

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DE LUCY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Abbey Wood, London

LEA area: Greenwich

Unique reference number: 100152

Headteacher: Mrs A Newbold

Lead inspector: Dr John Lilly

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 October 2003

Inspection number: 255956

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:	393
School address:	Cookhill Road Abbey Wood London
Postcode:	SE2 9PD
Telephone number:	020 8310 5290
Fax number:	020 8312 1475
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Ismail Danesi
Date of previous inspection:	7 June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

De Lucy is a large primary school with 393 girls and boys on roll between the ages of 3 and 11. It serves an area of very high social and economic deprivation and well over half the children are eligible for free school meals. The school serves an established estate of mainly social housing. Over recent years there has been an increase in the number of children from minority ethnic groups, including refugees. The number of children for whom English is an additional language is high and many younger children are at an early stage of English acquisition. Within the wide range of cultures, the largest group is black African. Somali is the largest language group other than English, followed by Yoruba and Portuguese. The proportion of children on the special educational needs register is very high but the number with statements is low. Speech and language, and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are the main areas of need identified on the register. A high number of children join or leave the school other than at the Foundation Stage or at the end of Year 6. The school has been able to recruit enough qualified staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12487	John Lilly	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Religious education Personal, social and health education
9115	Terry Clarke	Lay inspector	
23056	Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
23036	Jennifer Nicholson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Music Physical education
22180	Sandra Teacher	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology (ICT) Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**De Lucy is a rapidly improving school and now provides a sound education.** Children develop as happy and confident young people, and are keen to learn. The growing ambition of staff and strong support from the local education authority have already created a school in which all children achieve satisfactorily. Even so, standards of attainment are still too low, especially in speaking, listening and literacy. Currently, sound teaching, management and planning provide a secure foundation for the future, and staff are clear as to what still needs to improve. The school offers **satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher give the school clear direction and purpose and a vision of the very effective school it can become.
- Governors do not have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, therefore, cannot provide the leadership the school needs.
- The school does not have a sufficiently positive partnership with parents.
- Attainment in speaking, listening and literacy is too low and this holds back progress in all subjects.
- Sound management ensures that staff know what they need to do and where they need to improve.
- Attendance of some children is unsatisfactory.
- Most children are keen to learn and most behave well.
- The learning mentors make a major contribution to raising standards.
- Provision for the Foundation Stage is good.
- The school uses expert leadership from the local education authority very well.
- Children value highly the activities staff provide at playtimes.

Standards declined considerably following the last inspection until the current headteacher took up post in January 2003. She brought about rapid improvement through very strong leadership and skilled management. Behaviour and teaching improved considerably. This improvement has already begun to show in the good attitudes of the children, in the increased commitment of staff to high standards and in the children's improved achievement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
E\* - extremely low*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

After a serious decline in standards, results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 show signs of improvement, especially in mathematics and science. Children join the nursery with very low attainment and many cannot speak English. Although they make good progress, few will meet all the national goals set for the end of the reception year. Between Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 6 all children make satisfactory progress. Overall, **children achieve satisfactory standards** considering their low starting points. Even so, attainment by the end of Year 2 is still low. By the end

of Year 6, attainment is still low, but closer to the nationally expected standard. The most serious area of low attainment is in speaking, listening and literacy because this holds back progress in all subjects. To support improvement, **children have good attitudes towards their work, behave well and develop well as young people**. Although most children attend school well, poor attendance by a small minority hinders these children's learning.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides sound and improving education** within an ethos that encourages children to learn. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and enriched by well planned visits and other activities. Provision for personal development is effective. **Teaching is satisfactory** and all children make reasonable progress. Staff help children overcome their barriers to learning effectively and all children are valued and well supported.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory.** The new headteacher recognised that radical improvement was required in almost every aspect of the school. She showed staff what needed to be done and turned the school around. Staff are now moving confidently into the future, clear as to what still needs doing. The deputy headteacher plays a very valuable role, increasingly supported by other managers as they gain in expertise. The strong and practical leadership provided by the local education authority was and is essential to the school's improvement. Governors admit they did not realise the bad state into which the school had sunk. Although now working more efficiently, they do not as yet have a sufficiently clear awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

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

Most parents value the school but a small but significant minority of parents are very unhappy with the way the school is going. Their concerns are unwarranted but show that the school must become much better at building a positive partnership with all parents. Children love their school and are keen to play their part in its achievements. They value the way staff care for and about them, find their work interesting and appreciate the way staff provide enjoyable activities at playtimes because, as one said, 'You can learn by playing'.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Find better ways for governors to gain a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school so that they can then provide the leadership and direction the school needs to sustain improvement.
- Build a more positive and productive partnership with parents and carers.
- Find better ways of developing the children's speaking and listening skills, and literacy.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Attainment is below average in both Years 2 and 6, and low in speaking, listening and literacy. Standards are improving, however, and all children now make satisfactory progress and achieve soundly.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Weak speaking, listening and literacy hold back learning throughout the school.
- Improved teaching is raising standards.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	12.7 (13)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.2 (11.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	13.4 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

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

1. Following the last inspection, standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 did not improve in reading and writing but there was good improvement in mathematics. Results in 2003 were well below the national average in all three subjects; they were also below the average for similar schools.
2. The standards reached by current children in Years 1 and 2 are better but still below average in mathematics and science and well below in literacy. Their speaking and listening skills are well below national expectations and this hinders seriously their ability to understand, think through problems and express their ideas. Although still below average, attainment in other subjects overall is much closer to but below standards expected at age seven. All children make satisfactory progress in most lessons and achievement is sound. Children join the nursery with attainment which is well below average and many cannot speak English. Making good progress at the Foundation Stage, they steadily overcome any barriers to learning and their progress becomes more rapid. Even so, previously insecure learning before the school's recent improvement, especially in Year 1, hinders many.

