

INSPECTION REPORT

LEESONS PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Paul's Cray, Orpington, Kent

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101633

Headteacher: Miss Gill Dalton

Lead inspector: Peter Candlish

Dates of inspection: 15–18 March 2004

Inspection number: 256721

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4–11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	265
School address:	Leesons Hill St. Paul's Cray Orpington Kent
Postcode:	BR5 2LS
Telephone number:	01689 602786
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Dianne Fox
Date of previous inspection:	11 February 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Leesons Primary school is about the same size as other primary schools and has 265 children aged from four to eleven. There are slightly more boys than girls. The number admitted each year is 44 and consequently several classes have mixed ages. A new reception class opened in January 2004. The school is in an area of social and economic deprivation, and the proportion of pupils who have free school meals is well above the national average. Pupils are predominantly from white British backgrounds and only a very small minority are from mixed race or ethnic minority culture homes. A small minority of pupils are from traveller backgrounds. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs though this has dropped from an even higher level recently. Most pupils with special educational needs have speech or communication difficulties or moderate learning difficulties. The rate of mobility amongst pupils is very high and nearly half of Year 6 pupils did not begin at this school in the reception class. The attainment of pupils on entry is very low.

The school finds the recruitment and retention of teachers difficult and half are new to the school in the last two years. The headteacher left at the end of 2003 and the deputy is currently acting as headteacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
33224	Peter Candlish	Lead inspector	English as an additional language English Religious education History Geography
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
3574	Kanwaljit Singh	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has made good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is very low but because of good teaching they achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. The provision for the high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is good and they make satisfactory progress. The overall leadership and management are satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Standards in the core subjects are generally low.
- Achievement is satisfactory, overall.
- The acting head provides good leadership.
- There is consistently good teaching in Years 3 to 6 and, generally, good teaching overall.
- The school's comprehensive behaviour policy ensures that pupils' behaviour is satisfactory so that the learning can take place.
- Pupils are well cared for, supported and guided.
- The systems for the analysis of pupil's performance data are good though assessment data does not always inform the work set in the classroom.
- Governors support the school but do not challenge the head on key issues such as standards.

Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvement. Most of the important issues in the last report have been successfully addressed: teaching has improved from unsatisfactory to good overall; while standards remain well below average, achievement is now satisfactory because of the barriers facing the school; the monitoring of pupils' progress, and of teaching quality has improved; the quality and range of the curriculum is now satisfactory; and there is an improved emphasis on pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. However the school's efforts to improve attendance and punctuality have so far been unsuccessful.

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	D
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

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Overall, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory given their very low attainment on entry and the very high rate of mobility into and out of the school. The very high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs also achieves satisfactorily. In the Foundation Stage children achieve as well as expected and make satisfactory gains in all areas of learning.

In the 2003 national tests for seven-year-olds, the pupils' standards were very low compared to the national average and well below average compared to similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the percentage achieving as expected is improving and fewer pupils are not reaching the lowest National Curriculum level.

In the 2003 national tests for eleven-year-olds standards were very low in mathematics and well below average in English and science compared to all schools. However, compared to similar schools mathematics was well below average and the other two subjects were below average. Taking account of prior attainment, compared to similar schools, the percentage of pupils achieving higher than expectations was above average in English, average in science and below average in mathematics.

Pupils' personal development; and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes to school and their work are satisfactory. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage is good.

Although pupils like coming to school and find most lessons interesting, there remains a stubborn problem with below average attendance and poor punctuality despite the school's many efforts to tackle this issue.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Overall, **teaching is good** though pupils' learning is overall satisfactory. Pupils learn well in Years 3 to 6 but have some difficulty concentrating in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Poor attendance affects the continuity of learning for a significant minority. Teachers plan well and their enthusiasm stimulates pupils' interest. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Classroom assistants and support teachers make an effective contribution to lessons. Assessment arrangements are thorough but their outcomes are not always used effectively in matching work to pupils' needs.

The curriculum is satisfactory in quality and range and is enriched by lunchtime clubs and other activities. Good care, guidance and support is provided for pupils. Links with other schools are good and links with parents and the community are satisfactory. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear vision for the school. The school is satisfactorily managed. Subject co-ordinators work effectively in training their colleagues and monitoring pupils' work. The governing body is committed to supporting the school and actively monitoring work in the school. It has not yet begun to challenge the acting headteacher on fundamental issues such as the standards of pupils' work.

PARENTS AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally happy with the school though a significant minority are not happy with pupils' behaviour. They appreciate the efforts which are made to keep them informed and to help them to understand the curriculum, such as the workshops in literacy and numeracy. Pupils generally enjoy school, find lessons interesting, and appreciate the fairness and enthusiasm of their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in the core subjects.
- Improve attendance and punctuality.
- Improve writing in English and in other subjects.
- Improve the concentration and listening of reception and Year 1 and 2 pupils.
- Put right the minor omissions from the school brochure and governors' report to parents to meet statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in both national tests and classroom work are well below the national average in the core subjects but achievement is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily despite there being a very high proportion of such pupils.
- Standards have improved in writing in Year 2 and in English and science in Year 6.
- An above average proportion of pupils compared to similar schools achieve a higher level than expected in national tests at age eleven.
- Achievement in core subjects is satisfactory despite very low attainment on entry.
- Standards in national tests in 2004 are not expected to improve.
- Low standards in writing reduce the quality of work in other subjects.

Commentary

1. The 2003 national test results for seven-year-olds were very low compared to all schools and well below average compared to similar schools in reading and writing, while in mathematics they were very low compared to all schools and similar schools. A major cause of these low results is the very low attainment of pupils on entry to the school, for example, only a tiny minority of the current Year 6 pupils achieved even an average score on the local education authority's baseline test when they started school. There is some evidence of minor improvement in Year 2 test results in that the percentage achieving higher than expected has gone up, the proportion achieving below the lowest National Curriculum level has gone down, and results in writing have improved slightly. The trend in the school's performance in the national tests in 2003 at the end of Year 2 was below the national trend.

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

Standards in	School Results	National results
Reading	12.2 (11.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.2 (10.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	12.9 (13.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In the 2003 national tests, the results for eleven-year-olds compared to all schools were very low in mathematics and well below average in English and science. Compared to similar schools results are better with mathematics well below average and English and science below average; the results for the latter two subjects have improved since the last inspection in 2002. When taking account of prior attainment at the end Year 2, the proportion of eleven-year-olds attaining a higher than expected level compares favourably in English which is above the national average and science which is at the national average. This indicates that more able pupils are being encouraged by good teaching to achieve their potential.

