

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Blackfen, Bexley.

LEA area: London Borough of Bexley

Unique reference number: 101456

Headteacher: Mr J Murphy

Lead inspector: Mr D Manuel

Dates of inspection: 6th to 9th October 2003

Inspection number: 257120

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	444
School address:	Holbeach Gardens. Blackfen Sidcup
Postcode:	DA15 8QW
Telephone number:	020 8850 4470
Fax number:	020 8294 0157
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Father Timothy Finigan
Date of previous inspection:	01/6/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of the Rosary is a Catholic primary school for children aged between 3 and 11 years. The school is situated in Blackfen in the London Borough of Bexley and mainly serves the local parishes of Blackfen and Bexley. In addition, about 20 per cent of families come from a wider area. The school is regularly over-subscribed. The area is broadly average on the socio-economic scale. In the past year, 6 pupils joined at other than usual times and 9 departed at other than usual times.

Distinctive features of the school include the influence of the Catholic ethos and its commitment to providing an inclusive education through considering the needs of every pupil, whether personal, social or academic and providing the necessary support.

The school has 444 pupils on roll, above average size, with similar numbers of boys and girls. These are organised into two similar classes in each year group. However, there was only one reception class during the autumn term. In addition there is a nursery with separate morning and afternoon classes. There are 59 pupils on the SEN register (13 per cent, below average), 12 at School Action Plus and 9 statemented pupils (above average). There are no travellers' children nor pupils in public care. Ten pupils come from minority ethnic groups, but none speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry indicates that children are within the full range of capability but are broadly average overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21090	Mr D Manuel	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education
9173	Mrs S McDermott	Lay inspector	
32226	Mrs T Quick	Team inspector	English English as an additional language
31801	Mrs Y Bacchetta	Team Inspector	Science Geography History Special educational needs
27568	Mrs M Davidson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Our Lady of the Rosary is a very good school that provides very good value for money. It has maintained high standards in many areas in recent years under the headteacher's very good leadership and has improved in other areas. Staff work very effectively as a united team and have a very strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils receive a high quality of education that fully meets their needs. Standards continue to rise each year and, by the end of Year 6, levels of attainment are well above expected levels in English, mathematics and science and above expected levels in most other subjects.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school provides a very stimulating environment in which all pupils flourish.
- Leadership, management and governance are very good.
- Teaching is very good.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' attitudes and personal qualities are very good.
- Links between the nursery and reception classes are not sufficiently close.
- The information that parents receive in the end-of-year written reports, about how well their children are doing is not sufficiently detailed.

The school was previously inspected in June 1998. At that time most areas were identified as being good or satisfactory. The very few weaknesses have now been improved. The headteacher's very good leadership, the very good influence and support of the governing body and the whole-school determination to succeed have brought about further improvement in many areas from the time of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has risen to very good overall, with improved subject knowledge, high expectations and the development of very effective planning based on good assessment information. Standards have risen, and continue to do so, in many subjects by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	A	B	A
Science	A	A	A	A

Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well above the national average in English and science and above the national average in mathematics. They achieve well above the results of similar schools in all three subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Pupils of all ages achieve well and have enthusiasm for learning. They have a good ability to work either independently or collaboratively as required. The quality of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **very good** and cultural development is **good**. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with others are **very good**. Attendance is in line with the national average. A significant proportion of absence has been caused by a very small number of pupils with serious illness.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. The quality of teaching is **very good**. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when it was good and now results in very good learning by pupils across the age range. Pupils of all capabilities maintain good and often very good achievement, building on their earlier attainment. As pupils develop a wider range of skills and knowledge, teachers introduce ever increasing challenges to extend their learning even further. Teaching and learning in Year 6 are consistently very good and help pupils to achieve very well in most subjects by the time they leave the school.

The school shows **very good** concern for the care, health and safety of pupils. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum is broad and balanced and well-planned learning activities meet the varying needs of groups of pupils of different capabilities very successfully. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The school works well with parents, providing good information about events and their children's education. The school has developed good links with the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and management of the school which focuses on raising standards through improved quality of teaching. He ensures very good management by all key staff and most of all through a commitment to teamwork involving all members of teaching and non-teaching staff and governors. Improvements are managed very well by this team approach and are overseen by senior managers, subject co-ordinators and governors, using very effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's progress. However, links between the nursery and reception classes are not sufficiently close. The governing body contributes very effectively to the many strengths of the school. The overall result is that the school provides a very stimulating environment in which all pupils flourish.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school. In their responses, parents almost unanimously agreed that their children like school and behave well. They confirm that teaching is good and staff encourage their children to become more mature and expect them to work hard. They are also of the opinion that the school is managed and led well. However, a small proportion feel they could be kept better informed about how their children are getting on. The inspection team agrees with this view, in relation to the need for more detailed information in pupils' annual written reports. Pupils are very positive about the school and enjoy their learning. Most agreed that they find out new things in lessons and teachers help them a lot. Their teachers are very fair and listen to their ideas.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The school should establish closer links between the nursery and reception classes.
- Ensure parents receive more detailed written information in pupils' annual written reports about how well their children are doing.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