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.1 (24.2)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	23.4 (21.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.6 (24.1)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Following the last inspection, standards of attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6 remained static in English but declined seriously in mathematics and science. By 2003,

standards were well below the national average in all three subjects, but average for similar schools in English, just below in science and well below in mathematics. Even so, these results show significant improvement in mathematics and science, and improvement overall was greater than the national rate. The number of children with English as an additional language and the number of children joining the school late has increased steadily over the years. Teaching is now much better and consistently so. Consequently, attainment and progress are better. Even so, attainment in mathematics and science is still below average and in literacy well below. Attainment in other subjects is also improving, and in many subjects is broadly in line with national expectations. Interim results in national tests for 2003 confirm that the school has turned the corner and that standards are rising. Between Years 1 and 4, overall attainment rises, but in Years 5 and 6 it is at a level overall that it is relatively lower than in Year 4. This is because the children in these higher years do not have the secure understanding of topics they should have gained earlier in their school lives. All children achieve soundly.

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

The children's attitudes and behaviour are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children's punctuality is satisfactory but attendance is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good attitudes and behaviour of the children.
- The children's positive interest in school life and the activities provided.
- The school's promotion of good relationships and racial harmony.
- The school's action to promote good attendance and punctuality, even though the attendance of a few remains unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

4. The attitudes and behaviour of the children in the classroom and around the school are good. Most children like coming to school, show interest in their lessons and clearly enjoy the outside activities at break and at lunchtimes, for example, the imaginative way one of the lunchtime supervisors runs an outside disco. As a child said, 'We learn by playing'. The recently formed school council has helped to promote some of the playground activities. The children are polite and courteous to adults and show respect and a healthy curiosity towards visitors.
5. The school has a significant number of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In the main, staff are skilled at helping them control their behaviour. The school, however, does not as yet have the more focused strategies to ensure longer-term improvement. Relationships across the school amongst children from different ethnic groups and between children and adults are good. The school promotes good relationships and racial harmony and children make friends irrespective of cultural heritage. It is a school in which all children feel valued and value each other. The children say that bullying is rare and if they saw any they would tell a teacher who would deal with it. A small minority of parents feel behaviour is unsatisfactory but this is not borne out by inspection evidence. Temporary exclusions had been high but are reducing significantly.
6. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are good opportunities for reflection in assemblies and children are encouraged to be unafraid to show wonder in lessons. Children love discussing important questions and expressing their beliefs in religious education lessons. Moral development is also good, as when the school council agreed the 'Golden Rules'. School visits and the range of extra-curricular activities develop children's social awareness well. The lunchtime supervisors make a major contribution, as do the learning mentors. The ethos of the school develops good attitudes to the creativity of other

cultures as well as English, preparing the children well for life in a multi-cultural society. It is a delight to meet and speak with the children.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	0.4

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

7. In spite of the action taken to promote good attendance and punctuality, attendance is unsatisfactory. The considerable increase in unauthorised absence last year is partly due to the school's justifiable policy of not authorising absence for holidays taken during term time. The absence rate is still too high, but non-attendance occurs in a minority of families. The local education authority has just appointed an experienced attendance advisory officer to support the school, which should help to improve the attendance rate along with the already very effective work of the learning mentors. The high absence rate of some children has an adverse effect on their progress.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
198
2
8
2
3
1
4
4
4
5
42
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
7	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
1	0
0	0
0	0

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. This is the result of improvements led by the recently appointed headteacher backed by good support from the local education authority.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All pupils achieve soundly and there has been significant improvement in teaching and learning within the last two terms. The school is ambitiously committed to further improvement.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning is based upon clear identification of children's learning needs.
- Teachers use open questioning to help children think for themselves.
- Class management is usually good.
- Teachers do not address the different learning needs of children precisely enough.
- Teaching assistants and learning mentors help children achieve.

## Commentary

8. Teaching has improved significantly over the last two terms. During the inspection it was almost always at least satisfactory and often good or, more rarely, very good. Children are eager to learn and do their best, and make good progress, overcoming barriers to learning such as learning English as a new language or other special educational needs. Most but not all achieve well.
9. The improvement in teaching has come about because there is now a soundly planned curriculum. This leads to good planning for each lesson and unit of work. Each teacher now has a list of those children in danger of under-achievement, those with special educational needs and those with additional problems associated with learning English. Good assessment of these children's needs leads to good support, especially by teaching assistants and learning mentors. Raising the achievement of all children is now at the forefront of teachers' minds and this leads to ambitious challenge and pace in lessons. Even so, only the most experienced and expert teachers can move on to plan ways to address precisely the wide range of learning needs because some teachers do not use assessment sufficiently to adapt their teaching to meet the learning needs of each level of ability or need. This is because, although procedures are satisfactory for assessment and identification of why and how each child can learn more quickly, they need to be very good when faced with the very wide range of barriers to learning which the children present. Realising this, the school sets children of similar ability in Years 5 and 6 in classes targeted at a particular range of needs in literacy and numeracy. This is a successful strategy based on good assessment and leads to more effective teaching. The school is beginning to realise that they need a better policy on developing the children's speaking and listening skills that everyone can follow. This policy is much needed because this area of learning is not sufficiently addressed in planning and delivering lessons.
10. Children now talk about their learning and are proud of their achievements. They often help each other with their work, a key skill that some teachers spot and use effectively, for example, by asking children to think through problems in pairs or by working with a class to create a diagram to set out their ideas. Most children, however, do not understand how they can improve their work.
11. Most parents feel but do not know that their children are making good progress. A small minority do not believe teaching and learning are satisfactory. This uncertainty is because the school is not effective enough at keeping parents informed about what their children are learning and the targets they need to meet. Plans to involve parents fully in their children's learning are at an early stage.
12. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good because the senior manager is very expert and experienced. Similarly, local education authority experts or ones recruited by the school are making a major contribution to the improvement of teaching and learning throughout the school and areas of particular need. Learning mentors identify children in need and work very skilfully to raise their achievement, working closely with teaching assistants and class teachers. Outside experts comment on the way the school has moved from a position in which many staff thought nothing needed to improve to one in which staff are eager to learn ways to improve the children's achievement.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons or parts of lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (%)	10 (18%)	17 (31%)	27 (49%)	1 (2%)	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.*

Although the quality of teaching varied between classes and subjects, it was always at least satisfactory overall.