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

Standards in	School Results	National results
English	23.8 (24.3)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	23.2 (23.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.2 (24.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The standards of pupils' work seen during lessons and in scrutinies of written work in books reflected the results in the national tests. However, the achievement of the pupils in light of their capabilities is judged by inspectors to be satisfactory. There are a number of reasons for this judgement. As well as the very low ability of pupils on entry, particularly in language skills which causes difficulties in all areas of learning and subjects, the school has a very high rate of mobility inwards and outwards of pupils. For example, half of the pupils in the current Year 6 did not begin their schooling at this school. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is well above the national average and there is a further substantial minority of lower ability pupils who were classified as having special educational needs until the criteria for this designation were changed recently. There is evidence to show that a higher proportion of pupils entering the school later than at reception age are on the special educational needs register than of those who enter at reception age. Pupils who have been at the school since reception are more likely to achieve better than expected at the end of Year 6. Added to this is the satisfactory achievement of the pupils who have special educational needs themselves and that some of them achieve well. The statistics showing that the school's value added performance is at the national average would also support the judgement that pupils in this school have satisfactory achievement. On the evidence of the work seen and the observations of lessons, a high proportion of pupils were achieving according to their capabilities.
4. Girls do less well in national tests at the end of Year 6 than boys compared to national averages. In Year 2 national tests girls have made more progress than boys in achieving as expected and in the 2003 tests girls achieved significantly better than boys. There was no significant difference in the achievement and progress of boys and girls in the lessons seen. The small minority of pupils from ethnic minority cultures or of mixed race achieves as well as other pupils.
5. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory as is achievement in religious education which has also improved.
6. In the Foundation Stage, despite very low attainment on entry, particularly in language and communication, children achieve as well as expected and make satisfactory gains in all areas of learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes towards the school, and their behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a well thought out and consistently applied behaviour policy which is effective with potentially difficult and challenging pupils.
- Teachers motivate pupils to desire to learn.

- Good relationships, racial harmony and prompt attention to any incidents of harassment are features of the school.
- Attendance and punctuality are below the national average and expectations despite the school's efforts over many years.

Commentary

7. Parents and pupils both agree that pupils like coming to school. Pupils generally find lessons interesting, particularly when there are practical activities or out of the ordinary approaches, for example, when a teacher in an English lesson made a fruit punch to illustrate using written instructions. Pupils do not start school with a high level of personal or social confidence and the teachers of younger pupils have to work hard to encourage them to participate in whole class activities and to express their views. These efforts are generally successful and as they mature pupils do increase in confidence until in Years 3 to 6 they are often exuberantly keen to share their thoughts in class.
8. Pupils' behaviour in the classroom is always at least satisfactory. There are some challenging pupils including those whose behaviour has led to their inclusion on the special educational needs register but teachers have strategies and procedures to deal with most instances of misbehaviour. The school has a very detailed and systematic approach to behaviour management. All teachers and other adults are familiar with the policy on behaviour and the various strategies and stages are adhered to consistently and fairly. The standards of behaviour around the school and during breaks are at least satisfactory. Supervision is appropriate and, despite some exuberant play, the environment is safe and secure at all times. Pupils are able to mix together socially, for example when eating lunch, without rancour or antagonism. Parents and pupils report very few incidents of harassment or bullying and feel that when such incidents do occur they are dealt with promptly and open-handedly.
9. Children in the Foundation Stage are making progress towards the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development.
10. Most pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning. They concentrate in lessons and work hard to complete their tasks. Those who have behavioural difficulties present challenges but are well managed by staff. The small minority of pupils from ethnic minority culture backgrounds have similar attitudes to other pupils.
11. The school develops pupils' spiritual awareness through curriculum subjects such as religious education, music and art as well as, for example, by exposing pupils to various kinds of music and poetry in assemblies. Moral issues are a feature of discussions both in circle time and in religious education lessons but they are also tackled squarely by teachers when any incidents of, for example, unkindness come to their attention. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to develop their understanding of their own culture and to learn about other cultural traditions in a range of curriculum subjects; for example art work based on the African and Asian traditions is displayed around the school.

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	207	15	2

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded. All excluded pupils are boys, six of whom account for all exclusions

Attendance

12. Attendance is much worse than that normally found in primary schools both in terms of authorised and unauthorised absence. The latter is increasing as the school is now much less likely to authorise absence than it was. This is intended to help the Education Welfare Officer to prepare evidence for further action. The reason for the high level of absences is partly to do with an entrenched culture among a significant minority of parents who do not see the importance of ensuring that their children miss as little schooling as possible. The school has adopted a number of strategies to try to improve attendance largely without success. This is a persistent problem which the school must continue to address and give a high priority to. Poor punctuality is also more common than expected and is a consequence of the same parental attitudes which have led to low attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year %

Authorised absence	
School data	8.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.5
National data	0.4

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is good and learning and assessment are overall satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and the quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. Partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory and with other schools is good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall. Learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory overall. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good in years 3 to 6.
- Teachers manage behaviour well.
- Pupils are encouraged and stimulated by the teaching.
- A good range of teaching methods is used.
- Classroom assistants and support teachers are well used.
- Assessment arrangements and the monitoring of pupil performance data are systematic and detailed but they are not always well-used in matching work to pupils' individual needs.
- Appropriate mathematical and scientific vocabulary is insufficiently used.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn effectively and engage enthusiastically with lessons.
- Pupils in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2 sometimes lack concentration and listening skills.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	1 (2.3%)	29 (67.4%)	10 (20.4%)	3 (6.1%)	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.