At all ages, pupils achievement is **good and often very good** and the standards in each area of learning or subject are **mostly above what is expected nationally** and in some subjects, **are well above expected levels**. There is a clear trend of rising standards and continuing improvement. Boys and girls achieve equally well due to the focus on providing the best opportunities for all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well and attain well above expected levels in English, mathematics and science. They also attain above expected levels in most other subjects.
- Pupils in Year 2 achieve well and attain above expected levels in most subjects.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children start school in the nursery class (Foundation Stage) with average standards overall. Although early in the year, the children in nursery and reception classes are making good progress and are in line to achieve all the early learning goals that have been set for the end of the reception year in physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the case of personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, the majority of children are on track to exceed the goals. The early identification of children with special educational needs, the setting of specific short-term targets for their learning and the good planning of work and support to enable them to achieve the targets are already having good impact on these children's progress. The result is that children are achieving well in relation to their initial capabilities.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.8 (16.6)	16.8 (15.8)
writing	16.2 (14.6)	15.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.3 (16.9)	17.2 (16.5)

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school's results in national tests for pupils in Year 2 show regular, annual improvement exceeding the national trend. The school's results in 2003 results exceeded the national average in writing and matched the national average in reading and mathematics.
3. Standards in the current Year 2 are above expected levels in English, mathematics and science. Speaking and listening skills are good and most pupils speak confidently in front of others, expressing their ideas and opinions clearly. Pupils' reading and writing skills are developing well and most pupils are likely to attain above expected levels by the end of Year 2.

The same is true of mathematics and science. All pupils are starting Year 2 with a very secure knowledge and understanding of basic number work and a good level of knowledge and understanding in science. Standards are also above expected levels in most other subjects. All pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make similarly good progress in their learning. Good teaching and close monitoring of pupils' progress in key areas contribute significantly to the successes.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (28.7)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.0 (29.2)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (30.4)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Good annual improvements in national test results represent very good progress and achievement by the school since the previous inspection. Trends in results over the past three years exceed the national trend significantly. The school's results in 2003 results were well above the national average in English and science and above the national average in mathematics. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
5. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well in response to very good teaching. Their standards are currently above average in English, mathematics and science and are likely to be well above expected levels by the end of Year 6. Standards above expected levels are also being achieved in most other subjects. This consistency is good improvement on standards and progress judged during the previous inspection. Gifted and talented pupils are supported very well to extend their talents in a range of subjects. Higher attaining pupils are achieving as well as they should and most lower attaining pupils and those of average capability also achieve their full potential. Throughout the age range, pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the focused support they receive. The very small number of minority ethnic pupils are fully integrated into the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, spiritual, moral and social development are **very good**. Their cultural development is **good**. Punctuality is good and attendance is in line with the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships and curriculum opportunities in the school build pupils' confidence.
 - Pupils' enjoy learning and their determination to succeed is a significant factor in the high standards they achieve.
 - Pupils behave very well and look for opportunities to help each other.
6. Teachers create a pleasant, relaxed but purposeful working atmosphere and pupils know they are valued. They are keen to ask questions to extend their understanding. When volunteering answers, for example in mathematics, they confidently and quickly self-correct. Visitors and sensitive discussions help pupils to closely identify with the feelings of others. Pupils in Year 6 explain how school experiences have helped them become more confident. Most pupils find

lessons exciting and are enthusiastic about their work. They display high levels of curiosity and interest. They are enthralled in lessons, such as in an excellent history lesson when they did not want the lesson to end because they wished to continue with their writing. During group activities they agree decisions and make an effort to carry out group investigations correctly. Pupils with special needs make every effort to succeed. Parents confirm that pupils are very keen to come to school and that they enjoy doing their homework.

