

INSPECTION REPORT

AINSLIE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Chingford

LEA area: Waltham Forest

Unique reference number: 130343

Headteacher: Miss Sonia Titcomb

Lead inspector: Miss Cheryl Thompson

Dates of inspection: 29 – 31 March, 2004

Inspection number: 255298

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	384
School address:	140 Ainslie Road Waltham Forest London
Postcode:	E4 9DD
Telephone number:	020 8523 7913
Fax number:	020 8523 7655
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Father Christopher Owens
Date of previous inspection:	22/04/02

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Ainslie Wood is a larger than average primary school. It has 384 pupils on roll including 58 children who attend the part-time nursery classes. Attainment on entry is average with the weakest area being communication and literacy. The school serves the local area but also takes in pupils whose families move to Waltham Forest but cannot find school places near to their new homes. These pupils stay until a place in a school nearer home is available and this is the main cause of the high mobility in the school. The majority of pupils are white with their origins in the United Kingdom. The other main ethnic groups in the school are Black or Black British Caribbean and Black or Black British African. There is a small number of children from refugee or asylum-seeking families. About a quarter of the school's population has English as an additional language with around seven per cent at the early stages of learning the language. The main languages are Turkish, Bengali and Urdu. There is an average number of pupils with special educational needs but an above average number of pupils with statements of specific need. Their difficulties are identified as moderate learning and emotional and behavioural. The school gained Investors in People status in 2002 and is part of the local Education Action Zone.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22822	Cheryl Thompson	Lead inspector	English, art and design
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector	
25787	Edmond Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, music, physical education
22704	Gary Williams	Team inspector	Science, religious education, design and technology, special educational needs
18502	Vivienne McTiffen	Team inspector	Foundation stage, geography, history, information and communication technology
22476	Sue Vale	Team inspector	English as an additional language

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Overall evaluation

Ainslie Wood is an improving school providing a **sound** education for its pupils. Very good leadership from the headteacher provides a keen sense of purpose for the school. Standards are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are sound overall with much that is good. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very clear leadership by the headteacher with good support from assistant headteachers and governors.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 in ability groups for mathematics is raising standards at a good rate but more needs to be achieved in English and information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6.
- Half the teaching observed was good but there are too many variations in its quality to ensure consistent, good learning.
- The nursery gives children a good start to school.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their personal qualities and take responsibility.
- Attendance is well below average.
- In spite of the school's good efforts, not enough parents are supportive of their child's learning.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in April 2002 when the school was deemed to have serious weaknesses in several areas of its work. Improved governance and very determined leadership by the headteacher have resulted in very good systems for checking up on the work of the school. Consequently, standards are rising and underachievement noted at the last inspection has been dealt with effectively. The school has a good capacity to improve further, although the rate of improvement is likely to be dependent on recruiting and retaining teachers; this is a local problem.

Standards achieved

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	No Year 6 pupils in this school until 2002.	C	D	D
mathematics		E	C	C
science		D	C	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.*

Throughout the school, achievement is **satisfactory** and improving. This reflects the impact of the headteacher's strong focus on raising standards and good use of tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets for future attainment. Pupils at the early stages of learning and using English achieve well because they get very good support. Standards attained in Year 2 and Year 6 national tests are now average overall. Inspection evidence gives a mixed picture of standards but confirms continuing improvement. Standards in Reception are average. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading but around average in other subjects. In Year 6, standards are average in mathematics, science and religious education but below in information and communication technology and English, especially in speaking and listening. The current Year 5 and 6 pupils have had a high number of teachers in a relatively short time. This turnover of staff has affected their attitudes to work and progress over time and has led to gaps in their learning. These gaps in

knowledge are being tackled but for some pupils, especially in Year 5, there is much ground to make up.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are **satisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall and good from nursery to Year 2. Behaviour is improving but there remains a significant number of pupils, mainly boys, in Years 5 and 6 whose attitudes and behaviour are, at times, unacceptable. There are not enough opportunities for older pupils to take on responsibility. Attendance is poor. Similarly, a few parents do not get their children to school on time which means their children lose out by missing the introductory part of lessons.

Quality of education

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching is **satisfactory** overall. Half of the teaching observed was good or better and it was always good in the nursery. Teaching in mathematics is good because planning is based on what pupils already know and need to learn next; consequently, pupils learn at a good rate and standards are rising. Across the school, it is the variations in the quality of teaching that lead to patchy learning and achievement. In the good lessons observed, teachers set very high expectations with tasks at a good level and deployed classroom assistants effectively. In these briskly paced lessons, pupils had positive attitudes and achieved well. Where teaching is satisfactory or, occasionally, unsatisfactory, there are two main reasons: it is either because tasks are not carefully matched to pupils' abilities or teachers cannot manage a few pupils' challenging behaviour well enough to ensure that they get on with their work.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and for Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is sound with good provision for extra-curricular activities. The headteacher's use of the relatively new system to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics is having a very positive effect on raising standards. Links with parents are sound. The school recognises that more must be done to encourage parents' involvement in their child's learning

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are **good**. The last inspection identified significant weaknesses in leadership and management. These weaknesses have been resolved very well through the new headteacher's high quality, perceptive leadership and good, improved governance. The headteacher has an exceptional understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is now a crystal clear vision for ensuring high standards and very good management structures in place to ensure these. Two senior teachers provide good support as assistant headteachers but their management roles are constrained by almost full-time class teaching. However, local recruitment difficulties mean there is no deputy headteacher and there are several subjects without subject leaders; these staffing difficulties prevent management from being very good. On appointment, the headteacher inherited a significant budget deficit; consequently resources are at a minimum level. Careful planning is reducing this deficit.

Parents' and pupils' views of the school

Only a very small number of parents responded to the inspection questionnaire. Discussions with parents showed them to be satisfied with their child's education and pleased to see the improvements in standards. They would like to see more music in the school. Pupils like school, especially the sports activities; a few felt some Year 5 and 6 pupils' behaviour was not 'nice'.

Improvements needed

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

- Raise standards further, especially in English and information and communication technology, by eliminating the variations in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their personal qualities.

- Improve attendance.
- Encourage parents to be more involved in their child's education.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is satisfactory and improving. There is no difference in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs or different ethnic minority groups. Pupils at the early stages of learning and using English achieve well because they get very good support from staff and pupils. Standards are average overall except in reading in Year 2 where they are above and in English and information and communication technology at Year 6 where they are below.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 standards are rising, especially in mathematics but are not yet high enough in English and information and communication technology.
- Across Years 3 to 6, there are gaps in pupils' learning.
- Pupil mobility can adversely affect overall standards and test results.

Commentary

1. The last inspection identified underachievement by more able pupils in Years 3 to 5 and that many in Year 6 were making unsatisfactory progress. The underachievement has been tackled well by the implementation of good assessment procedures and the tracking procedures. Planning caters well for more able pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and there was no underachievement noted in lessons.