13. A high proportion of the teaching is good. This is particularly so in Years 3 to 6 where nine out of ten lessons seen were good. Only three unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The main weakness in the unsatisfactory lessons was that work which was too difficult was set, particularly for the more able. A weakness in mathematics and science lessons generally is that teachers and pupils use technical vocabulary too infrequently.
14. All teachers plan their work carefully, have clear learning objectives which they share with pupils, and try, usually successfully, to build in differentiated activities for pupils. A feature of lessons is the consistent and unremitting insistence of teachers that pupils should behave properly. This almost always leads to pupils attending properly and benefiting from the teaching. Teachers are often enthusiastic and stimulating in their approach, they develop good relationships with pupils, include all groups of pupils in all activities, and develop a caring ethos within which pupils can learn. Teachers use a range of teaching methods, pupil groupings and interesting activities, including practical work, to vary and add interest to pupils' experiences. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good and they are able to explain clearly to pupils and to use questioning techniques which make pupils think as well as checking on their understanding.
15. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching varies between classes but is consistently good in one of them. However, joint planning and common approaches help to ensure that overall children achieve satisfactorily. Children's positive attitudes and responses to teaching also aid their learning.
16. Classroom assistants and support teachers make an important contribution in the classroom. They are well briefed about the activities they assist with and the learning outcomes to be expected, they give enthusiastic support in whole class work, focus fully on their assigned groups during group work, and provide useful continuity, through their knowledge about individual pupils, when classes are taken by a teacher other than their regular teacher.
17. Overall learning is satisfactory and the recent improvements in teaching are not yet fully reflected in improved learning throughout the school. However, in Years 3 to 6 learning is now good, pupils show engagement with the lessons and reflect the enthusiasm of their teachers. They remember what they have learnt before and can relate this to the focus of the current lesson. While pupils are developing new learning skills, such as note taking, a significant minority are inhibited in this by limitations in their writing skills, even though they have acquired useful listening skills.
18. In the reception classes and Years 1 and 2, pupils are beginning to respond to teaching and to develop proper work habits but some have difficulty concentrating and listening for extended periods. An important factor in the overall quality of pupils' learning, particularly for younger pupils, is for a significant minority the lack of continuity in their learning either because of regular absences or, in some cases, because they have not yet been able to develop appropriate attitudes to learning as they are relatively new to the school.
19. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Pupils are taught mainly in classrooms but on occasions they are withdrawn for further, early and additional literacy lessons. Pupils' Individual Education Plans identify specific and achievable targets. Teaching and learning is based on these targets and work provided is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils also receive positive support from teacher assistants who work closely with them, explaining work and ensuring they stay on task. Pupils' progress is monitored and targets are reviewed termly. However, sometimes the targets in the Individual Education Plans are not sufficiently challenging and this results in only satisfactory progress. Pupils' statements of need are reviewed annually according to the code of practice requirements.
20. Only one pupil who has English as an additional language is not yet fluent. This pupil was supported by the local education authority's unit during her first term in the school and is now making progress in acquiring English. Six pupils are designated as being from a traveller

background and these receive support from the local education authority's support team for two mornings a week for half of each term. The support is given in withdrawal groups but work is informed by the pupils' class work as well as being specifically directed at the needs of traveller children.

21. Assessment has been thoroughly reviewed recently and well thought out systems are now in place for the assessment, recording and monitoring of pupils' performance data, as well as for tracking individual pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement. For example, detailed end-of-unit assessment sheets based closely on national strategy frameworks and the National Curriculum levels of attainment feed into an overall assessment tracking system. This system is becoming established and the school hopes that it will improve standards of achievement by improving teachers' ability to plan and teach in a way more precisely targeted at pupils' needs. As yet the impact in the classroom has not been widespread and some teachers, for example, are not matching work to pupils' abilities and needs with sufficient accuracy. However, one early success of the more precise targeting of pupils' needs has been the improved proportion of more able Year 6 pupils who achieve better than expected in National Tests; this was a direct result of the accurate identification of these pupils followed by more challenging work to ensure they fulfilled their potential.
22. The school has had difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, half of whom are new to the school in the past two years. This has led to the recruitment of some skilled teachers but also to the employment of a newly qualified teacher half way through this year to cover a reception class, as well as to the recruitment of teachers on temporary contracts, and job-sharing arrangements for three teachers. There was one teacher on long term sick leave and another on short term sick leave during the inspection.
23. Despite the relatively high turnover in staff, teaching is much improved since the last inspection two years ago. This is partially because of the careful monitoring of teaching by senior management and the professional development and training provided by subject co-ordinators. However, this improvement in teaching, while it has begun to improve the learning, particularly of Year 3 to 6 pupils, and is an important factor in pupils' satisfactory achievement, has not yet led to improved standards or to the good achievement which will be needed to bring about such improvement. Nor has it yet fully overcome the effects of the unsatisfactory teaching before the last inspection.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is relevant, inclusive and soundly balanced with all subjects allocated sufficient time. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of lunchtime and after school activities offered to all pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for.
- The school provides well for personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage.
- There is currently no appropriate outdoor provision for children in reception classes.

Commentary

24. The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of activities and experiences covering all areas of the National Curriculum and fulfilling statutory requirements, including those for religious education. The curriculum for the reception children is satisfactory. Teachers provide children with appropriate experiences that develop their skills in all areas of learning, although provision for appropriate outdoor activities is currently unsatisfactory and this reduces the standards of physical development. The school teaches all the subjects it should and planning is based well on national guidance. There is clear information about what pupils can

and cannot do in most subjects but too little reference is made to this information when teachers are planning work. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Though this has improved since the last inspection, opportunities for extended writing in history, geography and religious education could be increased.

25. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Curriculum provision for special needs is good because of the hard work, care and knowledge of the whole staff and is adapted to provide class work specially matched to pupils' needs. The pupils have sound Individual Education Plans. In the best examples pupils are helped by the support assistants to make good progress through targets in the basic skills of literacy. All pupils including the small minority from ethnic minority cultures are included in all curriculum work.
26. The school ensures that personal, social and health education, thinking skills and problem-solving have appropriate time given to them. Provision for personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage is good. The school tackles bullying and relationships through the suitable use of visits and visitors to explore issues.
27. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for enrichment, organised mostly by members of staff. These are mainly for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Most after school clubs are very well attended and greatly enjoyed. The clubs include, choir, dance, French, reading, revision, netball and football. There are also educational visits which provide shared experiences. Additionally, there are 'Focus Weeks' such as 'health week' and 'science week', which, with good staff collaboration, lead to effective cross-curricular links.
28. Accommodation is generally bright and attractive and in a good state of repair and cleanliness. The rooms are spacious and the school grounds are well used for sports and environmental learning. The school has made recent improvements to the information and communication technology suite. The library stocks a variety of books suitable for most pupils. The school maintains a satisfactory level of teaching and support staff despite difficulties with the recruitment and retention of teachers.

Care, guidance and support

The school promotes pupils' welfare, health and safety effectively. It gives good support, advice and guidance for pupils. Monitoring procedures are effective and good opportunities for pupils' personal development help the school to involve pupils in its work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Young children get a confident start to school life, as there are good induction procedures.
- The school makes good use of a range of support agencies.
- Pupils accept responsibilities willingly.

Commentary

29. The secure environment and concern that staff show for pupils' personal development contained in the last report have been well maintained. Effective child protection procedures are well implemented by the acting headteacher but as yet there is no specific training for other staff members to support this provision, nor is the post holder known to all staff. A member of the governing body has had appropriate training. There is a good number of trained first aiders. Minor accidents are recorded and dealt with in a sensitive and kindly way. Appropriate testing has been done to fire fighting equipment and termly fire drills have been held. The school has appropriate procedures for the safe use of the internet.
30. Support, advice and guidance are good because the teachers keep comprehensive records of pupils' personal and academic development. Class teachers provide pastoral support and the

school has a good system in place with confidential counselling so that pupils' worries and fears can be addressed as a high priority. Pupils' questionnaires showed that a high proportion had an adult available to go to if they had worries. The school has responded well to identified pupils' needs.