7. Young children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage. Significant attention is paid to establishing routines so that children know what is expected of them. Children establish particularly good relationships with all adults in this secure environment. They flourish socially, learning to take turns and concentrate on their activities. They are given suitable choices and their ideas are used well to develop creative play in the Nursery. This enables them to achieve good levels of independence and high self-esteem.
8. Pupils appreciate opportunities for prayer and reflection within the very good provision for their spiritual development. For example, many voluntarily took part in saying the Rosary before school each day during inspection week. The school, as part of its mission statement, creates a prayerful and reflective environment. Holy Mass and assemblies fully include pupils who are reverent and take part self-assuredly. Their very good personal, moral and social values reflect respect and understanding for the community. Pupils' cultural development is good and enables them to explain clearly, the importance of the beliefs and traditions of several faiths in this and other countries.
9. Behaviour in lessons is very good and in assemblies it is exemplary. There has been one exclusion this year. Pupils know how to avoid conflict and understand the consequences of right or wrong decisions. They reach thoughtful conclusions about rules relevant to their own classroom. Older pupils say that the school has helped 'all the bad things go out of them because they are taught to be good'. They constantly seek ways in which they can assist by tidying up or getting things ready and act as good role models for younger pupils or special needs pupils who find difficulty in remembering simple routines. Pupils in Year 4 are involved in shared reading sessions with younger pupils in reception. Punctuality is good and attendance is in line with the national average, in response to the school's effective procedures. A significant proportion of absence has been caused by a very small number of pupils with serious illness.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/3 - 94.2%

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.8%
National data (2001/02):	5.4%

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.0%
National data: (2001/02):	0.5%

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

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	336	0	1
White – Irish	7	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	64	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 **very good** quality of education by constantly seeking to improve the effectiveness of teaching and the quality of the learning opportunities for all pupils.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **very good** overall. The overall quality of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning and teaching provide stimulating learning activities which help raise pupils' levels of achievement and their standards across the curriculum.
- Information from assessment is used well in planning the next stages in pupils' learning.
- The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies very well and extends pupils' skills in good links across most other subjects.
- Pupils enjoy learning and this is due to teachers' very good understanding of how pupils learn best.

Commentary

10. The quality of teaching shows improvement from the time of the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be good and there was a very small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Very good monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by the headteacher, senior managers and subject co-ordinators have all contributed to the improvement.
11. Slight differences exist between stages. Teaching and learning are good overall at the Foundation Stage. This is chiefly due to teachers who are working with new children in nursery and reception, still being in the early stages of learning about the specific needs of that intake. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall with a small proportion which is very good. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is very good overall, being excellent in two lessons observed and

very good in half the lessons. The result is the very good quality of learning by pupils of all capabilities, maintaining very good achievement and building on their earlier attainment. As pupils develop a wider range of knowledge and skills, teachers introduce ever increasing challenges to stimulate pupils and extend their learning even further.

12. Another consistently good feature of teaching is the use of support staff. Teaching assistants provide good guidance to pupils with whom they work as a result of the thorough briefing they receive from class teachers. Such staff are vital to the progress of pupils with special educational needs in particular. These knowledgeable staff are helping these pupils to make good progress, especially in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Good progress is also evident in the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. None currently require specialist visiting support and they have very positive attitudes to learning. They receive good general support from school staff and other pupils. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and they, with high attaining pupils are given appropriately challenging learning activities and the high standards that they maintain are a sign of their continuing very good progress.
13. The school has very good systems and procedures in place to meet the individual pupils' needs for which targets are set. The assessment information is used very effectively to guide the planning of work that is well matched to the pupils' capabilities. Individual and group intervention strategies are carefully monitored for their effectiveness, in particular, in English. Assessment of particular groups of pupils, including the performances of boys and girls, has successfully helped to identify where boys needed support and now their achievement is similar to that of girls. There is a good through-school tracking system in place including a system devised by the co-ordinator to monitor the improvement of each pupil over a given period. At the start of lessons, teachers share the learning objectives with pupils, and these are reviewed together at the end. In this way, pupils are clear about what they have achieved and how they can improve. The marking of pupils' work is good and in English and mathematics is related to the pupils' individual targets.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	13 (31%)	20 (47%)	7 (17%)	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **broad, well balanced and relevant** to the needs of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum enables all pupils to achieve very well.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- The quality of the curriculum is enriched very well through the high quality of music provision, good art provision and the large number of extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to make good progress.
- The accommodation is in very good condition and is well organised to provide the best possible learning environment.

- Resources are of high quality and complement the very good teaching.