2. During the inspection too few lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music, physical education, geography or history to make an overall judgement about provision. However, from discussions with pupils, work on display and in pupils' books, standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history appear to be at the expected levels. The school has correctly identified that in the current Years 5 and 6, girls generally do better than boys.

3. The focus on raising standards since the last inspection has met with considerable success. As a result of improved subject leadership and very clear guidance from the headteacher, Year 6 standards in mathematics rose from well below average in 2002 to average in 2003. English is not moving forward at such a pace, but there are improvements. A great emphasis has been put on developing pupils' writing skills, especially for boys. A new spelling programme has also been introduced and is having a good impact. The emphasis on writing is showing good results especially in Years 1 to 3 where standards are around average. Many pupils in Years 4 to 6 still have much to make up in English and standards are mainly below average. However, boys are now showing more positive attitudes to writing in response to carefully chosen stimuli, such as the current focus on pirate adventures in Year 6. Speaking and listening skills have, correctly, been identified by the school as in need of improvement; standards are below average particularly in Years 5 and 6. Hearing a sample of Year 6 pupils read and discussing their reading habits and preferences shows that few read willingly at home and standards are below average. In contrast, Year 2 pupils are avid readers, read enthusiastically and regularly at home; standards here are above average.

4. The overall judgement that achievement across the school is satisfactory must be viewed in context. For Years 5 and 6, particularly, progress in learning as they have moved through the school has been affected by two key factors: a very high turnover of staff and, until relatively recently, lack of clear management structures to ensure a focus on standards. Both factors have affected these pupils' cumulative learning and attitudes. Consequently, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and a significant number have desultory attitudes to learning. They have much to make up,

especially in English, where, for example, speaking and listening skills are under-developed and basic spelling is not embedded. With the new, clear management structures in place and a very strong focus on pupils' progress, achievement is improving. In lessons observed across the school, when teaching was good, achievement was frequently good because pupils were working to capacity and making up for lost learning opportunities.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. The above table shows standards in 2003 national tests are average except in reading where they were below. Inspection evidence shows standards in reading have improved considerably this year and are now above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (27.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.9 (25.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.0 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. The table above shows standards in 2003 national tests to be average except in English where they are below. Inspection evidence shows a similar picture for 2004.

7. In some year groups there has been a very high turnover of pupils and this can adversely affect overall standards and test results. The school's tracking system, although relatively new, is showing that pupils new to the school are making at least satisfactory progress. The school has a turnover of about a fifth of its population with roughly the same number of pupils arriving as leaving. For example, nearly a fifth of the current Year 6 joined at Year 4 or 5. Pupils joining the school may only stay a short time until their families find a place for them in a school nearer to their home. Many of these pupils may have had several changes of school with the result that their attainment and behaviour are often not as good as they should be. There is also an increasing number of pupils who join the school with very little English and, whilst they make good progress, their fluency and vocabulary are not sufficiently developed to help them do well in national tests.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is poor and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show a good level of interest in all the activities provided for them.
- Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions.
- A significant minority of boys in Years 5 and 6 do not have a positive attitude to school.

- There are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility and to help them become more mature.
- Attendance is well below average and parents do not take this matter seriously enough.
- The school has good procedures in place to promote and to monitor attendance.

Commentary

8. The vast majority of pupils thoroughly enjoy the many opportunities provided by the school to make learning more relevant and interesting. They willingly attend a variety of clubs at lunchtime and after school promoting such diverse activities as mathematics, football and calligraphy. Pupils are interested in their work in class and complete it successfully. It is often attractively presented and displayed showing the value they place on their efforts and their pride in completing a task successfully.

9. In Reception, most pupils will attain the expected learning goals in their personal and social development. Behaviour is good in the nursery, Reception and Year 1 and Year 2 classes. In these classes, pupils are keen to please and have good relationships with each other and with adults. The calm yet purposeful working atmosphere created in classrooms results in pupils concentrating well and learning new skills and knowledge effectively. Pupils are eager to learn and are keen to do well.

Exclusions

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	218	4	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	22	3	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	2	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	30	6	0
Black or Black British – African	25	2	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	10	1	0
Any other ethnic group	2	1	0

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

10. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' attitudes are satisfactory overall and relationships are sound. There are a small number of pupils, almost invariably boys, in Years 5 and 6 who do not take school or their learning seriously enough. This is particularly noticeable when they are not well managed by teachers or other adults working in the school. For their age, they display an immature attitude in their relationships and to work. The school has recognised this problem and is currently trying out a new behaviour policy to guide pupils' behaviour and deal more consistently with pupils who persistently transgress. This is already proving successful as can be seen in the rapid fall in the number of temporary exclusions since last year when there were 35 days of exclusion. In this school year, there have been five.

11. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory overall and good for the younger pupils. As the school has grown to include older pupils it has not successfully put in place sufficient opportunities for these pupils to take responsibility. There is no real status conferred on Year 6 pupils to make younger pupils look up to them and aspire to emulate them when they reach the top of the school. The school council is proving a good way to involve pupils in the running of the school and their views are listened to and respected. For example, they highlighted the need for classroom games for wet playtimes, raised the funds through a 'mufti' day and chose and ordered suitable games from a catalogue. These were delivered and distributed to the classes with great excitement. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory but there are many opportunities missed, for example, in assemblies, to encourage pupils to think or reflect upon what makes people or occasions special. In religious education lessons, pupils have reasonable opportunities to learn

about the principles of other faiths, such as Buddhism. However, they do not always have the opportunity to relate their learning to their own lives.

12. Pupils' cultural development is good. It is well supported through the many high quality displays around the school showing artefacts from different lands and celebrating the many languages spoken in the school and local community. There is also a Turkish club for pupils to learn about Turkish culture and traditions. Visiting musicians such as African drummers and many art projects looking at art techniques from around the world also help to raise the pupils' understanding of other cultures. The school also regularly celebrates Black History Month and festivals from a range of cultures and faiths to help raise pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of life in our multicultural society.

Attendance

13. The attendance rate at the school is well below the national median and is therefore poor. Unauthorised absence is also poor. The school is very aware that attendance is a problem. It has put good systems in place to promote attendance through the awarding of attendance certificates for individuals and for classes, and this is beginning to have an impact. Punctuality is also well promoted. The school works hard to inform parents of the importance of getting their children to school and for them to arrive on time, and informs them of this on a regular basis through the school newsletters. However, a significant number of parents do not take the issue seriously and keep their children off school for inappropriate reasons. Similarly, many parents do not ensure their children arrive at school promptly which means there is often a disrupted start to their school day.