### **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning ensures balance, breadth and relevance in the curriculum.
- The system for tracking children's progress helps improve the curriculum.
- The new programme of visits make the curriculum come alive.
- There are good cross-curricular links between art, history, literacy and ICT.
- Learning mentors help children with particular needs take part in all lessons.
- There is too little emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills.
- The wider aspects of sex education are not being taught.

### **Commentary**

13. The curriculum is broad, meets statutory requirements and is accessible to all children. The learning mentors make a very good contribution towards keeping children involved and interested in learning. The sex education policy has yet to be agreed by the governors and the moral and personal aspects are missed. Preparation for transfer to secondary school is satisfactory as are the movements between the nursery, infant and junior sections of the school.
14. The leadership of the headteacher has enriched the curriculum not only by tightening planning and adding a programme of visits, but also by helping the tracking of children's progress to lead to improvements. The curriculum is well planned but subject managers are at an early stage in managing its delivery, for example, helping learning in one subject support another; a good start has been made in linking work in art, history, literacy and ICT. Importantly, there is too little emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills not just in literacy lessons but in all subjects; these low skills stop children from understanding and using what they are expected to learn. Recently planned termly visits are having a very positive affect on the children's understanding and enjoyment of the curriculum. Although there is now an overall plan for the curriculum to ensure that all subjects are covered, there is sometimes too long an interval between the study of certain subjects, such as geography. There is a developing personal, social and health scheme of work but it does not yet do enough to prepare children fully for the demands of their future lives, for example, the moral and social aspects of sex education.
15. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory but concentrates upon the older children. There is a 'breakfast' club that prepares children for the day. There is also an after-school club which offers sporting activities and some pleasurable opportunities for drawing and playing with friends. However, this is rather noisy and the children do not follow school rules, for example, walking on benches with outdoor shoes.

16. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory for delivery of the curriculum but the library is inadequate. Providing class libraries has not made up for the lack of a central library and does not encourage the children to read for enjoyment or to find information. Improving the availability of books is crucial to raising standards. Lack of good resources restricts children's access to the curriculum in other areas, for example, physical education. The headteacher has recruited expert staff and there are now adequate qualified staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum, including the needs of children learning English and those with special educational needs.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The learning mentors are very effective.
- The provision for children's welfare, health and safety is good.
- Induction arrangements for the nursery and reception class are good.
- The induction arrangements for children arriving in Years 1 – 6 are inadequate.

### **Commentary**

17. The experienced and designated adult for child protection keeps herself up-to-date with all the latest developments, passing on the information to other members of staff. Consequently, the school's child protection procedures are secure. Sufficient staff have qualifications in first-aid. An experienced school administrator helps sick and injured children efficiently and with care. She administers medicines appropriately. The health and safety policy is being reviewed in line with that of the local authority and will be agreed by the governing body shortly.
18. The learning mentors are a strength of the school. They are at the forefront of the school's provision of support, advice and guidance. The three mentors monitor children who have any problems with attendance or academic and social concerns. They start their day at the school gate picking up late arrivals and at lunchtime they run a 'drop in' centre for any children who need it. During the rest of the day they act as teaching assistants, supporting the children they monitor. Each child has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults at the school. If problems arise in a child's personal development, the concerns are noted and monitored. The school involves parents when concerns arise.
19. Support for children learning English or from an ethnic minority is satisfactory and fast improving. The recently appointed support teacher is not a specialist but is keen to learn. She works closely with the deputy headteacher. She has wisely taken time to assess in depth these children's needs and attainment. This keeps their needs at the forefront of teachers' minds and guides them to where help is needed. These recent improvements are well supported by local education authority specialists.
20. Support for children with special educational needs is satisfactory and again improving. The provision is well led and managed; the manager is usefully a member of the senior management team. Strengths are the detailed individual education plans in all teachers' planning files and the effective way these plans are supported by teaching assistants and learning mentors. A large number of the children have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. In the main, the school is very good at helping these children cope with their difficulties but has yet to develop sufficiently the specialised support they need. The local education authority has a good authority-wide behaviour improvement plan, delivered through a local partnership of which the school is member. These initiatives, however, are at a very early stage.

21. The school has started to involve the children in some school decisions through seeking their views and, where appropriate, acting on them. For example, they have been successful in starting up a pupils' newsletter and the school has responded to their request for an improvement in the playground activities. This is done through the recently formed school council. At present, there is too little discussion with children over how they can improve their work.
22. The induction arrangements for children arriving during the school year are unsatisfactory. The school receives a high number of children other than at the Foundation Stage. They are made very welcome and made to feel valued but insufficient time is given to assessing in depth their learning and personal needs before they work in full class lessons. Similarly, insufficient time is given to ensuring they have the minimum skills to access the curriculum. This situation is made worse because the school is sometimes told by the local education authority to accept a child without full information on their needs and background. For example; one arrival had serious emotional and behavioural difficulties and a very disrupted past; the school had to accept the child, even though the school already had many children with similar problems. On arrival, despite the school ensuring there was a meeting with parents, it had too little information on the child's background. The school did not have the resources to help this child. Consequently, the child disrupted the learning of others and took too long to begin achieving. This apparent forcing of the school to accept children about whom it does not have sufficient information and may not have sufficient resources to meet their needs, is a serious concern raised by governors. The induction arrangements for children starting at the Foundation Stage are good. Parents say staff helped their children to settle in well.