Commentary

14. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is planned well in the six areas of learning. There is a good balance of activities provided for all children. In the reception class a particularly good balance is maintained between appropriate experiences of the literacy and numeracy lessons and chances for children to choose their own play activities.
15. All teachers keep detailed plans for all subjects of the National Curriculum. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. Teachers are good at making links between subjects and this makes learning relevant to pupils. ICT is used well, for example, when interpreting historical events in newspaper format and linking design processes in art. The use of literacy and numeracy skills within other subjects like science, history and geography is well established and this also adds breadth to the curriculum. All statutory requirements are met.
16. There is a very good range of after school activities and clubs which are well attended by girls and boys. Educational visits to support learning are planned well to complement the curriculum and are exciting and enjoyable for pupils. A residential visit for older pupils gives them significant experience of outdoor pursuits and develops their social skills well. Visitors to school are used effectively to extend pupils' skills and understanding. There are particularly cordial relationships with the local emergency services and the liaison officer from the local constabulary visits regularly to talk through issues with pupils of all ages and this support is much valued and appreciated by the school.
17. The high quality of new specialist music teaching and provision for the older pupils is contributing significantly to the high standards achieved. The pupils really enjoy music lessons and also have extensive opportunities to play instruments both in class and through specialist instrumental lessons. The quality of the art curriculum is also significant in enriching the curriculum.
18. Good quality learning experiences are provided for pupils with special educational needs. These experiences are carefully matched to the needs of these pupils. Well-trained learning assistants have a very good understanding of the complex needs of pupils with statements, which enables them to access all subjects.
19. The accommodation is a very positive asset to pupils' learning and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Major building work has resulted in new classrooms that are well designed and provide pleasant working conditions for staff and pupils and meet the needs of pupils and the curriculum well. The main hall is still small for whole-school assemblies and for lunchtimes, but with careful organisation the school manages as best it can. As the school is only at ground level and ramps are provided as necessary, there is full access for pupils with disabilities. The whole site is very well maintained.
20. The quality and quantity of resources are very good. The school has high quality resources, particularly for the main subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Resources are easy to access for teachers and pupils and are used very well in lessons. Colourful and tactile resources, such as in mathematics and in art and design, interest the pupils and really help them to learn.

Care, guidance and support

The safety and security of pupils while at school is **very good**. The school has **very good** pastoral systems to support the pupils as they grow up. The pupils are satisfactorily involved in the work and development of their school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quick and effective sorting out of potential hazards.
- The very good and trusting relationships.
- A lack of formal structures to allow the pupils to have more of a voice in how their school is run.

Commentary

21. Pupils are safe and secure at school. The head teacher and caretaker are thorough in checking the site for potential hazards and doing all they can to make the school a safe place for children. Past problems with vandals coming on to the grounds out of hours have been resolved. During the inspection an unexpected cut in supply of both gas and water was handled extremely well. First aid is administered with care and professionalism. Adults in the school are clear about child protection procedures, following a recent, comprehensive training session for teaching and support staff.
22. The strong Catholic foundation underpins the committed and sensitive pastoral support for all pupils. Foundation Stage teachers know their children very well. Induction arrangements are good with early constructive links established between home and school. Children's activities are monitored closely and every care is taken to ensure their safety. Many adults have been well established on the staff for many years and so get to know individual pupils well as they move up through the school. Parents commented that "teachers take the time to know the children". Added to this are very good procedures that allow the staff to make the most of detailed academic and personal information to give well-targeted advice. Teachers quickly notice if there are domestic issues that are affecting a pupil's happiness and progress so they can give sympathetic yet practical support. The school handled the recent tragic deaths of a member of staff and a pupil with particular sensitivity. Pupils build up productive and trusting relationships with the adults in the school. As one boy in Year 6 said, "Teachers are friends, fair but firm if they need to be". Any misbehaviour is soon dealt with effectively.
23. All pupils questioned like being part of Our Lady of the Rosary school and feel they are valued members of the school community. The older pupils have been involved, to some extent, in the design of parts of the new building, such as the stained glass window in the chapel, the design of the altar and the use of the central quadrangle. The seeking of pupils' views is achieved through informal contact, with concerns and suggestions being picked up through passing conversations. There are insufficient formal structures for pupils to understand the important role they can play in the smooth running of the school. There is no school council and no hierarchy of prefects. The involvement of pupils in setting targets for their own learning is developing well. There is some particularly good practice in Years 1 and 2 where each pupil has a regular conference with their teacher to discuss what they like doing, if they have any worries and what they would like to do better. In giving their views the pupils feel they have ownership of their personal and academic achievement and strive well to attain their targets. The very small number of pupils of minority ethnic groups are fully integrated into the school. Only one pupil is in receipt of specialist support and is well supported by the school. The school deals very well with all matters regarding racial equality.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are very appreciative of the work of the school. The quality of links with the local community is **good**. The links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Families are made to feel very welcome in the school.