14. There are good procedures in place to monitor attendance; these procedures are followed thoroughly and any pupils whose attendance gives cause for concern are quickly identified and monitored closely. The school receives good support from the education welfare service who will visit parents when requested.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.6%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.4
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	1.6
National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Provision for nursery children is good. Pupils work from a sound curriculum with a good range of extra-curricular activities including sports.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with much that is good. Assessment is much improved and is now good; it is beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in mathematics.
- Good teaching in the nursery.
- Too many variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to help pupils, especially those at an early stage of learning English.

Commentary

15. At the time of the last inspection a significant weakness identified in many lessons was that teaching did not cater for more able pupils. Assessment was also identified as a weakness. Both these weaknesses have been dealt with effectively and teaching has improved. The headteacher made assessment and its influence on planning a main concern, and this has paid off. In all lessons observed in English, mathematics and science, work was carefully planned for pupils of different abilities and stages of English acquisition. As a result, pupils learned well in most of these lessons. In other subjects, there was variability in planning which meant that in some lessons, learning was only satisfactory. The recently-acquired software program for tracking pupils' progress is starting to be very beneficial. Teachers now have a very clear picture of the level at which each pupil is working and the target for future attainment. The headteacher's termly interview with each class teacher to check up on progress ensures pupils' achievement and standards remain a high priority.

16. At the last inspection, teaching in mathematics ranged from unsatisfactory to good. All the teaching seen now is good or better; consequently, pupils achieve well and standards are rising. Planning is particularly effective as it is closely matched to the needs of the individual pupils and helps them learn at a good rate. The setting of pupils into ability groups in Years 5 and 6 is also having a positive effect on progress as teachers can plan work more closely matched to the prior attainment of their pupils. Also, as three groups are formed from the two classes in each year, they have fewer pupils to teach and are able to give them more individual attention; in these groups, learning is good.

17. Teaching in the nursery is always good; children are happy and keen to learn. Highly proficient nursery officers and the nursery teacher work together as a very strong team to provide well for the children in their care. Good procedures help new children and their parents learn about routines and expectations so there is a smooth start to school. The 'key worker' system makes sure staff keep a very close eye on each child's learning and personal development. Children achieve well because interesting tasks and activities are carefully planned to build on what they already know and need to learn next.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	3 (7%)	21 (49%)	18 (42%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

18. The table above shows that the quality of teaching is variable. The local difficulties of recruitment and retention of teachers have slowed improvement in the overall quality of teaching. Half the teaching staff were new to the school in September 2003. Governors decided that they would prefer to appoint experienced staff rather than have too many newly qualified staff starting at the same time. Although this was a well thought out decision, it has been difficult to find the experienced staff and three appointments have been temporary as a result. Through her rigorous checks on teaching, the headteacher is acutely aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching. She has provided extra support and training for new staff which are beginning to have an impact.

19. Better teaching is, in the main, by the longer-serving, more experienced staff although there is some very good support teaching in Reception and for the Years 5 and 6 more able mathematics groups. The good or better teaching is characterised by high expectations for all to work hard at tasks that are carefully matched to pupils' abilities. In these lessons, learning is good because no time is wasted and pupils' behaviour is managed competently through good relationships and very clear expectations. Introductions are suitably paced to keep a good balance between the explanation and getting on with tasks. Examination of pupils' completed work shows some teachers mark

pupils' work more helpfully than others. In the best examples, teachers praise and let pupils know what they need to do to improve. A few good examples were noted of pupils marking each other's work; they made perceptive and helpful comments. The school has good procedures for setting individuals targets for improvement but, currently, these targets are not as high profile as they could be. Not all teachers mention targets when marking pupils' work. Satisfactory teaching is adequate but with room for improvement. The main areas noted for improvements are managing behaviour well enough to ensure pupils get on with their work, cutting over-long introductions to lessons and planning to cater for pupils' different levels of abilities. In history and geography, it was noted that there is not enough emphasis on helping pupils to develop the skills associated with the subjects.

20. Teachers deploy classroom assistants effectively to support those pupils who find the work difficult or have behavioural problems. In mathematics, teachers include the role of the classroom assistants in their planning and fully brief them before each lesson. Support for pupils at the early stages of learning English is very good. There is very good emphasis on using practical tasks to help learn and practise new vocabulary. Pupils new to the school are also helped to settle in and to find friends who speak the same language.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and in the Foundation Stage, it is good. A good range of extra-curricular activities complements the curriculum and helps promote moral and social development. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement in the range of extra-curricular activities including the residential opportunities for Year 6 pupils.
- The organisation of swimming provision does not allow for all pupils to have the opportunity to learn to swim.
- Not enough opportunities for pupils to develop musical talents.
- Good improvement since the last inspection in ensuring adequate time for teaching subjects such as art and design.

Commentary

21. Children in the Foundation Stage learn from a good curriculum. A wide range of lively activities and good resources are used well to promote children's development in all areas of learning. Links between Reception and Year 1 are sound, ensuring a smooth transition between the areas of learning and the National Curriculum. The curriculum in Years 1 to Year 6 is broad and balanced and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum. The national strategies for numeracy and literacy have been implemented fully. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus and daily acts of worship are provided.

22. The school has an appropriate drugs awareness policy in place and the dangers of substance abuse are successfully taught through the health education programme. This is often supported by the police. Provision for sex education is also in place. Circle time makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and the overall relationships within the school. However, there are missed opportunities to promote responsibility and initiative. The school acknowledges this and is currently considering strategies to promote these areas.

23. The good range of extra-curricular activities covers many wide and varied disciplines. Sport is well covered in terms of football, netball and athletics. More opportunities are on offer during residential visits when Year 6 pupils experience sports such as orienteering, rock climbing and abseiling. Visitors to school and educational visits are linked to the topics studied and make a useful contribution to extending pupils' learning as well as providing valuable social benefits.

24. Provision for swimming in Year 3 does not allow for pupils who join the school in later year groups to have the opportunity to achieve the 25 metre unaided swim. Neither does it provide another opportunity for those who were unsuccessful in Year 3. In information and communication technology, strands of modelling and controlling are not fully in place because equipment required, although ordered, has not yet been received. Opportunities to use information and communication technology for cross-curricular areas are well served by pupils being able to use the computer suite for this as well as a skills session. However, planning for this is currently insufficiently precise.

25. Music remains an area for considerable development throughout the school. The school has identified this and the new co-ordinator has written a comprehensive action plan to help move the subject forward. A scheme of work has already been introduced with training for teachers in how to use it effectively with their classes. Teachers are now more confident and are planning music lessons on a regular basis as the scheme is particularly aimed at non-specialist teachers. Pupils sing reasonably tunefully in some assemblies but have few opportunities to compose or appreciate music. Currently there are no out of lesson opportunities for pupils to take part in musical activities or to learn to play an instrument.