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

The school's links with parents are unsatisfactory. The links with the community and with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' annual reports now fulfil statutory requirements.
- The school has some good links with other agencies.
- The school now sends out regular newsletters.
- A significant number of parents are unhappy with recent changes at the school.

### **Commentary**

23. Most parents are supportive of the school. However, at the parents' meeting a significant minority was not happy at some of the changes the headteacher had introduced. One of these was the handwriting, which parents described as 'italic'. In fact this was normal cursive handwriting, which the children should be using but which had not previously been emphasised. Perhaps a more justified complaint was the perceived lack of information to parents on why changes needed to happen. A lack of effective communication between school and home was also reflected in other answers to the questionnaires. The poor relationship with a minority of parents is holding back the school's improvement because they oppose necessary changes and take up a great deal of the time of senior managers. Governors do not play a sufficient role in forging links between home and school and staff do not have sufficient training in dealing with this difficult problem.
24. The information for parents is satisfactory. The annual reports are of good quality and are informative. Newsletters are sent out each week and contain clear information. Teachers are always available to parents after school and the headteacher is at the front of the school when children arrive in the mornings. The school is trying to involve more parents in children's learning with some success. For example: a few parents help in the classroom and listen to

children read, they are encouraged to attend Friday assemblies and some are starting to accompany children on school trips.

25. The school has some effective links with the community and other agencies but, overall, these links are insufficient, for example, with faith communities. A number of people attended a community tea party held during the inspection. Partners included Charlton football club and an environmental centre. There are regular visits by the fire service and the police visit the school to talk to the children. The procedures for transferring children to secondary school are satisfactory. Year 6 children visit their chosen secondary school for taster lessons.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management were weak but are now satisfactory overall. Strong leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher has turned the school around but senior managers recognise there is still much to do. They are well supported by key managers, for example, the manager of support for children with special educational needs and the local education authority. Governors support the school but have yet to give a sufficiently strong lead on future improvements.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Sound management that ensures that staff work effectively together.
- Governors' insecure knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Good support from the local education authority.

### **Commentary**

26. When the headteacher took up post she gave governors and staff a wake-up call that standards had declined to a seriously low level. Her courageous leadership gave the school new direction and strong management. She made it clear that things and people's perceptions had to change and this released the leadership and management skills of senior managers. The deputy headteacher and senior manager of provision for children with special educational needs provide fine professional role models for others. Staff now work to clear schemes of work and secure assessment information. Performance management is strong yet supportive; the headteacher deals with identified weaknesses firmly, giving clear guidance on areas to improve. She has recruited ambitious new blood into the school, looking and finding people who can bring new skills and are unafraid to admit that they may still have a lot to learn. Leadership and middle management overall are satisfactory with clear direction from the top on necessary and further improvements, including the development of a central school improvement team that will include more middle managers. Subject leaders have ensured their colleagues have what they need to carry out their responsibilities, but have insufficient time to work with colleagues in classrooms, identifying what works and what still needs to improve. The good achievement of children at the Foundation Stage is evidence of what children can achieve once leadership and management are expert and strong. Staff during the inspection came across as a strong team unafraid to face what still needs putting right but rightly proud of what they have already achieved. Self-evaluation is now rigorous and leads to appropriate training or guidance. This radical change has been helped significantly by support from the local education authority.
27. The governing body were not aware of the serious state into which the school had fallen but even so ensured that they appointed an experienced headteacher. They faced up to the problems she described and now support her completely. They work efficiently through committees, but are only beginning to find ways to investigate and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the range of skills present within their own membership. They do not provide sufficiently strong leadership, for example, in championing the achievements of the school with parents who have yet to be convinced. A characteristic of

the headteacher is that she ensures that the school does the simple and crucial things well in all areas of the school's life and work. The governors do not play a sufficiently upfront role in planning a similarly simple strategy for the future and checking that what is decided actually happens.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,161,121	Balance from previous year	1,173,03
Total expenditure	1,124,362	Balance carried forward to the next	1,540,61
Expenditure per pupil	2,998		

28. The school controls finance very well and budgeting is both prudent and also well focused on raising standards. The school has a large surplus; there are sensibly plans to use this to support the school's improvement. The headteacher ensures that improvement is guided by consultation with others and comparison with the performance of other similar schools, and this leads to precise targets to achieve and to innovative ways to rectify problems and to gain best value from investments.

**OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

**What is the effectiveness of community provision?**

Community provision supports the achievement of children but lacks the cohesion that would allow even greater benefits.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The willingness of all partners to work more closely together.
- The school's vision to become a centre for this partnership.
- The lack of a strategic plan to bring cohesion across the provision.
- The lack of communication and collaboration between partners.
- Inadequate accommodation that hinders some initiatives.

**Commentary**

29. Community provision makes a significant contribution to the children's achievement and personal development by making children feel individually valued and cared for. The school works closely with several community partners and wishes to become a centre of the community where the partners can work more closely and, therefore, more effectively together. At present, these partners tend to work separately with too little communication and collaboration between them. Effective provision for family literacy is hindered by lack of accommodation in the school for much of the year. Support for Somali families is much valued but works in isolation. An after-school club is much valued by children and parents but again tends to work alongside rather than with the school. Consequently, on occasion children are allowed to behave in ways that are not allowed during the school day. The accommodation is not ideal, but the children enjoy the many activities.

30. There are also good local education authority programmes to support ethnic minority children, to raise achievement through Excellence and Cities programmes and to raise attainment by improving behaviour. The latter is a partnership centred on the local comprehensive school as part of an authority-wide behaviour improvement plan. The community's anxiety over possible changes to the role of the secondary school hinders this project. Even so, and at an early stage, this initiative already has a range of helpful specialist support and plans to increase this

range. The school arranges a caring breakfast club. There are links with such as Charlton football club and the emergency services but too little partnership with community business, commerce or faith organisations.