31. Pupils with special educational needs get good support. The school has good access to a wide range of support agencies and uses these well. There are some good community support services such as the Children Project offered through the local education authority, where adults can learn how to fully support their children.
32. The personal, social and health education programme is supportive of pupils' needs. Although the pupils' questionnaire had indicated some concerns about other children's behaviour, during inspection week behaviour was never less than satisfactory, nor were any incidents of bullying seen. The school has worked hard to offer a safe environment; it has high expectations of good behaviour and appropriate sanctions are used. This is well understood by all pupils. At lunchtime supervisors may invite pupils to sit upon a yellow chair in the school yard; very rarely is a 'red card' issued, requiring a visit to a class teacher or acting headteacher. Incidents of misbehaviour are well recorded and appropriate contact made to parents by letter if expectations are not met.
33. The school has identified the need for a school council which would allow pupils to have a greater contribution to the life of the school. Pupils accept monitor-type duties, such as clearing the hall area for assemblies. A playground buddy system has been well developed where older children act as play partners in the infants playground. The older classes take this seriously and undertake this task well.
34. The induction arrangements for the school are good; the acting headteacher interviews parents and supplies them with a 'parents pack' of good information about the school. Older pupils settle well into the supportive environment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents and the local community and good partnerships with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents of pupils with special educational need do not contribute to Individual Education Plans.
- The school gives parents good information about pupils' standards and progress.
- There are very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary education.
- The school is actively making links with other schools.

Commentary

35. The school recognises the need to further develop the link with parents. Most parents are confident that the school does all it can to support and care for their children. Attendance at the meeting with parents was very low. The governing body, through its public relations committee, contributes to an active fundraising programme whose events are supported by the community. Parents are reluctant to attend the annual meeting of the governing body and formal meetings arranged by the school. However a termly meeting to discuss the children's progress with teachers is generally well attended by parents. In the main, parents are happy with the work of the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs do not always

fully understand the individual educational programmes suggested for their child. The school has the confidence of all of the communities which it serves including ethnic minority culture

communities. There are a few minor omissions from the school brochure and governors' annual report.

36. The school, recognising the reluctance of some parents to support fully school events, has provided a good range of information about school life; for example, it sends regular newsletters. The school brochure and governors' annual report give good information and the pack for new parents is very comprehensive. The acting head interviews the parents of new pupils to the school so that she can explain requirements and underline expectations. This is a good idea. Pupils' annual reports of progress give a good account of work done and targets for the future.
37. The school has taken an active role in making good links with other schools. An active pyramid of schools provides good opportunities for discussion about professional needs and development. There are well developed links with local secondary schools, including an information and technology visit by Year 6 pupils and the opportunity for Year 7 tutors to visit the primary school. The cluster of local schools meet regularly to discuss matters of common interest, such as the mobility of local pupils.
38. Because the school wishes to be involved in the local community it has encouraged two good initiatives. A business partnership, where local volunteers became reading partners, in the 'Right to Read' scheme and opportunities under the Bromley Child Project for parents to have tuition and develop skills in English and information and technology. These weekly courses are very much welcomed by participants

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good and the leadership of others is satisfactory. The management of the school is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory as is financial administration.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher is able to motivate and enthuse staff and to get them to work corporately.
- The acting headteacher has a clear vision and sense of purpose.
- There are good arrangements for the monitoring of performance data and teaching quality.
- The governors do not challenge the senior staff enough.
- The overall control of the budget needs to be tighter.

Commentary

39. The previous headteacher of the school left at the end of the term preceding the inspection. The deputy headteacher became the acting headteacher at that point and has been appointed as headteacher from the beginning of the term after the inspection.
40. The acting headteacher was an active partner of the previous headteacher and took the lead, as deputy headteacher, in a number of initiatives to improve the school which are now becoming established. The acting headteacher gives very positive leadership to the school, and her dynamism and energy, as well as her openness with staff, pupils and parents, have enabled her, in a very short time, to establish herself as the natural leader of the school, and to enjoy the respect of all parties. The acting headteacher's vision for the school includes not only a commitment to providing a safe, secure learning environment in which pupils are well behaved, but also to the very necessary improvement of academic standards and the further improvement of pupils' achievement. The acting headteacher is securing the commitment of staff and governors to this vision.
41. Because there is no deputy head at present, a temporary management structure has been created in which four senior teachers share responsibilities. One of these four is currently on

sick leave and the others have not yet been able to provide anything more than satisfactory leadership in their new capacities.

42. The school is satisfactorily managed. The acting headteacher has continued the work begun under the previous headteacher in improving the collection and monitoring of data on pupils' performance, the management of teachers' performance including the monitoring of teaching quality, and the drive to improve pupils' behaviour and achievement. Some of these initiatives have already had some success, others are becoming established and should lead to an improvement in management in the future. The acting headteacher and other staff show a commitment to school evaluation and improvement.
43. Management at the subject co-ordinator level has improved. Co-ordinators actively monitor the planning of work in their subjects as well as monitoring and moderating the standards of work in pupils' books. They are not yet involved in the monitoring of teaching in their subjects but they provide training for their colleagues which may well have contributed to the improvements in teaching since the last inspection. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership and manages this aspect well.
44. The acting headteacher has managed the recruitment and, in particular, the retention of staff well during the recent past, firstly in a supportive capacity to the previous headteacher and latterly in her own right. This has involved maintaining a committed and appropriate teaching staff during a period of discontinuity, long term sick absences, teacher departures and teachers reducing their commitment from full to part-time working. Various expediciencies have been resorted to including a quite complex structure of job shares. While management has been active in tackling poor attendance and punctuality, efforts so far have been unsuccessful and the problem remains.
45. The governing body is supportive of the school and is fully involved in its life. Governors make regular visits to the school which involve some observations of teaching, and each governor is linked to a teacher and to a curriculum area. The governing body meets regularly, has active committees as required, and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. The governing body shares the acting headteacher's vision for the school and carries out its role in performance management and setting objectives for the head. The governors are aware of the challenges facing the school and of its successes. They are beginning to challenge the head on issues such as financial restraints and budget deficits but are reluctant, as yet, to challenge the head about issues such as low standards in national tests. Governors are inclined to see the school's weaknesses in terms of constraints, such as finance and accommodation space, rather than in terms of low standards. However, relationships between the governors are open and honest, and they are committed to the welfare of the school and its pupils.
46. Governors are involved in the management of the school's finances and ensure that the principles of best value are maintained. The finance committee monitors the school's budget and shows appropriate concern about budget deficit. The school is currently running a substantial deficit. This has arisen not because of any profligacy or financial mismanagement but rather from a series of events over which the school had little control, such as the failure of an expected grant to cover the costs of two classroom assistants whose contracts subsequently had to be terminated, and two long term sickness absences. However, the overall control of the budget needs to be addressed.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	734,088
Total expenditure	671,245
Expenditure per pupil	2,760

Balances (£)	
Balance for previous year	43,739
Balance carried forward to next	88,230

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The four-year-olds are admitted in September and January during the academic year. Children are well prepared for their start in the reception classes, with frequent visits beforehand. Many have not had pre-school experience before starting full-time school. Children's attainment on entry is very low particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Children are well prepared for transfer to Year 1.