26. Time allocations in all subject areas are now appropriate. The headteacher checks to make sure that pupils are taught all necessary aspects of the National Curriculum and that no time is wasted. In lessons observed, there was no evidence of any time slippage as lessons started punctually. The school has adopted schemes of work that assist teachers in determining what is to be taught in each year group. Planning for parallel year groups is done together to ensure both classes have similar work and opportunities. Pupils requiring support receive well delivered learning programmes from teaching assistants. Work is well planned between teachers and support staff, and is mostly provided in class. However, pupils are withdrawn if best suited to their needs, for example for the Early Literacy Support (ELS). In a good ELS session observed, the small group made good progress and felt pleased with their achievements. The support noted for pupils at the early stages of learning English was most effective with a very good emphasis on practical activities.

27. There are enough teachers and support staff. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall with some favourable features, such as two school halls and spacious well kept sporting facilities. The school boasts two computer suites and a battery of computers in some areas. The library is satisfactory overall. The areas outside the classrooms offer opportunities for group of pupils to work on other activities, such as design and technology, art or academic support. However, the layout of classrooms and work areas does not make it easy for teachers to keep a good eye on what pupils are doing in these areas. Therefore, when there is no teaching assistant or parent-helper available these work areas and the computers in them are rarely used.

28. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, provision was good and pupils' needs identified very well. Following that inspection, there has been a long period of over a year without a special educational needs co-ordinator in which provision declined. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, and, subsequently, a new co-ordinator, the backlog of assessing pupils' needs and providing appropriate education plans has moved forward at a good rate. However, the school recognises that more needs to be done and good plans are in place to achieve this. There is clear evidence that the co-ordinator is impacting positively on raising the quality of provision. The school is looking critically at the individual education plans (IEP's) with a view to customising them to address the needs of the pupils more precisely. The organisation of provision now ensures that pupils are becoming confident members of the community. Support staff work well with teachers to make sure that teachers know how well pupils have achieved or if new strategies should be tried out. Parents are involved as much as possible. Discussions about progress are held termly with parents and they and their child sign the paperwork to say they have been part of the review and are involved in planning the next steps.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is satisfactory. The school seeks and acts on pupils' views and their involvement is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good systems to monitor and track pupils' academic standards and progress in the core subjects.
- Adults know pupils well and provide good levels of care.
- Pupils feel well supported by all staff in the school.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is good.
- Induction arrangements for pupils when they enter the school are good.

Commentary

29. Since the last inspection, there has been considerable improvement in assessing pupils' standards and progress in the core subjects of English and mathematics and science. These assessments are used well to track pupils' progress as they move through the school, to set targets and to predict future achievement. They are also used effectively to quickly identify any pupil or specific group of pupils making less than expected progress. Such pupils are then given extra support and guidance to help them achieve better standards in their work. Every term the headteacher and individual class teachers meet to assess the progress of every pupil. As a result of these useful discussions, any strategies needed to help them make better progress are put in place. Assessments in other subjects to help plan suitable work are not as strong. The school recognises this and plans to improve them in the near future.

30. Arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory. The school follows the local authority procedures and checks are made to the grounds and building by the site manager. Procedures are in the process of being tightened up and arrangements have been made for a full health and safety review to be carried out in the near future, which will involve both staff and governors. Risk assessment is not yet carried out as a matter of course although these assessments are always completed for any trips out of school. The headteacher is the nominated child protection officer and both she and another member of staff have received appropriate training. Regular discussion at staff meetings ensures that all staff are aware of the correct procedures and of the need to inform the headteacher immediately should they have any concerns.

31. Pupils are confident that their views are listened to as they have seen the outcome of suggestions made by the school council. Recently the school council organised a non-uniform day to raise funds for wet-playtime classroom games, which they then chose and ordered. Even those pupils spoken to who were not on the school council were happy that their views were taken into account. Pupils are proud of their contribution to the life of the school.

32. There are good relationships between pupils and all staff in the school. This ensures that all pupils feel well cared for, safe and secure. Pupils spoken to confirm that there is always someone available for them to talk to should they need support or advice. The school is fortunate to have full-time staff who speak Turkish because this is the predominant language spoken by pupils arriving at school with little English. These pupils know that they have someone to turn to if they need help.

33. There are good induction arrangements for pupils, both when they enter the school in the nursery, and if they enter the school at a later date. Procedures are well set out and ensure that pupils feel welcome in the school, settle well and have a good start to their school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community and with other schools are also satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good level of support provided for the school from their links with the Education Action Zone.
- The school works hard to enlist parents' help in contributing to pupils' learning, but many parents are not supportive.

Commentary

34. Parents and carers have satisfactory views of the school. It works hard to encourage parents to support the school through the Friends' Association, and also to help their children with homework. The Friends' Association is supportive of the school and raises significant funds each year on behalf of the school. Many parents support their children by ensuring that homework is done and returned to school, however, a small number do not provide this support.

35. The school provides a regular newsletter for parents, which informs them of what is happening. In addition curriculum information is sent out termly to advise parents what is happening in their children's class and how they can help their children at home. The pre-inspection questionnaire was returned by only a very small proportion of parents. It showed that a number of parents did not feel the school sought their views. The school recognises that they have not sent out regular questionnaires to seek parents' wider views, but does have a suggestion box in the foyer; however, this is not well used. At the pre-inspection parents' evening and during the inspection, parents confirmed that staff are always available to talk to them and that they are welcome in the school.

36. There are opportunities for parents to meet staff formally and informally to discuss their children's progress, although a significant number of parents do not make use of these opportunities. Written annual reports for parents are satisfactory; they inform parents what their children know, understand and can do, and give areas for development, but they do not give parents a clear indication of how their children are progressing.

37. There are appropriate links with other schools to assist with the transfer of pupils to their secondary education. The school receives good support through the Education Action Zone; subject co-ordinators meet regularly and there are joint initiatives and training, which support the school curriculum well. Links with a nearby Beacon school have given good support for the development of the leadership and management. The school, and especially the headteacher, receives very good support from the Local Education Authority group of seven headteachers (WF7). This mentoring support has been instrumental in helping and supporting the new headteacher to develop her leadership role and put management structures in place. It is hoped that this invaluable support will continue until, at least, the deputy headteacher takes up his post.

38. There are satisfactory links with the community. The vicar of the local church comes into school each week to take an assembly and children in Years 1 and 2 visit the church. The local police come and talk to the children about 'stranger danger'. The school supports a number of charities each year, and arrangements are made for representatives to come and talk to the children about their work. Use is made of the local sports facilities for football and tennis coaching. Appropriate use is also made of facilities in the local area such as art galleries, museums and local parks.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's very clear and determined leadership has ensured good improvement since the last inspection. Management is good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership from the headteacher.
- Very good management systems in place.
- Senior staff provide good leadership.
- Many subjects are without co-ordinators.

Commentary

39. When the school was last inspected in April 2002, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in several areas of its work. Two of the areas of weakness were the leadership and management of the school. When the school was re-inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in January, 2003 it was judged that only limited progress had been made addressing these weaknesses. A further inspection in June 2003, judged that the school had made *reasonable progress* in addressing the identified weaknesses.