31. Every partner interviewed was very keen to work within a larger partnership, with the school as its centre. Although many initiatives are at an early stage, the benefits are already clear. Children value their schooling more highly and, consequently, are more eager to learn. They feel more valued and, consequently, are more willing to play their part. They gain a better understanding of the wider world and this raises their aspirations. There is a shared will and vision, and the school with its partners say how much they want to find better ways of bring these beginnings together to enrich the community as a whole and, thereby, the children's learning. This provides great opportunities for the school to become the heart of these community initiatives aided by the good representation of the community within the governing body.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

32. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Most children enter the nursery at three with very low levels of language development and many are at very early stages of learning English. Children achieve well and by the end of Reception most are on course to reach the nationally set early learning goals in most aspects of personal, social and emotional development, physical development, and aspects of creative development. Because of very low starting points, however, most are unlikely to reach the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and the imaginative aspect of creative development.
33. Teaching is good. Staff have a good understanding of the active way that young children learn. They provide a wide variety of relevant and interesting activities, but the lack of a covered outside area and poor drainage hinders outdoor learning during bad weather. The good balance between activities that are adult-led and child-initiated promotes independence and confidence effectively. Good leadership ensures that the unit meets children's needs effectively. Adult roles are clear and teamwork is good. Comprehensive but newly in place assessment systems help teachers to provide appropriate levels of challenge for all children. Improvement since the last inspection in 1999 is good. The reception and nursery classes are now well integrated and literacy enjoys a higher profile.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

- Staff provide a calm and welcoming environment.
- Children are well settled, confident and friendly.
- Children are keen to come to school.
- Children behave well.

#### **Commentary**

34. Standards in most aspects of personal, social and emotional development meet national expectations. Children achieve well. Very good teaching helps them to settle and feel secure in the caring and welcoming environment; even the youngest are eager to come each day. Staff manage behaviour in a consistently positive way, making sure that children learning English understand. Children behave sensibly and move happily about the well-organised setting. They enjoy the wide variety of practical activities and select their tasks with confidence. With gentle reminders they are beginning to share and take turns. They almost always work and play harmoniously, sometimes together and sometimes alongside each other, enjoying the rich and diverse cultural backgrounds of other children. They enjoy making things such as diva lamps and barfi sweets but are unclear as to their significance. Self-service snack times encourage the children's independence.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff help children remember sounds and letters in a variety of ways.
- Children enjoy books and handle them with care.

## Commentary

35. Despite good teaching, staff are not yet able to compensate for children's low starting points and, consequently, most children are unlikely to reach the national goals. Few older children talk in a fluent or extended way, and many are reluctant to speak in front of a group. Teachers' good questioning skills encourage them to talk about a favourite story, but many responses are single words or short phrases. Often younger children respond in non-verbal ways, such as nodding. Staff emphasise new words clearly, especially for those learning English. Areas for improvement include finding more ways to engage with children in planned and spontaneous conversations. Teachers encourage children's interest in books effectively; children enjoy listening to lively stories. Consequently, children enjoy using books and treat them carefully. They join in with repetitive phrases and make relevant, albeit limited, comments. Older children with higher ability read simple texts. Others are beginning to remember common words. Most can recognise their names and some can write them accurately. Younger children make good attempts at 'signing in' at the beginning of sessions. The high profile that teachers give to teaching sounds and letters, sometimes using particularly effective and imaginative strategies, motivate and inspire children to use new words. Staff sensibly provide a wide variety of implements for early writing, but sometimes miss the chance to write down the meaning of the children's letter-like shapes.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching about patterns.
- Not enough incidental mathematics across the curriculum.
- Staff do not talk mathematically to children in their chosen play.

### Commentary

36. Children achieve satisfactorily but most are unlikely to reach the national goals. Attainment is better in pattern-making aspects. Teaching is satisfactory and there are some good quality focused sessions. For example, lively teaching helped many older children to learn about simple alternate patterns using beads, interlocking bricks and their bodies. Higher-attaining children devised more complex patterns and extended their learning, choosing later to colour squares in a pattern. Such daily activities promote good learning. Overall, however, although staff provide mathematics activities for children's structured play, this area of learning does not have a sufficiently high profile across the curriculum. Daily routines such as registration are not used well enough. Opportunities are lost for incidental counting or early computation, or to talk mathematically with children in their play.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good cross-curricular links about Diwali.
- Provision for information and communication technology is poor.

## Commentary

37. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area but most children are unlikely to attain the national goals. Although children play happily with technological items such as typewriters, telephones and tills, poor computer and software provision hinders learning. Children move freely about the unit but, because the one computer is sited in the nursery area, access for reception children is too limited. Teaching is satisfactory. Focused small-group teaching is good; for example, children were fully involved making sweets for Diwali, smelling ingredients such as coconut, measuring out icing sugar and mixing. Small-step questions encourage children to talk about what they are doing but there is too little questioning to encourage extended answers. Teachers provide an appropriate variety of activities to promote learning about other cultures but children find it hard to remember their significance. This is because staff do not make the activities sufficiently relevant, for example, by relating them directly to the diverse cultural heritages of the children.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good daily access to large apparatus for energetic play.
- Wide range of suitable activities to encourage dexterity.
- The lack of a covered outside area and poor drainage of current areas.

## Commentary

38. Children achieve satisfactorily and most are likely to reach the national goals. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers provide a wide range of suitable activities to encourage children to use their hands and fingers with dexterity and most hold pencils, glue-spreaders and paintbrushes effectively. They use their fingers well to thread beads, press and roll dough or pour sand carefully. Daily access to the garden provides good opportunities for energetic play with wheeled toys such as bikes and scooters, or to climb, balance and slide. The low-level climbing frame lacks challenge for older children. Poor drainage and the lack of a covered outdoor play area overly restricts children's access to outside physical activity during bad weather.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy a wide range of art and music activities.
- Staff do not join children in their imaginative play often enough.