- Parents help the school in many practical and fund raising ways.
- Parents do not receive sufficiently detailed information in written reports about how well their children are doing.
- Links with the Catholic parishes and neighbouring schools are good and visits to local places of interest benefit the pupils' learning.

Commentary

24. The school has a great asset in the committed and supportive parents. Parents are very appreciative of all that the school does for their children and are happy to pop in if they have any questions or concerns. The welcome is extended to other family members at the popular annual grandparents' morning, when pupils proudly show off their work. By sharing the same values and high expectations as the school, a strong partnership is formed in bringing up the pupils as well-rounded individuals. Parents are particularly good at turning up for school productions, the end of term events and the three transitional meetings from key stage to key stage. Not only does the thriving parent association raise prodigious funds to supplement the purchase of resources, but parents also go out of their way to raise money for the school's chosen charities. A good number of parents help in the school with reading and accompanying outings.
25. The information provided to parents is satisfactory. A key issue at the time of the previous inspection was to provide parents with better information on the curriculum and how subjects are taught. Although class teachers now send out a letter each term on what is to be covered and the prospectus gives a simple list of subjects taught, they provide insufficient detail for parents to get further involved in their children's learning. Several parents would like to know more about the teaching methods used so they can help from home. An evening for parents of pupils in Year 3 to find out more about the numeracy strategy proved popular and this good practice should be extended in other areas. Annual reports are perceptive on each pupil's personal development, but do not give sufficiently clear messages on how the pupil has progressed in each subject over the year. The school has very good assessment systems that are not yet being used fully to pass on accurate information to parents. It is a good idea to let parents know about targets for improvement, but often these are too vague. For example, it is difficult for parents to know how to help their child when the target is "to continue to develop X's existing skills in maths" without identifying which skills. Similarly, the targets set for pupils with special educational needs are often too general, so parents cannot be sufficiently involved in their children's progress. On the positive side parents are clear about homework expectations and are regular readers with their children. The monthly newsletters and the annual calendar of events are extremely useful and allow the parents to plan their diary for months ahead.
26. The school makes good use of various local communities for the benefit of the pupils. Particularly strong is the link with its two Catholic parishes, from which governors, staff and pupils are drawn. The parish priests regularly visit to celebrate mass and this contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual development. A good range of visits out into the Sidcup and Blackfen areas brings the curriculum to life and highlights the importance of being part of a local community. Visits to the nearby environment centre are very popular with the pupils and contribute well to scientific learning. Other visits include museums, art galleries and farms. Visitors also come from the fire, police and ambulance services, all vitally important in teaching pupils how a community works. Sporting links with other primary schools are good, not only giving pupils a chance to improve their physical education and fitness, but also to learn how to compete and take winning or losing in a sportsman like way. Effective links with secondary schools mean that pupils and their parents are well informed and confident when they move on from Our Lady of the Rosary.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and key staff provide **very good** leadership and management of the school. A **very good** governing body is rigorous in its monitoring of the school's progress and is a strong source of support for staff and pupils.

The main strengths are

- The headteacher's very good leadership and management are well supported by all staff.
- Very good levels of governance by the governing body.
- The very good support provided by finance and administrative staff and by teaching assistants.

Commentary

27. The leadership shown by the headteacher is very good, and the very clear direction that he gives to the work of the school has ensured that leadership shown by other staff is very good. Central to the effectiveness of the school's well-planned educational direction and priorities is the shared commitment of all teaching and non-teaching staff and governors to the continuous improvement of the quality of education and of the standards achieved by pupils.
28. Another strength is the very good management of agreed strategies for improvement. The School Development Plan is an effective whole-school document for improvement. In support of the set targets, all staff are committed to ensuring a very inclusive approach where the needs of all pupils are paramount. The school is very well organised with high levels of delegation. All staff are clear about their roles, responsibilities and personal objectives and work together very effectively. Regular self-evaluation and the monitoring of performance data take place and key priorities are agreed by all staff in how to raise standards and do the best for all pupils. A good example of this is the improvement in standards of pupils' writing in recent years. Continuing staff development is detailed in the current school development plan.
29. Subject leaders analyse results and monitor standards in their subjects effectively. They are perceptive and anticipate problems, such as the recent changes in teaching arrangements for music and geography. The influence of their very good leadership is reflected throughout most of the school. However, there is only limited liaison between the nursery and reception classes. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership in her newly appointed role. She has created a positive ethos in which teachers and support staff work closely and successfully together to cater for the individual needs of those pupils who need extra help. Subject co-ordinators and class teachers carefully identify pupils with social, literacy or numeracy needs by tracking pupils' progress regularly. However, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to provide more detailed guidance in the individual education plans.
30. The governing body provides very good support for all aspects of the school's work. Their strong commitment has been instrumental in their very effective influence on the school and the improvements since the previous inspection. Progress towards the school's targets is monitored rigorously and key aspects of the school's work, such as the raising of standards in English and mathematics, are monitored very positively by the governors.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	835,250
Total expenditure	842,485
Expenditure per pupil	1,769