40. The headteacher has a very clear sense of purpose for the school, recognising that children have only one chance for a primary education and it must be a good one. Since taking over as acting headteacher in May 2003, and as headteacher in October 2003, her very clear vision and persistent hard work have moved Ainslie Wood forward at a good rate, in spite of a turnover of half the teaching staff. The turnover of staff has slowed improvement but has not dimmed the school's determination. The school no longer has serious weaknesses in any area of its work; standards have improved and are continuing to rise. In the absence of a deputy, two senior teachers have taken the roles of assistant headteachers and provide good, supportive leadership. However, they have an almost full-time teaching commitment so their input is limited. The recent appointment of a deputy headteacher to start in September, 2004, should allow the headteacher to share the workload more equitably.

41. The headteacher, governors and senior staff know that there is still much to be done and realistic, high quality plans are in place to bring about further improvement. These plans are the outcome of the headteacher's and senior staff's very good understanding about what is going on in the school. Very good systems are in place for checking up on standards, achievement and teaching and learning, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Regular lesson observations, analysis of pupils' work and scrutiny of planning have all contributed to the identification of weaknesses and the action needed to bring about improvements. These activities are carefully linked to the formal processes of performance management, setting staff targets and providing training and guidance. Two very good examples are the support and training provided for the mathematics co-ordinator and the targets for attainment in writing included in teachers' and support staff targets. Both examples have led to better achievement and rising standards.

42. Senior staff take responsibility for leading the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. In these roles they provide good leadership because they have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and areas. Their action plans are thorough with clear targets for improvement. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. The co-ordinator is new to the school and the responsibility. She has already dealt efficiently with over a year's backlog of documentation and assessment in order to bring the provision to the current satisfactory standard. The high turnover of staff and lack of a deputy headteacher mean that in many subjects, such as art and design, design and technology and history and geography, there are

no subject co-ordinators. The headteacher has taken on the caretaking role but this is far from ideal. It is to the school's credit that standards have not slipped.

43. Criticisms of the role played by the governors at the last inspection have been tackled successfully. Governors have undertaken training and now have a much better understanding of their roles. The vice-chair provides dynamic leadership for the curriculum and standards committee. This committee meets very regularly and provides the driving force for the governors. It analyses test result data and pupils' progress and is well informed about standards. Governors are now taking a stronger role in shaping the school's direction and questioning how targets are being met. Due to an oversight, the school's national test results were not sent out this year with the prospectus.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£1,150,431	Balance from previous year	-£47,895
Total expenditure	£1,093,589	Balance carried forward to the next	-£28,496
Expenditure per pupil	£2754.63		

44. On appointment, the headteacher inherited a deficit budget of £29,000. Together with the office manager, this deficit is being reduced very efficiently, according to careful planning. The school is also in a falling roll situation and financial planning is well placed to deal with this.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

45. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall, and good in the nursery. This is a decline in the level of provision since the last inspection and is due to staff changes in the Reception class. In the nursery, teaching is good. Strong team work amongst staff and very effective contributions from proficient nursery officers mean that children are guided well in their learning. In the Reception class, support teaching is very good but, overall, teaching is satisfactory.

46. In the Foundation Stage, children's overall achievement is satisfactory so that, by the end of Reception, most reach the levels expected for their age. The nursery and Reception class areas are well organised, with interesting activities for all areas of learning. There are good arrangements for children starting school and for those moving from nursery into Reception. Systems for recording progress are good, with a strong focus on building upon what children already know. Since the last inspection, communication between nursery and Reception class staff has improved to aid consistency across the early years. Staff are keen to ensure that communication with Year 1 teachers is equally effective.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Set routines have a good impact on children's development.
- Children develop confidence and self-esteem through positive relationships.
- Systems to enable children to be more responsible for their own learning are evolving in the Reception class.

Commentary

47. Children come to school with varying personal and social skills. By the time they leave the Reception class, most reach standards expected for their age. The clear structure of the day and learning areas provide a secure environment where confidence and self esteem grow. In the nursery, teaching is good. As a result of constant encouragement and support by staff, who know individuals well, children are happily involved in a range of stimulating activities. Most part from their parents easily. They share apparatus well, indoors and outdoors. They co-operate in play areas or when using the computers. Consistent levels of expectation mean that children in the nursery and Reception class know how to behave and respond well to staff. They sustain concentration and readily engage with other children and adults. There is a suitable balance between teacher-directed tasks and those children choose for themselves, especially in the nursery. In order to build upon this and increase independence, the Reception class is developing ways to make children more responsible for their own learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The enjoyment of books is actively nurtured.

- Consistent approach to the teaching of early reading and writing skills in preparation for later learning.
- Plenty of opportunities for speaking and listening.

Commentary

48. Effective teaching across the Foundation Stage focuses strongly on developing an interest in books and reading. There are imaginative story sessions when children listen attentively. For example, nursery children heard the story of “The Three Billy Goats Gruff”. Good teaching meant that they were actively involved and encouraged to talk about parts of the story. They were keen to mimic voices and gestures of the main characters. The story formed the basis of much of the week’s work in other areas of learning. This practice is adopted in the Reception class where the story “Shark in the Park” allowed children to identify rhyming words and predict what happens next. Very effective support teaching led to children making their own big book and large models, as well as a visit to the local park. Children have a positive attitude to books and are keen to share them. There is a consistent approach to early reading and writing skills. As a result, most children achieve the expected goals by the time they are five and some exceed them, especially in reading. Children are encouraged to listen, answer questions and contribute to discussions. They are asked to talk about what they are doing. Staff enthusiastically extend language and introduce new vocabulary when children are involved in imaginary role play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematics is linked with other activities to promote high interest.
- Well supported activities.
- Focus on numeracy in the Reception class.
- Overlong and unimaginative introductions.

Commentary

49. A themed approach in the nursery links learning in mathematics to other activities. For example, based upon the story of “The Three Billy Goats Gruff”, good teaching introduced vocabulary “small”, “medium”, “big”, so children sorted, ordered and identified matching pairs. They engage in counting rhymes and songs. They learn the days of the week and count on to find the date. Children become familiar with colours and how to write numbers. In the Reception class, teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is a greater focus on numeracy, in preparation for Year 1. Most children reach the goals expected for their age and some exceed them. Children play counting games and order numbers to 20. Some count to 100. They begin to record their number work using the plus and minus sign. They identify day and night and begin to recognise important times in the day when they come to school, have lunch or go out to play. Good resources mean that children have access to number-related story books and stimulating, colourful apparatus. Children are adequately supported in their learning. However, sometimes the beginnings of their numeracy sessions are over-long and lack imagination. As a result, this reduces children’s interest and the time they have to apply their skills.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of interesting activities help children discover the world around them.

- Good resources.

