and a review of pupils' work indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress and are attaining standards in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, receive good support and make the same progress as all other pupils.
80. It is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning from such a small sample. However, an analysis of pupils' work across the school shows that there is

sometimes a lack of consistency in marking and it is not being used as effectively as it might be to raise standards. Work is sometimes untidy and unfinished. Although teachers know the pupils well, there is no consistent use of assessment through the school to monitor and help improve progress. In the one Year 6 lesson that was observed, the teaching was good and involved the pupils well so that all learned and achieved well. Pupils were looking at areas of famine around the world and the work of Christian Aid. Good use was made of ICT and the Internet to research and inform pupils and the interesting facts discovered led to some good discussion. The pupils were able to relate what they were doing to their own lives and make telling comparisons. For example, several pupils spoken to were appalled to learn that 85 out of every 100 people in the world have no access to water in their homes.

81. The subject has not been well monitored in the past and this has led to some lack of continuity through the school. The recently appointed subject leaders are well aware of this need and have a clear vision of what is needed to move the subject on and raise standards. Part of the problem has arisen because teachers were awaiting the publication of a new agreed syllabus. This has now been put in place and is already providing a focus for improvement.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

82. Only two lessons were seen in **art and design**. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about overall provision; however the evidence available indicates that it is good. In addition to observing lessons, display work was viewed and pupils were spoken to about what they had learnt in art and design.
83. It is evident from teachers' planning, the prospectus and discussions with pupils that work planned in art and design is interesting and varied. This is an improvement on the last inspection. A lively approach was observed in a good Year 5/6 art lesson, when pupils concentrated hard to create snake and boomerang mobiles in the style of aboriginal art. They were inspired by the examples shown by their teacher and took careful note of her thoughts on the skills and techniques they needed to use. They maintained good attention as they produced their own designs. The pupils then collaborated well with their partners to praise and evaluate each other's work. The teacher supported all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, well in their learning. Displays are bright and colourful around the school. For example, pupils in the Infant Art Club have produced some very good quality weavings, masks and bags, brightly decorated with felt birds and feathers. Junior phase pupils have worked closely with a professional artist and produced an imaginative, good quality frieze of the jungle. Good use is made of ICT in art to create repeating pattern and shape pictures in the style of Kandinsky and Paul Klee. The subject makes an effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
84. The curriculum is good overall. It is broad, balanced and relevant. It is enriched by experiences such as creative art projects. Pupils thoroughly enjoy making puppets, marbling, clay work, collage work, two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Standards are above expectations for pupils by age seven and in line with expectations for pupils by age 11. Evidence from a scrutiny of work shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. The co-ordinator is providing good clear educational direction for the subject. The school has developed good systems for pupils to self-evaluate their work; however there is an inconsistency in the use of assessment to support pupils' learning. There has been good

improvement in the quality of the curriculum, planning and assessment procedures since the last inspection.

85. It was not possible to observe any **design and technology** lessons during the inspection. An analysis of pupils' work and some good displays through the school shows that standards through the school are satisfactory. There are a number of examples of work of a high quality on display. Pupils enjoy the subject and were keen to show the inspector some of the work being done through the school. Year 6 pupils, for example, demonstrated the moving pulleys made by Years 3 and 4, linking in with the literacy work on the book, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*.
86. There is an inconsistent use of assessment procedures throughout the school and this makes it hard for teachers to monitor how well pupils are doing and identify strengths and weaknesses. There is also a lack of consistent and effective monitoring of design and technology to ensure continuity. The subject leader has only recently taken on the responsibility and is well aware of the need to improve monitoring and assessment.

Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well because of the effective music teaching being developed in the school.
- The quality of singing overall is good.
- The music curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular clubs and by visits from professional musicians.
- The subject leader has recently been appointed and is committed to raising the standard of music across the whole school.