The teaching varies in quality between the two classes and is overall satisfactory. It is consistently good in one of the classes. However, because both teachers effectively share the formal planning and ideas about good practice, most children achieve as well as expected and show satisfactory gains in all areas of learning. Children's positive attitudes and behaviour also contribute well to their achievements. All children achieve satisfactorily regardless of their prior attainment, ethnicity or gender. The staff have a sound understanding of how young children learn. The curriculum is carefully based on the recommended areas of learning and children are provided with a suitable range of interesting activities. Teachers closely link with the work children will encounter in Year 1, for example, in the work based on the principles of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Teachers' short-term planning includes clear learning objectives for all areas of learning with a suitable balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities. A well-considered approach to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis has been introduced recently and is beginning to support the planning of appropriate activities and tasks for children of different abilities.

The Foundation Stage is satisfactorily led by the new co-ordinator who is beginning to develop her role. There is a clear action plan which identifies areas for development. The staff are fully aware of the principles that underpin good early years practice. They are well supported by classroom assistants and work as an effective team.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**. This is reflected in the way children are learning to respect each other, share resources, take turns and play together.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships at all levels are to the fore and children feel secure and happy.
- Children have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy being in school.
- A good number of children achieve well and attain some of the early learning goals in this area.
- Insufficient emphasis is placed on developing children's independence.

Commentary

47. Children enter school with immature personal and social skills, but they settle down quickly and feel both happy and secure. This reflects the skilful teaching of the staff. There are well established routines and the staff act as good role models for children. They explain clearly what is expected of them and create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special. Most children are attentive and eager to learn, and find it easy to conform to the appropriate standards of behaviour set by the staff. Children of different backgrounds work and play in harmony.

48. Most children show developing confidence in trying new activities and are making progress towards the early learning goals. They learn to share and take turns; for example, each one was seen effectively taking a turn to 'make a wish' in a circle. Adults help children to form good relationships with others through many good opportunities to work in pairs or as part of a group. However, in some activities adults are over-directive and do not encourage initiative and independence. This was noted in a session where the production of a large painting was excessively controlled, and as a result children could not freely explore and create using their own imagination.
49. Teaching is good. Children are developing self-confidence as a result of adults' sympathetic approach. They are purposefully engaged in most lessons and show consideration and respect for property and each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most staff provide good role-models of language.
- The school and home reading system is well established.
- Good use of role-play supports communication, language and literacy.
- Children can not yet form letters properly.

Commentary

50. There is appropriate emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Demonstration and use of visual information enables all children to understand what they have to do. Some good strategies, such as sharing favourite stories and portraying the characters, effectively support children in their early literacy development. This was noted in a good lesson where adults, dressed as the main characters in the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', supported children's understanding of main events in the story and worked on developing their ability to ask simple questions. The lesson effectively supported children's concentration and development of good listening skills. This class had also worked on 'story boxes' of favourite traditional stories such as, 'The Gingerbread Man', 'Cinderella' and 'Little Red Riding Hood' and these effectively supported children's recall of story sequences. Children's achievement is satisfactory, given the low attainment on entry and the short period in school of one reception class, and they are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.
51. The adults develop children's communication by providing good role-models in the way they talk to each other and to children. They question children in small groups and individually and listen carefully to what they have to say. Children learn the new vocabulary and the appropriate way to say something. Most children are not inhibited about talking to each other or adults and show good gains in their speaking skills.
52. Most children write their own names unaided but do not yet form letters correctly. A few are beginning to link sounds with letters and attempting to write simple two or three letter words. Most others do pretend writing or write strings of letters, for example when making shopping lists in the class's imaginative corner. Some direct teaching of basic skills is not always effective. For example, in a group session when learning to link letters with their initial sounds, children were confused as they used both upper and lower case letters together.
53. The system of regular exchange and sharing of books with parents and teachers is well established and used effectively to enhance children's love for books and develop their early reading skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The overall provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of well-planned practical opportunities supports learning of numbers.
- Children are showing interest in mathematical activities and beginning to learn basic skills.

Commentary

54. Most children make satisfactory progress from the very low level on entry. Teachers' early assessments indicate that children's ability to count and their knowledge of numbers is quite limited. Children match, sort and count using everyday objects. Most do not yet know basic shapes or count accurately. A few are adept at jig-saw puzzles. Most are not yet secure in counting reliably to 10. A significant minority are on course to achieve some of the early learning goals, but the majority are not expected to reach the average standards by the end of the reception year. The teachers provide good opportunities to count people or objects. As a result, a significant number of children acquire sufficient knowledge and understanding of how to solve simple problems involving the use of vocabulary such as, 'one more than' or 'one less than', by the time they enter Year 1.
55. Teaching is satisfactory overall and children are beginning to develop appropriate learning habits. Teachers plan a variety of interesting practical activities to promote mathematical understanding. Children gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. Some children describe objects by shape, size, colour or quantity when working with construction equipment. Teachers are anxious for children to do well, but often their expectations are too high. The activities planned do not always match children's ability levels. For example, on a number line, children could sequence numbers to 10 with support, but most were not yet ready to go beyond that. They benefit well from a lot of practice and reinforcement before moving on to the next step.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The overall provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning provides practical opportunities to learn and use of resources supports this.
- Adult intervention to encourage exploration is insufficient.

Commentary

56. The analysis of teachers' planning and work on display indicates that children have worked on topics such as, 'looking after ourselves', 'the food I should eat' and 'people who help us'. There are appropriate opportunities for younger children to explore everyday objects of interest, for example, in the class café. In one class, the children had been looking at different types of beans as part of their work on the story, 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.
57. Children have insufficient opportunities to use computers in the class or the computer suite. The younger children have role-play opportunities, such as 'shopping' or playing in the giant's castle. In general, when children are engaged in free play activities or self-initiated play, adults make insufficient use of questioning to enhance children's knowledge of the world around them. There is insufficient adult intervention in activities and encouragement for children to explore new ideas. Children are not sufficiently encouraged to talk about their experiences or

ask questions to find out how things work. However, children are making some progress towards the early learning goals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children actively participate and enjoy lessons in the hall.
- There is no outdoor provision for physical development, play and exploration.