## Commentary

39. Children achieve well in art and music aspects, and are on course to reach the national goals. They paint, print and make colourful collages. They sing enthusiastically and experiment with percussion instruments. Imaginative aspects, however, fall below expectations because of the children's low starting points, especially in talk and expressing ideas. Staff provide suitable areas for imaginative and role-play which children enjoy. They dress up, cut pizzas and scan packets at the supermarket checkout, for example, but their play is often solitary. Staff do not join them often enough to develop ideas, stimulate imagination, or encourage extended talk. Teaching is satisfactory.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards overall are too low and this hinders learning in other subjects.
- Teachers do not develop the children's speaking and listening skills well enough.
- The subject leader is very enthusiastic and has good plans to raise standards.
- There is some very good teaching.
- Children are keen to learn and they behave well in lessons.
- The school uses expertise from local education authority very well.
- Setting arrangements help teachers match work to children's needs
- Class libraries are too small and do not contain a sufficient range of modern books.

## Commentary

40. Standards in English are well below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is not as good as during the last inspection when standards were below the national average. Since then, however, the percentage of children with English as an additional language has doubled and many pupils transfer into this school. Thus not all children spend their whole time at De Lucy and several children who start late have experienced difficulties elsewhere. Improvement was poor but has become satisfactory since the current headteacher took up post.
41. The children's speaking and listening skills are well below average across the school. Although the children are given many opportunities to discuss in pairs their skills are not improving fast enough. Teachers often miss opportunities to extend their vocabulary. Even though teachers use the correct words themselves they do not focus the children's attention upon how they can broaden and use a wider range of words. For instance, when a child used the slang term 'bunged' the teacher gave other words but did not directly present these as more useful alternatives. While the children are well behaved and appear to listen well they do not always understand what is being read or said. Visits outside the school are giving the children much to say, for instance, following a Year 2 visit to central London. They travelled by boat and train, learned about history and above all 'talked' – a child loved the way she could use the new idea 'stone cathedral'. This term was used later during work on a computer and when memories were drawn and talked about in art.
42. Standards in reading are well below average across the school though pupils are very keen to improve and enjoy reading. A third of Year 6 pupils belong to a local library, which is very good. However, in school, there is not an adequate central library with a computer system. Each class has a library stock but there are too few non-fiction books and many of these do not have contents pages. The children try to find other ways to get the information but are often

unsuccessful. They are determined but when reading generally they have too few skills to help them read well and understand the meaning. The younger children do not use sounds in words or 'phonics' to help them when they meet new words and older able children do not have sufficient vocabulary to understand the meaning of new words.

43. The children's writing skills are well below average. Recently the school has placed a great emphasis upon developing neat, joined handwriting and this is beginning to raise standards. A significant improvement is the way teachers are encouraging extended and creative writing in various subjects and, consequently, standards are rising.
44. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is most effective when children in Years 5 and 6 are working in classes of similar attainment because the teachers can focus their teaching more precisely. During the inspection there were several examples of very good teaching where the teacher made learning purposeful and fun. Work is matched well to children's ability, and practical activities are used very well to motivate, interest and give children very good clues as to how they can improve their language. Teacher assistants are used very well. Teacher's plans are very good at building learning step-by-step over the week.
45. The new subject leader and manager is very keen and determined to raise standards. He uses the very good help from the local education authority to develop, for example, assessment and to help teachers plan work. However, he has too little time to work with teachers in classrooms. Consequently, although the quality of teaching and learning is improving, standards overall are not improving fast enough.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

46. The National Literacy Strategy is in place but tends to stand alone. For example, the school lacks a plan for developing language across the curriculum. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are not sufficiently highlighted in the planning for all subjects. For instance, the children's interest in design and technology could be used to help them speak and then plan their work in literacy lessons, thus leaving more time for practical activities.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** and improving.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The National Numeracy Strategy has contributed significantly to raising standards.
- Innovation in the curriculum has improved both teaching and learning.
- Children have too few opportunities to try out and talk about their own strategies for calculation.
- Computers (ICT) are not used enough in classrooms.

### **Commentary**

47. Children join the school with very low attainment. Although all children achieve satisfactorily, attainment in Years 2 and 6 is still below average and expected standards. Even so, this represents a good recent improvement.
48. Standards are slowly improving because the school responds productively to the good support from the local education authority. The school is part of an intensive support programme, which identifies individual children to help raise their attainment. They are assessed in Years 3 and 5 to identify areas of weakness. There are then successful 'booster' classes and the children are usefully set according to ability in Years 5 and 6. It is significant that results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 have improved significantly.

49. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with a significant amount of good teaching; this enables all children to make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented effectively. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to produce a stimulating and secure learning environment and children respond by being keen to learn. They are given sound opportunities to work together and children work collaboratively, showing pride and pleasure in their achievements.
50. Generally, oral work is the least effective aspect of the teaching. Teachers' questioning at the start of the daily mathematics lesson does not always provide enough challenge for all the children. Children do not get enough opportunities to bounce their ideas off each other. Questioning is frequently of individuals and teachers rarely ask children to comment on each other's ideas. Children do not have enough opportunity to try out and discuss their own ideas for calculation before they are shown a standard method. The use of mathematical vocabulary is not consistent. The use of ICT to support the teaching of mathematics is limited and not always included in the planning.
51. The new subject leader and manager is working closely with senior management to raise standards. Together, they know what they need to do to improve learning further and have developed good teamwork between staff. As yet, there has been too little time allocated to monitoring teaching and then sharing the best practice.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

52. The school does not have a systematic plan for including mathematical learning across the curriculum, although this is in future improvement planning. Even so, children do use number in other subjects. In science, children create and analyse tables of data, using bar charts to show their pulse rates. Year 6 analyse census details on families in Victorian times. Mathematical skills are not as well developed in most other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in science are below national expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- Results in national tests declined significantly but have risen in 2003.
- Limited language skills hinder progress.
- Practical science lessons motivate children well.