Commentary

50. A wide range of practical activities enables children to discover the world around them and most reach the expected goals for their age. In the nursery, they explore musical sounds and use magnifying glasses for closer study. They cook a variety of foods, often supported by helping parents. An interesting range of books introduces children to other cultures and lifestyles. Good teaching supports and develops role play. Children find out about the doctor's surgery or opticians and learn about what happens in a shop. For example, during the inspection, children playing in an imaginary "book shop" were shown the bar code which they would need to "scan" at the till. In the Reception class, these good beginnings are built upon to develop early scientific understanding. Through their senses, children identify smells and sounds. They explore textures with a feely box and make "telephones" and multi-coloured glasses. From stories like "Funnybones" they identify body parts. They talk about the seasons and know that spring is "when the flowers grow". In both nursery and Reception, children use computers with confidence and enjoy making things happen on screen. The Reception class becomes familiar with the larger school environment when they go to the hall for assembly or use the computer suite to extend their technology skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective involvement of staff.
- Spacious outdoor areas.
- Interesting activities to encourage good hand and eye co-ordination.
- Insufficient focus on effective class management.

Commentary

51. By the end of Reception, most children reach levels expected. In the nursery, access to the outdoor play area and the good level of support they receive have a positive impact on learning. Children use this area daily when they meet new and interesting activities which are imaginatively created by staff. They balance, climb and travel along apparatus. They play well together. During the inspection, the outdoor house became a drive-through MacDonald's for children to approach on a variety of wheeled vehicles which they pushed and pedalled. Indoors, they use large construction blocks, water and sand. In the Reception class, skills develop as co-ordination increases. Children make models with Lego and junk materials and cut out with increasing dexterity. They have access to the outdoor play areas on a regular basis which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching in Reception is satisfactory. During a lesson in the hall, children were moving in time to drum beats. They used space well, moved safely with confidence and were aware of others. They followed instructions, responded to sound and practised their movements. Children were well supported in their attempts by the adults present. However, insufficient focus on pace and overall class management meant that some children did not fully apply themselves.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's work is valued and they are actively involved in a range of interesting experiences.

Commentary

52. In the nursery and Reception classes children use paint, glue and a range of materials to create pictures and models. With effective adult support, they design large scale models of the park or choose materials to make collages of trolls. They use sponges and brushes to paint colourful pictures, many of which are prominently displayed. They consider how to represent skin tones when painting faces and, in the Reception class, mix powder paint to obtain the colours they want. During the inspection, a group was painting pictures of statues to go in a park. They handled powder paint and water carefully and took advice from each other on how to achieve purple or orange. Good provision means that children have the opportunity to sing songs, respond to music in dance and take part in performances. Role play areas are well designed to encourage children to use their imaginations and extend language and experience through play. By the end of Reception, most children will have attained the expected standards.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving at a good rate in Year 2 and steadily through Years 3 to 6.
- Standards in speaking and listening are generally below average and have been identified by the school as needing improvement.
- Very good leadership of the subject has brought about good improvement since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching varies and is generally better for Years 1 and 2.
- Target-setting for pupils is in place but is not being used to maximum effect.
- Teachers make good links with other subjects but are not yet exploiting these to best effect to teach specific literacy skills.

Commentary

53. Provision and standards have improved since the last inspection. At that time, standards in reading and writing for Year 2 were judged to be average and Year 6 standards were judged to be well below average. In 2003 national tests, Year 2 standards dropped, especially in reading where they were below average. Year 6 standards were below average. This particular year group had experienced a number of changes of teacher.

54. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2. Inspection evidence shows current Year 2 standards in reading are above average with almost half the pupils on track to attain the higher Level 3. In writing, standards are around average but with a little higher than average proportion likely to attain the higher Level 3. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. The strong focus on better provision for more able pupils has ensured an average proportion of Year 6 pupils likely to attain the higher Level 5. However, standards in Year 6 overall are just below average. These pupils have much to make up from their patchy learning as they moved through Years 2 to 6. Indeed, when in Year 2, their standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing. Overall test results will also be adversely affected by the number of pupils who have recently arrived at the school with little English. These pupils are making good progress but their skills will not be sufficiently developed to help them do well in national tests. Another factor which impacts adversely on standards is that a significant number of pupils, mainly boys, in Year 6 and Year 5, have ambivalent attitudes to their work. In spite of teachers' great efforts to enthuse and encourage, these pupils complete a minimal amount of work and are not keen to read.

55. The school knows that standards in speaking and listening are not as good as they should be and have good plans to put this right. They have correctly focused on improving reading and writing skills and are now in a position to develop speaking and listening further. Handwriting is generally neat and well formed but currently, there is no consistency in the style and whether pencil, pen or ball point is used. Pupils practise handwriting but this is not always marked so teachers do not notice that some letter formation is not correct.

56. The two co-ordinators provide very good leadership. They have a very good overview of standards and provision and set colleagues good examples for teaching. Their action plan for further improvement is excellent. It demonstrates their very thorough understanding of strengths and areas for improvement and how this will be secured. As examples, they are acutely aware of the continuing need to improve boys' writing and speaking and listening skills through the school. Targets are realistic but not mediocre. The purchase of new reading resources designed to appeal to boys is having a good impact among the younger pupils. Older pupils say they like the non-fiction material and 'some of the fiction' but say they would like more books to choose from. The newly-introduced spelling scheme is having a good impact across the school and especially in Years 1 and

2 where pupils are able to build cumulatively on what they know. In other year groups, there are still gaps in pupils' spelling vocabulary and many in Years 5 and 6 make very basic spelling errors.

57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and generally good in Years 1 and 2 where most teachers have been at the school a reasonable time and are experienced. Here, teachers have good subject knowledge, teach basic skills well and are adept at planning to the national framework for teaching literacy. Teaching is more variable across the rest of the school although there is no unsatisfactory teaching. There are teachers who are new to the country and not familiar with teaching to the literacy framework. Also, in one of each of the two Year 5 and 6 classes, behaviour is not managed well enough to make sure that pupils get on with their work and complete their tasks. As a result, pupils make only satisfactory gains in their learning and do not take enough care with the presentation.

58. Through the headteacher's good tracking system and teachers' assessments there is a good understanding of pupils' attainment and what they need to learn next. Appropriate targets are set but, currently, are not always being referred to when teachers mark pupils' work. Nor are they always shared with parents so that they can help at home.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. The strong emphasis on raising standards in writing by giving a good range of purposes for writing has been successful. Many good examples were noted in a wide range of subjects where pupils used their literacy skills to good effect. Year 2 had written good accounts of how they felt when they had heard and seen the start of 'The Great Fire of London'. Year 5 have written letters to request information on how to save water as part of their 'Water' topic. Year 6 have researched and written their accounts of Winston Churchill. The school has correctly identified the next step as teaching specific skills, such as note taking or letter writing, through other subjects so that pupils learn these skills in relevant and meaningful contexts.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and are now in line with the national average.
- The quality of teaching is good so pupils achieve well.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Assessment procedures are good and are used effectively to raise standards.
- Appropriate links with other subjects are not always identified or planned.