Commentary

58. Currently there is no suitable outside enclosed play area. As part of the 'Start' project, children have opportunities to learn skills such as spatial awareness in dance taught by a visiting adult. Teachers use the main hall to teach physical education lessons and this to some extent supplements the lack of outdoor facilities.
59. Most children are very capable and active. They are aware of space and show satisfactory co-ordination and control. A movement lesson in the hall was well enjoyed by all. Adults encouraged children to undress independently, managing buckles and buttons and to put shoes on the correct feet.
60. Most children demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They hold a pencil correctly, and paint carefully with brushes. Children are developing confidence in the use of scissors and joining materials with glue. Most are not yet in line with the expectations of early learning goals by the end of the year. Teachers always provide calm and caring support and have a sensitive awareness of children's safety.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for well structured role-play.

Commentary

61. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for creativity. Children draw, paint and make collages. They experiment with paint and use their observations and imagination to create pleasing results. In one reception class, the clay models of 'gingerbread men' made with salt dough were well finished. Children are given opportunities to explore colour and texture, and work with a range of materials. There are well planned opportunities in ten lessons as part of 'Start' project, for children to sing and clap favourite songs and express enjoyment.
62. Opportunities for children to create their own role play are particularly good. Children enjoy dressing up as the giant and Jack in their castle. Adults are particularly good at modelling children's play. As a result children are progressing towards the early learning goals.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall achievement is satisfactory despite very low attainment on entry, particularly in speaking and listening.
- Teaching is good overall; it is consistently good in Years 3 to 6.
- In Years 1 and 2 there is an appropriate emphasis on understanding the relationship between sounds and letters and learning how to sound out words.
- Low standards in writing reduce the quality of the pupils' work in English and in other subjects.

Commentary

63. Standards in national tests in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 are very low compared to all schools and well below average compared to similar schools. Standards in national tests in Year 6 are well below average compared to all schools and below average compared to similar schools. The percentage achieving higher than expected in English is above average compared to similar schools which indicates that the more able pupils are being challenged and achieving their full potential. Work scrutinies confirm that standards of work in books are well below average. Though more able pupils can write extensively, present their work neatly, and observe conventions in spelling, punctuation and grammar well, a substantial minority, sometimes approaching half of the pupils in a class, produce work which is brief, not well presented and which contains many errors. The school's own expectations for English in the 2004 Year 6 national tests are that only around half will reach expected standards.
64. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English throughout the school and their achievement by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory despite barriers to learning which include very low ability in language skills on entry, high rates of mobility including a tendency for new pupils to go onto the special educational needs register, and a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in English and the satisfactory achievement of these pupils helps achievement overall to be satisfactory. The small minority of pupils from ethnic minority culture backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils.
65. The coverage of the English curriculum is appropriate and well planned to reflect both the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. There is a strong emphasis upon listening and speaking skills and interesting activities help to improve achievement in these skills. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 class pupils listened carefully to a broadcast of a science fiction story and took notes of its main points, and in a Year 4 and 5 class a pupil narrated the story of a fable while others acted out its contents. In Years 1 and 2 there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of the link between sounds and letters, for example, making it clear to pupils that the initial sound of Tuesday is "t" not "ch". The school's approach to teaching reading is systematic. Additional time, outside of the literacy hour, is allocated to reading and this, together with appropriate work, such as reading in pairs, during literacy lessons, helps pupils to improve their reading skills. There is also appropriate emphasis on developing the skills of Years 1 and 2 pupils so they can sound out unfamiliar words when they meet them. Though writing remains a weakness for a substantial minority of pupils, they are given opportunities to write in a broad range of ways and are helped by well prepared teaching materials and clear advice and instructions from teachers.
66. Teaching is good overall and learning, though overall satisfactory, is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Because teaching has improved only over the past two years, some pupils especially those who are absent or late often, have not

yet developed their learning abilities. This is particularly so in Years 1 and 2 where some pupils lack concentration. The strengths of teaching include:

- Good use of technical vocabulary by teachers.
- Clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils.
- Appropriately differentiated work which generally matches pupils' needs.
- An enthusiastic approach to teaching English which stimulates pupils to be interested in language and literature.
- Good questioning which involves pupils of all abilities in discussion, and careful listening to pupils' responses to check on their understanding.
- Interesting activities which sometimes link to other subjects, for example references to measurements when introducing writing cookery recipes.

67. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to participate in activities and discussion, especially in Years 3 to 6. In the reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils sometimes do not listen well.
68. The English Co-ordinator has led the subject for only two terms and also leads another core subject. She manages English well and has improved resources particularly for guided reading and writing. She provides training for teachers, for example on the assessment of writing, and has developed an assessment sheet on speaking and listening as well as introducing a new handwriting scheme. She monitors standards in English by looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work in books. She is also helping to monitor the effect of the new school assessment and tracking system. However, though progress has been made since the last inspection, the overall impact on standards of these activities is not yet clear.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. The school's approach to literacy across the curriculum is effective in encouraging writing in other subjects. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to use their language and literacy skills in other subjects. They work in groups and pairs in subjects such as science, geography and ICT which helps the development of speaking and listening skills. They undertake written work in a range of subjects including science, history in particular, and geography. While this extends their experiences in literacy, the overall standards of such work are themselves reduced by the pupils' own limited writing skills. Literacy lessons could make greater use of texts from other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy mathematics and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The National Numeracy strategy is implemented well and is having a positive effect on standards, particularly in mental arithmetic.
- Standards are well below what is expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall though generally good in Years 3 to 6.
- The procedures for assessment are good, but sometimes assessment information is insufficiently used in planning.
- Some aspects of mathematics are not taught in sufficient depth.

Commentary

70. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are well below what is expected for their ages. The latest national test results attained by pupils at seven and eleven were very low. Very low ability on entry, a high level of pupil changes and of pupils with special educational

needs in the school contributed to these results. The school's inclusive climate for learning promotes good attitudes towards the subject in all pupils, which contribute well to overall learning and achievement which are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make the same progress as their peers as do the small minority of pupils from ethnic minority culture backgrounds.