Balance from previous year	3,694
Balance carried forward to the next	- 7,235

31. The overall efficiency of the school is very good. The headteacher and governors have developed well-structured procedures that effectively support the school's educational priorities. Very good use is made of new technology in all aspects of school life to improve efficiency levels and to support the curriculum. Specific funding, such as that for special educational needs and national funding for ICT, has been used very efficiently and resources acquired are used very effectively to support teaching and learning.
32. The school applies the principles of best value for money very well and regularly consults and involves all those concerned in decision-making about spending, including staff, parents and pupils. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services and resources in order to acquire cost effectiveness and, as a result, money is spent efficiently. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are excellent, enabling the headteacher and governors to closely monitor and evaluate spending decisions. The most recent financial audit took place a year ago and acknowledged well-managed financial controls. Taking into account the very good achievement by pupils, the overall very good teaching and learning which take place, the stimulating quality of education provided and the well below average unit costs, the school provides very good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for education in the Foundation Stage of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
- Teaching is good.
- Good use is made of the very good accommodation.
- There is limited liaison for curriculum development between the nursery and reception classes.

Commentary

33. Children are achieving well in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development because of good teaching. Children make particularly good progress in the reception class as a good balance is maintained between elements of the literacy and numeracy lessons and the opportunities children have to select appropriately linked play activities for themselves. In the nursery, the staff build effectively upon children's own suggestions to develop and extend their experiences, especially in creative role-play. For example, creating the Rainforest Café after work linking animals to the jungle. All adults take appropriate responsibility for children's learning. They contribute satisfactorily to the records of progress kept for each child.
34. The very well designed accommodation is used well, particularly in the nursery where there is space for directed activities as well as small areas which provide interesting corners for reading, role play and sensory experiences. The outside area is also used well at all times of day giving children good opportunities to climb, jump and balance as well as draw and play with the sand. Outside activities link well to current themes in the reception class. Structured play activities extend children's learning well. For example, children involved with making a roadway will then draw a map for others to study.
35. Currently the liaison between the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory and children move happily from one class to another. However, there have been only limited opportunities for teachers to develop the areas of learning together or to consider the particular needs of those of reception age children in the nursery.

PERSONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**. Children achieve well and most will exceed the Early Learning Goals for this area by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-established routines help children to learn about acceptable behaviour.
- Opportunities for choice enable children to develop appropriate levels of independence.
- The caring and stimulating atmosphere enables children to establish good relationships.

Commentary

36. Children learn how to behave appropriately in school by following regular routines. As a result, their behaviour is good and they are responsive to their teachers, becoming particularly attentive listeners in the reception class. All children work very hard. They change themselves sensibly for physical activities. The quality of teaching is good with strengths in the range of well-planned opportunities that are provided. Children are encouraged to make choices about their play and this contributes very well to their personal development. The youngest children suggest ideas, particularly for imaginative play and this greatly enhances their confidence. There are very good relationships established between adults and children, and this is the basis for the good progress made during the Foundation Stage. The older children in the reception class benefit greatly from meeting with their 'buddy' class in Year 4. They share reading, for example, play games and act as partners on a science walk. This successful innovation helps the members of both classes very well with aspects of social and moral development, and typifies the caring and supportive atmosphere of the whole school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **good**. More children than might be expected will exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of the curriculum at the end of the reception year due to good teaching

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults successfully encourage children to extend their vocabulary and thinking.
- Children learn well due to a good balance of activities.

Commentary

37. All adults in the Foundation Stage use every opportunity available to talk with children, to extend their communication skills. In the reception class, children experience such elements of the literacy hour as are suitable. They read big books and learn the initial sounds of words. Teaching is good and encourages all children to achieve well at their different levels of need. Teachers value children's contributions and this gives them confidence. All children take home books to share and enjoy reading and telling stories. They make good progress with their own reading, which is monitored closely. Older children also make good progress with their writing. By the end of the reception year they write independently using their knowledge of sounds to build up new words. This is encouraged by a good range of activities which makes writing fun, for example making little books, looking at pop-ups and labelling pictures. In the nursery too, children learn to make marks and start to 'write' by designing menus for the Rain forest Café.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**. Children achieve well and more than might be expected will exceed the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage due to good teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults use every opportunity to encourage children to count.
- A good balance of activities ensures that children have a good range of mathematical experiences.