Commentary

60. Since the last inspection there has been a very good improvement in the provision. At that time standards were below those found nationally and now they are in line. Teaching, from being satisfactory, is now consistently good and the subject is well led and managed.

61. The standards attained in the 2003 tests taken by Year 2 pupils were similar to those found nationally, rising from below average in 2002. Pupils in Year 6 also did much better in their tests. In 2002, they were well below the national average but in 2003 they reached the standards expected for their age. Pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are also working at levels similar to those found nationally. There has been a good improvement in pupils' knowledge and understanding of all aspects of mathematics. The school identified interpreting data shown in graphs and charts and solving problems written in words as areas for improvement. Teachers have successfully addressed these by adjusting their planning to give pupils more experience and practice.

62. The improved standards are a direct result of the good teaching pupils now receive as they move through the school. All the teaching seen during the inspection was good or better. The planning of numeracy work is particularly effective as it is closely matched to the needs of the individual pupils and helps them learn at a good rate. The setting of pupils into ability groups in Years 5 and 6 is also having a positive effect on progress as teachers can plan work more closely matched to the prior attainment of their pupils. Also, as three groups are formed from the two classes in each year, they have fewer pupils to teach and are able to give them more individual attention. Teachers throughout the school use classroom assistants very effectively to support those pupils who find the work difficult or have behavioural problems. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 2 lesson about measure where the classroom assistant sat facing the pupils while they were sitting on the carpet. It enabled him to interact with specific pupils much more effectively than if he had sat behind them and consequently their progress was good. Teachers include the role of the classroom assistants in their planning and fully brief them before each lesson.

63. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the provision and develop her management role. She monitors the subject effectively and has a good overview of how well individual and groups of pupils throughout the school are achieving.

64. The good procedures for assessing pupils, tracking their progress and setting appropriate targets are effective in raising levels of achievement. For example, the data collected is used to place older pupils in the most appropriate set for mathematics so that they are learning at the correct level. It also identifies any individuals who are not making good enough progress so that they can be given additional support in booster classes, the two lunchtime mathematics clubs and, for the most able, a Saturday mathematics school in which the pupils enjoyed cracking codes and were fascinated by a genuine Enigma machine from the Second World War.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. The pupils' skills in mathematics are used in other subjects of the curriculum but their inclusion is not always planned to gain maximum impact. When such links are made they prove useful, making learning more relevant and helping pupils reinforce their skills and understanding in mathematics. For example, in science, pupils make graphs to display their findings and in history, pupils in Year 2 studied prices of goods at the time of the 'Great Fire of London'.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Planning to ensure pupils build on previous knowledge and good provision in investigative science.
- Effective use is made of real life contexts to engage and motivate pupils.
- Good emphasis on the use of scientific vocabulary.
- Assessment is good overall.
- Leadership and management is good overall.
- The use of information and communication technology in science is not directly planned for in lessons. However, the school acknowledges this and it is to be addressed.

Commentary

66. Standards achieved in Year 2 and Year 6 national tests in 2003 were average. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms similar standards. These standards represent a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards attained by the oldest pupils were well below national expectations and by Year 6 achievements were unsatisfactory and many failed to

attain the expected Level 4. There are several reasons for this improvement, including the school's focus on investigative and problem solving work built carefully into the planning. Effective leadership has improved teaching which, in turn, is having a positive impact on motivating pupils. Consequently, standards are improved. No significant differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in class and achieve similarly to their peers. Pupils at the early stages of learning English get good support to learn new vocabulary and achieve well.

67. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching varied between satisfactory and good. The majority was good, leading to generally good achievement. Planning is detailed and teachers' secure subject knowledge is evident in clear explanations and probing questioning. Pupils display enthusiasm and positive attitudes towards their work. Good interaction between teacher, support staff and pupils results in high levels of engagement, facilitating good opportunities for teachers to assess pupils' understanding. This is due to the emphasis placed on using and then discussing the results of fair tests in pupils' investigative work. Pupils record their findings accurately and the quality of collating and presenting data in their books is good. Providing pupils with the opportunities to develop their skills of investigative science is a strength of the teaching. Teachers ensure that pupils are given sufficient opportunity to work collaboratively, which strengthens their predictive skills, extends their use of scientific language and promotes evaluative discussion. This was observed with Year 6 pupils when debating the most accurate method of measuring to be used. It is also reflected in the range of work seen in pupils' books.

68. Planning of lessons provides sufficient challenge for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils. These opportunities promote pupils' enthusiastic responses. Good emphasis is placed on pupils developing recording skills throughout the school and they are actively encouraged to use the language of method, prediction, results and conclusion. Teachers' explanations are clear and appropriate and sufficiently detailed to ensure pupil understanding. Discussions probe pupils' knowledge and understanding and challenge their thinking. Their investigative activities are purposeful and pupils think about what they have learnt and use knowledge and skills acquired in subsequent lessons. Assessment is good and evaluative marking helps pupils to know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

69. The subject leader has a clear vision for future development, including identifying and establishing a consistent approach in its use of information and communication technology. Results from national tests are carefully analysed together with information from the end of unit tests and day to day monitoring of progress. The results of the analyses help to identify future areas for development and to check if targets are being, or are likely to be, achieved. The subject leader monitors planning to ensure subject coverage but acknowledges the need to monitor teaching and learning carefully to ensure consistent quality of teaching in parallel classes. Resources are sufficient to ensure appropriate delivery.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of computer suites, although computers outside classrooms are underused.
- There is a clear focus on areas for improvement.
- Standards of Year 6 pupils are below average.
- Assessment procedures are not yet fully in place.

Commentary

70. Since the last inspection provision of computers has improved; the school has established an additional computer suite which gives pupils well-timetabled opportunities to develop their skills.

Computers outside classrooms are effectively used to support small groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. However, access to these computers is restricted. This limits pupils' independent research and application of skills to other subjects during lessons.

71. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in line with those expected nationally. Pupils use computers with confidence. They log on, run software and recognise and use various icons. They manipulate the mouse to make things happen on screen. When using databases they enter information, make choices and produce graphs. To create pictures, they select colours, patterns and shapes.

72. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Standards in Year 6 are below those expected nationally. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were presenting work based on a study of rivers. They logged on and accessed software competently. They added to their existing work, using a variety of font styles, clip art, animation and sound to make their presentations more interesting. Most were well motivated and keen to produce a polished result. However, pupils' achievement is hampered because the opportunity to develop control and modelling skills and extend communication through e-mail is limited. The subject manager is aware of this and is actively involved in improving provision.