### **Commentary**

53. Standards in science in Year 6 are below national expectations, reflecting the findings of the 1999 inspection. Even so, Year 6 children observe different soil types carefully and explain which would make a suitable habitat for 'mini-beasts'. They record findings on simple charts with higher-attaining children making more detailed recordings.
54. National test results in 2002 at the end Year 6 were very low but have risen significantly in 2003. Even so, results have declined significantly since 1998, when they were above average. Reasons for this include children's low starting points, previously teachers' low expectations of the children, and an increase in the numbers of children with English as an additional language. Limited language skills continue to hinder children's learning in science across the school as they lack the vocabulary and fluency to talk with confidence about their work.
55. Standards for seven-year-olds are also below national expectations, reflecting the findings of the 1999 inspection and teachers' assessments in 2003. Even so, children talk about the

needs of babies and toddlers scientifically and higher-attaining children begin to compare and contrast their findings.

56. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall. The best aspects include practical experiments that stimulate children and effectively arouse their curiosity. Practical lessons are now established, an improvement since the last inspection, but are not always frequent enough. Further teaching strengths include using resources such as the electronic microscope to generate effective whole-class discussions, and helping children to make links with prior and current learning. In general teachers emphasise new scientific vocabulary appropriately, such as 'hinge' and 'ball and socket' joints. They are well prepared and well organised. Their expectations of what children can do, however, are sometimes too low.
57. Leadership and management in science are adequate. Previous weaknesses in taking steps to halt the trend of declining results are now, with the support of the new headteacher, being addressed. Effective new setting arrangements for Year 6 children enable higher attainers to move at a sharper pace. Monitoring children's workbooks rigorously identifies implications for teaching and learning. Ways forward are becoming clear.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching does not address sufficiently the varying learning needs of the children.
- ICT is not used enough in classrooms.
- Planned use of new hard and software ensures coverage of the National Curriculum.
- The children have good attitudes and behave well.

### **Commentary**

58. Children in Year 6 will not reach expected standards because they are only just beginning to benefit from the new computer suite. Younger children will not reach average standards unless more time is spent in learning ICT skills, especially in the classroom. Even so, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, and computers are beginning to make an important contribution to standards in other areas of the curriculum.
59. There is excitement in the learning, which contributes to children's spiritual development. Their delight was plain to see as their work rolls out of the printer, for example when Year 6 children presented a multi-media slideshow that told a story and Year 1 manipulated the mouse to control the cursor. Older or more able children support younger or less able children.
60. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the good lessons, children achieve well because teachers have clear expectations and pupils know what they have to do. Occasionally, teachers are hesitant because they lack confidence and speed when demonstrating computer skills, and in some lessons they do not ensure that each pupil has a fair turn on the computer. Teachers do not make enough use of the computers in their classrooms and ICT is too seldom included in their planning.
61. Effective leadership and management of the subject are raising standards and improving the range and quality of provision. The subject leader is keen to ensure that the new resources are fully used. Parents are made aware of Internet safety. The school conducted a rigorous audit of standards and agreed an effective improvement. Subsequent investment in resources and staff training greatly enhanced the learning opportunities for children. The school is beginning to monitor pupils' progress, but recognises that monitoring and assessment are not yet good

enough to enable teachers to match tasks precisely to each child's needs. The school has good plans for further development.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

62. The use of ICT across the curriculum is not sufficiently co-ordinated. Even so, it is well used for data handling in mathematics, research using the Internet in history and using a microscope linked to a computer in science. Children use word processing when producing books, projects and poetry, and graphic programs in art and design. The use of control technology is not yet in place.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History and geography**

Provision for both history and geography is **satisfactory**.

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

- Visits enrich the curriculum.
- Geography is not taught on a sufficiently regular basis.
- There are insufficient books in the library for research.
- Lack of formal assessment means children are unclear as to how to improve their work.

#### **Commentary**

63. A good range of purposeful visits enriches the curriculum. Year 2's visit to London gave them a better understanding the Great Fire, while outings to Lullingstone Villa and Lesnes Abbey brought Roman times to life. The story of Richard De Luci linked the past to their present. History is blocked with geography on the timetable, although greater emphasis appears to be given to history. With large gaps of time between lessons, it is difficult for children to build up their knowledge and skills in a systematic way. Consequently, although children's attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 matches national expectations in history, it is below expectations in geography. Even so, this represents satisfactory progress and achievement and shows at least sound teaching.
64. The subject managers for geography and history recognise they need greater full-school focus on their subjects. They are enthusiastic and have good plans for raising the profile of geography and building on children's natural curiosity in history. 'Black History' month was a very good opportunity to involve everyone in celebrations of the multi-cultural life of the school and community. History and geography are blended together well in many of the activities.

### **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work to a good curriculum plan.
- Teaching and learning are at least satisfactory and often good even though some teachers lack subject knowledge and expertise.
- Children treat the subject seriously and are willing to think for themselves.
- The subject manager provides strong leadership.

## Commentary

65. Teachers put a lot of effort and thought into the weekly lessons. Children enjoy grappling with ideas and building their own beliefs. A good range of topics covers the major religions and the way that religion brings meaning and purpose to human lives, often helped by teachers using Muslim children as “my experts”. All children make satisfactory and steady progress, and most reach the standards that are expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is good. This is because teachers know their pupils and understand what they need, whether it is help with English or to overcome unwillingness to really think through a problem. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good, this is because the teacher’s lack of expertise misses the religious significance of activities or because the tasks do not stretch the children, especially the more able. Teachers make good use of diagrams, sometimes called ‘mind-maps’, to bring together the children’s thinking, and are beginning to make better use of creative and extended writing as a way of helping children express their feelings.
66. The new subject leader is enthusiastic and potentially very effective. She realises that she has a great deal to do and learn, particularly in the detailed management of the subject. Her strength is in her leadership, namely her determination to succeed and her sense of direction; her enthusiasm inspires others. Reflective assemblies enhance religious education, encouraging quiet thought about serious matters. Ways of building on both spiritual and cultural development would benefit from lessons being structured around the festivals of world religions, allowing children to celebrate rather than just learn about these special events. The subject leader plans to make links with local faith communities and this is necessary.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

### Art and design

Provision for art is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching seen was good overall, even though curriculum plan does not help teachers build steadily the children’s skills.
- There are good links with other subjects particularly ICT.
- Children generally work hard.
- Visits to London and elsewhere give children many ideas.
- Work is often not displayed well.
- Resources are not varied, shared efficiently or well organised.
- The Sketchbooks are not used consistently to show progress over time.