71. Pupils are enthusiastic and good-humoured. They enjoy lessons, work hard and are keen to do well. When working together they collaborate and support one another well. Teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils sensitively, taking account of their individual needs and recognising their achievements.
72. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has begun to impact well on standards in mental arithmetic in particular. Pupils' skills in numeracy make a positive contribution to their achievements in the subject. The school is working very hard to raise standards. The introduction of Year 6 'booster classes' has resulted in more effective smaller group teaching and greater pupil confidence in their ability to succeed. Most initiatives are still too recent to have had a full impact, but the changes have produced a strong, coherent structure, which should raise standards in the future. For example the assessments for each year group are thorough and used for identifying teaching groups and setting clear learning targets. But this practice is not yet fully established, and results in a mismatch of work to pupils' abilities, in some lessons.
73. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is generally good in Years 3 to 6 and overall satisfactory in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2 where two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The good lessons reflect the school's determination to improve pupils' independence, confidence in problem solving, readiness to experiment with different approaches and capacity to explain. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use to good effect in lessons. Teaching of mental mathematics is good in most lessons, and this quality is reflected in pupils' improving knowledge of numbers. A good example was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where good teaching resulted in most pupils showing improved understanding of ratios and proportions. In another lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils learnt the ordering of fractions with ease. The teachers in good lessons used questioning, explanations and demonstration very effectively. The good teacher-pupil relationships encouraged pupils' confidence and helped them to achieve. The two unsatisfactory lessons in Years 1 and 2, were characterised by tasks that were often too difficult even for some higher attaining pupils. Marking is regular and encouraging, but sometimes, in Years 1 and 2, does not help pupils make improvements in their work.
74. Some aspects of mathematics, for example, 'shape space and measurement' and 'data handling', are not being studied in appropriate depth. The subject leader for mathematics has plans to develop the subject more effectively and to build on progress since the last inspection. The priorities such as rigorous checks in teaching and learning and the need to ensure appropriate coverage have been aptly highlighted and planned for the near future.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory. Some teachers are not yet using cross-curricular approaches sufficiently in their work to allow pupils to apply their mathematical skills regularly enough in other subjects. The school is helpfully aiming to improve the quality of problem solving in mathematics by treating it as a cross-curricular learning skill, which can usefully be applied across subjects as well as in mathematics itself.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 2 and 6 pupils' standards are well below average.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is good across the school. However, pupils' scientific vocabulary does not receive appropriate attention.
- Teachers place good emphasis on teaching investigative work.
- The acting co-ordinator provides effective leadership and manages the subject well.
- Opportunities for linking science and ICT are developing well.

Commentary

76. Results in the 2003 national tests for Year 6 pupils were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Teacher assessments for Year 2 were also well below the expected levels. Standards of pupils in the current Year 6 and 2 are also well below the national average. This is because: attainment is very low when pupils start school, a high proportion of pupils have special educational needs, a large number of pupils join and leave school during the school years and a substantial number who join the school have special educational needs. Although six out of ten pupils attain the expected standards others with special educational needs bring the overall standards well below the expected levels.
77. Pupil' achievement is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils understand that plants need water and light to grow and investigate if plants would grow as well without soil in cotton wool, sand and on cloth. Year 6 pupils know how to predict and find out by 'fair testing'. They record results and conclusions, as was seen in a lesson when pupils were finding out how solids can be helped to dissolve more quickly. They were investigating varying the temperature and volume of water. Pupils were allowed to get things wrong and these opportunities were used to promote rigorous scientific enquiry.
78. Pupils apply literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily when they record work. Pupils use information and communication technology skills well to find information and record findings in graphical and on tabular form. Year 4 pupils were comparing the lengths of shadows in winter and summer using a computer program. Year 2 pupils use computers to classify mini-beasts according to the number of their legs.
79. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by teachers and teacher assistants within classes and their achievement is satisfactory. Achievement of a very small number of pupils who are from ethnic minority groups is satisfactory. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English are fluent in English and their achievement is similar to their English-speaking peers.
80. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. Planning is effective. Teachers set clear learning objectives and pupils are aware of what is expected of them. They understand how the present lesson links to previous work. Pupils are managed well across the school. Teachers use praise and encouragement successfully to motivate pupils. Pupils' interest is maintained by careful questioning. Resources are well used for investigative work.
81. Pupils' recall skills are not good and their scientific vocabulary is insufficiently developed. Teachers plan the scientific vocabulary for the topic but do not consistently clarify it or use it in their explanations. They also do not always require their pupils to use it when they explain or write their investigations. Sometimes, too much time and support is given to pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils do not receive the required support.

82. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The acting co-ordinator is experienced and has a good view of the working of the subject across the school and an appropriate plan for improvement is implemented. Assessment data is analysed and pupils' progress is tracked. The systems are relatively new but the information gained from the analyses is beginning to be used to improve achievement and standards.
83. Since the previous inspection, while standards remain well below average in national tests, leadership and management have improved from unsatisfactory to good and this has led to other improvements. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good and as a result achievement of pupils has improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards across the school are in line with the national expectations except in Year 6 where they are below average.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
- Teaching is good.
- The computer suite is used well but the number of computers is insufficient.
- The new co-ordinator's leadership and management role is developing well.

Commentary

84. Standards are average except in the current Year 6 where they are below the expected level. The provision, curriculum coverage and teaching have improved from previous years and as a result pupils throughout the school are achieving the expected standards. As the improvements in information and communication technology are relatively new, Year 6 pupils have not had time enough to catch up.
85. Achievement and attainment of boys and girls is similar. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language achieve similar standards to their peers. The information and communication technology suite is used well by all classes, at least twice a week, to learn skills in the subject and across other subjects. In Year 2, pupils satisfactorily use a simple graph program to display results about their favourite method of travel to school. They open the files, enter and save data. They used the program to investigate the growth of tomato plants by varying the degrees of temperature, light and the quantity of water.
86. Year 6 pupils competently mixed text and graphics to prepare power point presentations when they wrote their curriculum vitae to apply for 'pretend' jobs in the local leisure centre. They have adequate skills in using spreadsheets. They know how to use the internet for research and how to send electronic mail. Pupils have positive attitudes to their studies and work with interest and enthusiasm.
87. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. The teachers have a good understanding of pupils' previous learning and they build on this effectively. Teachers give clear explanations. They manage the pupils firmly but pleasantly, and, through the constant use of praise and encouragement, quickly establish a good climate for learning. Pupils are receptive, understand what they are required to do and are keen to 'have a go'. The number of computers in the suite is small and pupils have to work in threes and in pairs. They have to wait to take turns and this slows progress. The school has appropriate plans to improve this facility in the near future.