73. Teaching is satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory or poor teaching which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are familiar with software. They demonstrate programs well and manage pupils effectively. In the best lessons seen, teachers have regard for various abilities within the class and extend skills accordingly. They check how well pupils are doing as the lesson proceeds and help them to build upon what they already know. However, systems for tracking how well pupils are doing or identifying different abilities within classes are not yet consistently in use across the school.

74. Due to difficulties with technology and lack of adequate resources, development in some areas has been hindered. However, the subject manager has a clear focus on what needs to improve. Consistent planning guidelines for information and communication technology are being developed and new resources acquired to allow pupils better opportunity to achieve more highly. The subject manager is keen to implement a new system to help teachers identify how well pupils are doing. This will provide consistent information between year groups and allow pupils to build upon their technological skills.

Information and communication across the curriculum

75. The school has clear aims to develop greater consistency in using information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. There is evidence that this is already happening in mathematics, science and geography. However, it is not yet fully established and pupils do not make sufficient independent use of information and communication technology to support their learning.

HUMANITIES

76. During the inspection too few lessons were seen in **geography** or **history** to make an overall judgement on provision or standards.

77. Evidence from lessons and pupils' work indicates that geographical knowledge is satisfactory, although skills are underdeveloped. For example, when looking at items from other countries, very few Year 2 pupils had appropriate strategies to help them decide where the items originated. In a map drawing lesson, older pupils found it difficult to apply their knowledge of scale and symbols to their own work.

78. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, historical learning on the Egyptians links to work on the River Nile and its associated physical features. In information and communication technology, pupils use Powerpoint to present their work on rivers. Mathematical

skills are employed during map reading. Literacy is extended through report writing, note taking and formulating questionnaires although, in lessons seen, opportunities for pupils to engage in discussion and understand and use geographical vocabulary are limited.

79. In history, pupils of all ages build up factual knowledge by learning about main events and famous people. In some cases, it is clear from pupils' writing that they have the opportunity to relate to the experiences of others from the past. For example, in Year 4, pupils wrote at length on the Viking raids from the viewpoint of a monk or a Viking raider. The youngest pupils recall facts well but are not equipped with sufficient skills to place events in order.

80. The absence of managers in both subjects means that provision, including the consistency of teaching and the effectiveness of what is taught, is not sufficiently monitored. There are no systems for judging how well pupils are doing in history or geography.

Religious education

Provision for Religious Education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and usually extend pupils' understanding through effective discussions.
- Use of writing and role play to record and enhance pupils' learning is underdeveloped.
- Monitoring of teaching, learning and standards and use of assessment requires further development.

Commentary

81. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This represents a similar picture to that of the previous inspection. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils displayed good knowledge of the events leading to the death of Jesus. They show interest and are enthusiastic about their learning and are eager to relate the facts and characters of the events. They referred with clear understanding to the symbolism of the bread and wine at the Last Supper. By Year 6, their knowledge had progressed and when completing their learning on Buddhism they explored the meaning of 'unhappiness'. They considered the barriers preventing the world becoming a 'peaceful place' and reflected on how they could help remove these barriers. Throughout both these lessons, pupils sustained concentration promoted through teachers' high expectations, probing and challenging questioning and providing opportunity for reflection. However, in a parallel Year 6 lesson, teaching was unsatisfactory because there was no challenge or opportunity for pupils to relate their learning on Buddhism to their own lives. Though pupils were relatively well behaved, they were not enthused to learn.

82. Most teachers put across factual knowledge well and are interactive in their approach. They capture pupils' interest and use resources and displays well to focus pupils' attention. Such lessons stimulate pupils to speak to one another, especially when the teachers ask them to discuss issues in pairs and in groups. However, writing to record the knowledge gathered is minimal as is the use of imaginative drama to further develop pupils' enthusiasm and understanding. Achievement is satisfactory overall, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. However, in the unsatisfactory lesson observed, pupils with little English had no help or support to allow them to join in the lesson.

83. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding to improve learning is very limited and requires development. Monitoring of planning is in place but monitoring of teaching, learning and standards requires further development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson was seen in **music** and pupils were heard singing in assembly. In **physical education** a dance lesson was seen. **Art and design** and **design and technology** were not a focus of the inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to make a firm judgement about provision in these subjects.

84. **Music** remains an area for considerable development throughout the school. The school has identified this and the new co-ordinator has written a comprehensive action plan to help move the subject forward. A scheme of work has already been introduced with training for teachers in how to use it effectively with their classes. Teachers are now more confident and are planning music lessons on a regular basis as the scheme is particularly aimed at non-specialist teachers. Pupils sing reasonably tunefully in some assemblies but have few opportunities to compose or appreciate music. Music is played at the start and end of assemblies for pupils to listen to. However, they are not always told the title of the piece or any information about the composer. The school productions and concerts give all pupils the opportunity to sing from memory to an audience. These are well attended by appreciative parents and carers and much enjoyed by the pupils.

85. Teachers' planning shows that all aspects of **physical education** are taught throughout the school. Pupils in all years have gymnastics, dance and games lessons and those in Year 3 to 6 also have opportunities to take part in athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities. The school's participation in competitive sport, particularly football, is very good indeed and the pupils, both boys and girls, have a great deal of success bringing great credit to themselves and their school. The football teams are coached to a good level of skill by a volunteer parent and a classroom assistant who both give a great deal of their time to maintain the high standards. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well and is extremely enthusiastic. She monitors the provision effectively and has introduced a useful method of assessing and recording pupils' achievements. Swimming takes place in Year 3 and, although the majority of pupils reach the nationally expected standard at this age, any pupils who join the school after Year 3 do not have the opportunity to learn to swim. The annual residential school journey to Dorset for pupils in Year 6 gives them the opportunity to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities as well as learning to live together harmoniously in an environment away from home. The school holds two very popular sports days each year. Many parents attend and some volunteer to help with the organisation. There are good resources for physical education that are used well to help pupils learn new skills.

86. From scrutiny of pupils' work, it is clear that in art and design and design and technology pupils are receiving a curriculum which matches statutory requirements and is skills based. In **design and technology** all classes from Year 1 to Year 6 complete design sheets, draw their intended models, identify materials and tools and, when complete, offer an evaluation which identifies what they would have changed to improve it. Currently there are no co-ordinators for the subjects and the school has done well to attain standards, which would appear to be at least satisfactory. In **art and design** pupils' work shows that there is good coverage of the required work. Pupils take care with their work and discussions with them show they are enthusiastic about the subject. There was further evidence to confirm that food technology also received its curriculum entitlement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are appropriate schemes for pupils' health education and sex education.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility.

Commentary

87. Suitable schemes of work ensure that both health and sex education are taught appropriately. The school takes advantage of 'fruit for schools' so that pupils have the chance to eat one portion of fruit per day. It teaches the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise through the science curriculum.

88. A good start has been made in giving pupils a sense of responsibility by being members of the school council. Apart from this though, there are very few opportunities for older pupils especially to take on responsible tasks and feel 'special'.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