### Commentary

67. Standards of work are satisfactory. The children, however, do not develop their skills and understanding to the full, mainly because do not make enough use of sketchbooks. This also

misses an opportunity for teachers to evaluate progress. Display of children's work is barely satisfactory. It is often hidden and this does not celebrate the children's achievements.

68. There are good but unsystematic links with other subjects. Their effectiveness is too dependent upon each teacher's knowledge, expertise and confidence. The recently introduced regular trips and visits, for example to London, contribute positively to the children's understanding and observation of the world around them. Very good teaching encouraged them to create and build on their own ideas.
69. The new leader of this subject is enthusiastic and has a good plan to improve standards. She has had, however, too little time to implement the plan, for example to audit, organise and improve resources, and to improve curriculum planning.

## **Design and technology**

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning balances the design, make and evaluate aspects of the subject.

### **Commentary**

70. One Year 6 lesson was observed. All children were keen to make cushions that were to be tested by the reception class. They had learned the necessary skills and evaluated their work but had too little time to decorate these to their satisfaction. They enjoy design and technology lessons and worked hard because the teacher made the lesson interesting and relevant. Planning for the subject is good and discussion with children showed that their attainment was broadly in line with national expectation by Year 6.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children enjoy music lessons and work hard.
- The school makes good use of in-house and local education authority musical expertise.
- On occasion, children are particularly well challenged and motivated.

### **Commentary**

71. Standards in music meet expectations, maintaining the position at the 1999 inspection. Singing throughout the school is tuneful and often enthusiastic. For example, Year 6 children have a basic understanding of 12-bar Blues, composing suitable lyrics and improvisations. Children in Year 2 identify higher and lower notes with confidence. They hold a steady beat as they sing and some use tuned instruments appropriately. Older children make good contributions to assemblies by playing guitars. Children achieve satisfactorily.
72. The quality of teaching is good overall. Confident and well-structured teaching in one very good lesson, together with good opportunities to rehearse and improve, stimulated children very well to work hard and produce a creditable performance of their Blues song. Teachers effectively emphasise musical terms such as 'pitch', 'melody' and 'improvise' and children begin to use them in their talk. Children respond well to the enthusiastic teaching and enjoy their music lessons.

73. Despite the lack of a permanent music co-ordinator, the subject is moving forward positively. Through the supervision of the headteacher, available skills among the staff are being put to good use. For example, piano or guitar accompaniment enhances singing in assembly and children have the opportunity to take part in guitar and recorder clubs. In addition, a specialist teacher from the local education authority works effectively alongside teachers and demonstrates key lessons. This develops the musical expertise and confidence of staff in general. The opportunity for instrumental tuition further enhances children's musical experience, as does a summer term musical production. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader knows what needs to improve and her leadership is already succeeding.
- The lack of good quality basic equipment hinders learning.
- Many older children are reluctant to take part in outdoor sessions.
- The bleak, poorly marked playground for older children hinders learning.

### Commentary

74. Attainment in aspects of physical education is barely adequate in Year 6. In Year 2 standards are satisfactory. Eleven-year-olds show some precision and control in gymnastics using large climbing and balancing apparatus and are beginning to pay attention to correct starting and finishing positions. They lack confidence, however, and under-perform when on camera for an assessment. Their reluctance to change for outdoor sessions hinders the progress they can make, as many do not take part in lessons. Eleven-year-olds do not achieve as well as they could, signifying a decline since the previous inspection. Seven-year-olds achieve satisfactorily. They approach physical sessions keenly and are appropriately aware of the need for raised heartbeats as they begin. They practise ball skills and improve, carefully following the teacher's clear instruction.
75. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The best lessons are pacy, challenging and well structured, for example, in a good dance lesson. Children use self-evaluation well. Teachers give the children positive feedback. They encourage them to consider their own and others' performance and how it can be improved. The video camera is used to good effect for this purpose although children do not always perform as well as they can. On occasion, teaching is less than satisfactory, when activities are not well matched to children's needs, and the lack of basic good quality equipment such as balls and team bands hinders progress. Worn markings and a cracked playground surface are demotivating and the lack of clear boundaries for small games limits the quality of play. The quality of teaching has declined since the last inspection, when it was good overall.
76. The keen new co-ordinator is making a good start in identifying what needs to be done but she has not yet had time to monitor standards in lessons. The school has not addressed with sufficient rigour the reluctance of older children to take part in outdoor sessions. Standards have declined since the last inspection.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is an appropriate scheme of work with weekly lessons.

### **Commentary**

77. The development of a personal, social and health curriculum is a recent part of the general improvement of the school. A good start has been made but the initiative is at an early stage. Children now have weekly lessons, working to an agreed and appropriate scheme of work. Teachers prepare carefully and children find the lessons interesting and important. Teaching is satisfactory and all pupils make sound progress. Even so, children's maturity of thought and awareness is lower than expected of children at each age. The learning is sometimes extended by 'circle time' (a time when children can discuss their problems openly) and this is a successful link. Senior managers see this area of learning to be at the heart of the school's curriculum because they recognise the immaturity and lack of awareness among the children. The subject is satisfactorily managed but currently the responsible subject manager does not exercise the leadership necessary to put the subject at the heart of the children's learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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