Commentary

38. Counting, singing and being surrounded by numbers give children many opportunities to learn about mathematics. They count bears balancing on a scale, for example, and count larger numbers of children present in class. Older children have suitable experiences to enable them to develop their numeracy skills. They print and name mathematical shapes and create patterns, as well as playing number games. The quality of teaching is good. In both classes, teachers are inventive in offering a wide range of play activities which involve mathematics, as in the cafés or during making activities in technology or art.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

39. Very little direct teaching was seen in these areas but evidence from planned activities and recorded work indicates that most children are on course to meet the early learning goals in these areas. Imaginative structured play activities give children a wide range of opportunities to experiment with paint, printing and colouring media. Children clearly enjoy their imaginative play and this makes a significant contribution to their social and moral development and independence.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is satisfactory. In this area children achieve satisfactorily and most will attain the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of outside equipment in the nursery to support physical development.

Commentary

40. All children in the Foundation Stage have ample opportunities to use wheeled toys. Well supervised activities outside ensure that the youngest children learn how to balance, climb and jump well with due regard for their safety. They use large balls and learn how to stop and send the ball back with adequate control. All the children enjoy moving to music and songs and the youngest use the hall and outside area to practise their animal movements expressively to interpret a poem. The good use of the hall ensures that all children from the Foundation Stage feel part of the school community. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and due emphasis is given to developing hand control through early drawing, writing and painting skills. As a result of the good opportunities provided for writing, most children have a firm pencil grip and form most letters correctly.

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses are

- Very good subject co-ordination.
- Very good standards of teaching and learning.
- Very good standards of work and very good achievement.
- A very well organised resources room, with a very good selection of resources.

Commentary

41. Inspection evidence confirms very good standards of achievement throughout the school. Pupils enter the school with average skills in English. At the end of Year 2, they are above national expectations and by the end of Year 6 pupils leave the school with well above average standards. The very good teaching together with the very good climate for learning within the school promotes these very good standards. This improves the good standards seen at the previous inspection, and this is as a result of the challenging provision.
42. Standards in English are good by Year 2. Speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils speak with confidence and react appropriately to differing situations. Teachers encourage the good development of vocabulary. Reading is good with pupils from Year 1 learning and enjoying the use of simple research skills. Pupils are becoming skilled at expressing their thoughts in written form. A good level of story writing is seen across Year 2, with many pupils using correct grammar with direct speech. By Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. They are developing a love of reading and talk knowledgeably about the books they have read. Improvement in pupils' creative writing is a current focus for the school. The effect of this focus is seen in the standard of writing in Year 6 which is well above the expected level. Achievement is very good because teaching is stimulating and consistently challenging.
43. Although the capabilities within different year groups vary, overall there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The planning for pupils' learning is very good and provides very well for the needs of all pupils. All pupils make at least good progress, including those with special educational needs. The school is focusing effectively on the higher attaining pupils to ensure that they achieve their full potential, particularly in writing. The teachers plan co-operatively and share the planning with the teaching assistants, whose support has a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. Marking of pupils' written work takes into account targets which are tailored to meet pupils' individual needs. There are very effective systems for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment. Intervention programmes to support individuals and groups of pupils are carefully monitored by the co-ordinator to assess their effectiveness. The good quality information from assessments positively influences the teachers' future planning.
44. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use interesting techniques to engage pupils' interest. This has a positive impact on their learning progress. During the inspection, limited use was made of ICT to develop pupils' literacy skills. However, there was evidence of its use in displays of pupils' stories and poetry. Pupils work well individually and collaboratively.
45. The accommodation used for the teaching of English is very good, as are the resources. Resources are attractively displayed and easily accessible. Opportunities for enrichment in English include visits by theatre groups. There is a wide variety of fiction books in each classroom, which pupils can read at home and a well stocked, attractively presented non-fiction library.
46. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has the vision to further develop literacy in the school. The documentation is of a high standard. The recording systems, especially the individual pupil reading records, are very good. Teachers and teaching assistants receive very effective training to support and develop the pupils' learning. The co-ordinator scrutinizes the pupils' books and monitors planning and has made classroom observations.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. All pupils make good use of their well-developed writing skills in a range of subjects but particularly in history and science where subject specific vocabulary is taught and used effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses are

- Teaching is consistently very good.
- Standards of attainment are high.
- Very good subject co-ordination monitors the improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' standards very well.
- Very good planning of learning activities which closely match the needs of groups of pupils of different capabilities.