88. The co-ordinator is new but his leadership and management are developing well. He has taken over from an experienced teacher who had made appropriate improvements. The scheme of work supports staff well and is continuously revised to meet pupils' needs. All teachers have had training. Assessment in the subject is satisfactory.
89. The school has made good improvements from the previous inspection. Use of information and communication technology is now good. Pupils get good opportunities to use the suite to develop skills in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

90. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology skills in several curriculum areas. They use their word-processing skills across many subjects. The internet is used for research in subjects such as history, geography, art and design and religious education. Pupils use their literacy skills to prepare power point presentations. They use computers in numeracy for data handling and when working with spreadsheets. Good use of ICT skills is made in science, geography, and art and design. In a very good art and design lesson pupils were using the internet to learn about African 'mud cloth' before designing their own patterns. In geography pupils had studied weather maps and physical features of Mali. In science, pupils use ICT to investigate growth of plants, make a database of mini-beasts and compare shadows in winter and in summer. The scheme of work to develop the use of ICT across the curriculum is good and the school is beginning to implement it.

HUMANITIES

91. During the inspection no lessons were seen in **geography** and only one in **history**. Therefore it was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of provision in these subjects. On the basis of scrutinies of work in pupils' books, displays around the school, subject co-ordinators' files, and resources, it is clear that both subjects have a secure place in the curriculum and are allocated sufficient time within the block topic timetable. Both subjects also cover the National Curriculum at both key stages. Work in books indicates that interesting activities are set for pupils and appropriate links are made to other subjects. For example, art work, such as making a Malian mud rug, frequently illustrates and broadens work in history and geography, and ICT is used to give pupils access to information as in Years 4 and 5 work on explorers, or the internet, as in Year 2 work on living on an island.
92. The lesson seen in history was well taught. The teacher stimulated Year 5 and 6 pupils' interest through an enthusiastic approach. The tasks set involved pupils directly and they in turn showed some enthusiasm for the subject matter. They completed tasks in the time available and remembered what they had learnt in previous lessons. History and geography have the same co-ordinator who gives support and advice to colleagues, monitors curriculum coverage, and will monitor teachers' levelling of work in the subjects. Resources in history are satisfactory and well organised; those in geography are more limited though scheduled for some augmentation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is overall good.
- The locally agreed syllabus is followed which ensures appropriate content is covered.
- A sufficient range of work is recorded in pupils' books.
- Standards of written work are affected by pupils' generally below average writing skills.

Commentary

93. Standards in religious education are below average particularly in written work where weak writing skills reduce standards. However, pupils' overall achievement in the subject is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have some understanding of books which are special to various religions, and know some of the stories of Christianity and Buddhism. They are becoming aware of common moral teachings in religions, such as a commitment to helping others. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have a more detailed knowledge of Christianity and other faiths. In written work they show themselves able to, for example, list and identify common features of Christianity and Hinduism, and to examine the versions of the Christmas story told by Matthew and Mark. They are also able to discuss sensibly moral issues such as homelessness and what religions have to say about such issues.
94. Religious education is firmly established in the curriculum, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Coverage is broad and both Christianity and other faiths receive proper attention. Sufficient lessons require that pupils record religious education work, which they usually complete and which is always marked by teachers. A number of effective displays in classrooms and around the school focus on religious education, in particular on multi-faith aspects.
95. Teaching of religious education is overall good. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and are clear about the objectives of their teaching. They make considerable efforts to make the subject interesting for pupils by making links to other subjects, setting relevant practical activities, and adopting innovative teaching approaches. For example a Year 2 class made cards for the Hindu festival of Hopi, on which they drew symmetrical patterns linked to previous work in mathematics, while in a Year 3 and 4 class pupils' interest in and understanding of the Easter story were enhanced when the teacher took on the role of both a supporter and an opponent of Jesus so that pupils could ask questions of her in these capacities. Pupils generally acquire new knowledge in lessons and can recall what they have done in previous lessons. In Years 3 to 6 they are able to work independently and concentrate on tasks until they are completed.
96. The co-ordinator for religious education has been on long-term sickness leave and has not been able to provide leadership in the subject. However, she has been able to undertake management tasks, such as preparing end-of-unit assessment sheets and up-dating the religious education policy. She has also audited resources which are accessibly stored in topic boxes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

97. During the inspection only one lesson was seen in each of **design and technology**, **physical education**, and **art and design** and none was seen in **music**. It was therefore not possible to make judgements on the quality of provision in these subjects. Art and design is planned using national guidance to ensure that skills build progressively as pupils move through the school. An art lesson observed in a class of mixed Year 5 and 6 pupils focused on an art form of West African people. Pupils designed and created a mud cloth based on Bogolafin designs. They thoroughly enjoyed exploring the visual elements to include colour, pattern, tone, line and texture. The quality of most artwork displayed around the school is good, for example, the Inca patterns by Year 4 and willow patterns by Year 2. The textile work by older pupils in making a banner for the 'World Book Day', was also of a good quality, very attractive and well finished. Art and design resources are of a satisfactory range and quality and are used to good effect to assist pupils' learning and to engage their interest in art lessons. In music teachers use a commercial scheme of work to guide their lessons. Appropriate time is allocated and pupils have opportunities to sing and listen to music in assemblies.

98. In design and technology the school document indicates that National Curriculum requirements are met. In the lesson observed teaching and learning were good and standards were as expected. The process of designing and making a product and evaluating its fitness for purpose was well implemented. Pupils examined a range of purses before they decided on the material, style and the design they would like to choose for their own purses. The lesson was planned well and the teacher used good questioning to challenge pupils' thinking. As a result pupils' criteria for evaluating the product was good. The teaching assistant provided good support.
99. In physical education the school document indicated that National Curriculum requirements are met. Only one lesson was observed. In that lesson, teaching and learning were good and standards were as expected. Pupils were given opportunities to warm up and cool down after their physical activity. They were required to design a game with appropriate rules and scoring system using the given equipment. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and successfully designed their games. After school clubs such as football and rugby improve learning. All pupils swim in Year 3 and most can swim 25 metres. Pupils take part in borough competitions in athletics and other competitive sport. This enriches their curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

100. Only one lesson was observed in personal, social and health education and this was a joint lesson with religious education. It is therefore not possible to make a judgement about overall provision for this area. However, the school gives appropriate emphasis to this area and each class is timetabled for one lesson each week. There is an appropriate policy and work is planned to cover topics relevant to pupils' needs such as health and safety, and drugs education. In the lesson seen, Year 6 pupils showed that they were able to think about, understand and discuss moral questions such as how to make reparation for a morally wrong act. Assemblies are also used to raise relevant questions in particular those related to living in a community and behaving properly.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
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	3
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum , including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
Effectiveness of the school links with parents	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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)