Commentary

87. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are at least in line with nationally expected levels and above in singing. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in singing throughout the school. This is supported by opportunities for them to perform, which encourages an appreciation of music as well as promoting confidence through the use of drama. This was in evidence in their recent production of *The Aliens have Landed* when singing particularly was of a high quality. Standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the previous inspection but the appointment of the new subject leader is already impacting on raising standards. The musical experiences offered enrich and promote musical development. Pupils experience a good range of non-European music, such as Aboriginal and Caribbean music. They enjoy working with different visiting musicians who promote and develop understanding of strings and woodwind. Recently the school choir performed with other choirs in the Albert Hall.
88. Teaching is good overall. Lessons have clear objectives and these are discussed with the pupils. This engages their interests and encourages all to participate fully. Within the lessons are musical elements, such as dynamics, texture and duration, and pupils' musical vocabulary is developed well. The content is well matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils listen carefully and are able to copy accurately a range of rhythms.

89. The expertise of the music specialist teacher is clearly evident in the enjoyment of singing in the daily acts of collective worship. His enthusiasm for music is contagious and pupils respond positively to this. He adopts a professional approach to establishing a school choir through professional auditioning and discussing with pupils his expectations. Resources are satisfactory.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils achieve standards that are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good features.
- Extra-curricular activities make a significant contribution to extending and complementing school based activities.
- Leadership and management are effective.

Commentary

90. Standards in physical education are above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement throughout the school since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
91. Over time, in school, and supported with many extra-curricular activities, pupils develop confidence, self-discipline and other personal qualities, such as independence and interdependence. They are aware of the need to warm up and cool down, to handle equipment with care as well as understanding the effect activity has on the body. In gymnastics, pupils acquire good style in their balance and sequence work. They demonstrate pike and straddle movements emphasising good stretched positions with ankles extended and toes pointed. In games, pupils acquire skills, such as dodging, feinting, passing and catching, which can be transferred to many games' situations. Pupils attend the local swimming pool and by Year 6 in excess of 75 per cent of pupils achieve the 25 metre unaided swim. In the summer, pupils are actively involved in athletics. In matches and tournaments pupils acquire a competitive edge, whilst retaining respect for opposing teams as well as each other. Teachers ensure that all pupils participate fully and are good role models in terms of appropriate dress and learning from each other.
92. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers consider the individual needs of pupils very well. They provide the opportunities for them to work in pairs, evaluate each other's performance and develop strong partnerships to promote social interaction. The management of pupils' behaviour, subject expertise and use of time and resources contribute to the high standards being achieved. The curriculum for physical education is very good. The extensive opportunities provided in the extra-curricular programme enrich and enhance the acquisition of skills development in this subject area very well. As a result, individual pupils and teams compete in a variety of sports. The school has a wide range of resources and the accommodation in school is appropriate. The residential experience of Year 6 pupils contributes strongly to the pupils' physical education, extending and complementing school activities as well as promoting independence and interdependence. The potential for continued development is good. Pupils' progress is

well supported by staff. The co-ordinator is providing good, clear educational direction for the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has an effective programme and ensures a consistent approach in all classes.
- Leadership and management are very effective.

Commentary

93. The school has a particularly well-organised programme, which is delivered consistently, applied equitably and impacts positively. The programme provides very good guidance to teachers and promotes pupils' achievement well. The quality of teaching and learning is good and leads to good achievement and high standards. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
94. Very good opportunities are provided in all classes for circle time⁴ to discuss matters concerning them. Pupils indicate their appreciation for these opportunities. The programme includes drug awareness and sex education. Similarly, healthy eating and keeping safe are aspects of pupils' personal development that are explored effectively, enabling pupils to develop a good awareness of their own selves and of others through class lessons, *Life Bus* visit and *Junior Citizen*. Throughout the programme, pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities for their own actions and the actions of others. For example, the class council feeding into school council approach is proving to be highly successful and pupils appreciate the opportunity to consider others as well as themselves. Their awareness of citizenship is promoted well through a practical approach, including playground pals, and the establishment of a school council. This helps to develop pupils' committee and debating skills.
95. The leadership and management of this area are very well managed by the deputy headteacher. He has carefully considered the needs of the pupils and has provided a positive environment for learning, which is acceptable and exciting. Pupils on the school council and those who act as class councillors feel they are contributing to school life.

⁴ During 'circle time' children sit in a circle and discuss personal feelings and thoughts.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
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	2
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).