Commentary

48. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve well and currently attain standards which are above expected levels and are likely to be well above expected levels by the end of the year. The school's targets for pupils in Year 6 confirm these judgements. This is an improvement on the above expected levels seen during the previous inspection. Talented pupils, higher attaining, average and lower attaining pupils are all suitably challenged by teachers to enable them to achieve their full potential. Teachers' methods and strategies are very effective in stimulating pupils and inspiring them to enjoy their lessons. Boys and girls respond and achieve equally well.
49. Pupils in Year 2 build systematically on the good progress evident in Year 1 and acquire a good knowledge and understanding of number, shape, measurement and methods of calculation. Compared with their past attainment, pupils' levels of achievement in Year 2 are good overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and overcome any learning difficulties as a result of the good support they receive.
50. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is very good overall. Performances in annual tests contribute very effectively to teachers' tracking of progress in relation to set targets and detailed information is passed on each year to the new teacher. Standards in Year 6 are already above expected levels and a good proportion of the pupils are on track to be well above by the end of the year. All pupils in Year 6 are achieving very well and flourishing on the very good teaching. In work on fractions, higher attaining pupils confidently and accurately calculate different types of fraction that are equivalent, including decimals and percentages. Lower attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of proper and improper fractions and know key vocabulary such as 'numerator', 'denominator' and 'cancelling'.
51. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented very well throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The main strengths shared by all teachers include the high quality of their planning. This is achieved in year group teams and takes careful account of the different capabilities of pupils. This has a beneficial influence on the rate of pupils' learning. As pupils develop a wider range of skills, teachers introduce ever increasing challenges to extend pupils' learning. This is particularly so in Year 6, where pupils are very keen to learn and their progress is considerably better than normally seen. Other strengths include high expectations of work and behaviour and the establishing of very good relationships.

52. The improvements in pupils' standards and the quality of teaching since the previous inspection are reflective of the influence of the subject leader. Co-ordination of the subject is very good in both its leadership and its management. The co-ordinator's detailed analysis of pupils' performances in regular testing highlights specific areas for development in each year group. Annual action plans identify wide-ranging, relevant tasks that always refer back in some way to the raising of standards. Resources are very good in quantity and quality and are used very effectively to support pupils' learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Pupils have very good, regular opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. These include data handling in science to present results of investigations in preferred forms of graphs and charts. This is further extended by the use of ICT to present information in a variety of ways. This includes, for example, calculating the mean, mode and median and investigating the range of mathematical probability from impossible to certain. Measurement is practised regularly in design and technology and also during the summer term in athletics, when pupils record their progress using measuring and timing skills. The gradual development of mapping skills in geography incorporates increasingly accurate work using co-ordinates.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses are

- Standards in science are very high.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very effective.

Commentary

54. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above expected levels and by the end of Year 6 they are well above expected levels. These are improvements from the previous inspection when standards throughout were above expected levels. Pupils' achievement is very good when related to their original starting points. During this inspection, a high proportion of pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 were already above expectations in their science enquiry skills. Similarly pupils in Year 6 are well above expected levels in their knowledge and understanding of materials, and pupils in Year 2 in their recognition that all living things have common needs.
55. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers' knowledge is very good and lessons are well sequenced so that pupils are effectively challenged to reach the teachers' high expectations. Teachers make effective use of assessment to plan lessons that build carefully on pupils' previous understanding or to re-affirm correct ideas for pupils who are a little uncertain. In the best marking, the teacher notes a target for improvement. Imaginative teaching methods and skilful questioning lead to pupils developing high levels of interest and keen involvement in practical experiences, which help pupils of different capabilities to learn well. Visits to places of scientific interest are well prepared so that pupils carefully record intended observations.
56. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well, for example, when writing poetry about the water cycle or to make accurate use of measurement and graphs. Pupils in Year 2 reinforce their ICT skills by using computers to present information in bar charts. Pupils in Year 6

carefully construct line graphs by hand but miss opportunities to use a computer to test predictions. Teachers are supported well by parents, for example, helping to walk pupils in Year 2 to the local park for scientific studies. These activities stimulate them greatly and increase their understanding of differences and similarities in plants. Pupils with learning difficulties or statements of special educational need are supported sensitively and have activities carefully modified by knowledgeable support teachers so that they succeed in tasks.

57. Science has a high profile in the school. The subject manager, through her professional development and high interest, leads and manages the science curriculum very well, so that teaching and learning builds on pupils' previous achievement. Assessment at the end of topics is used directly in planning future lessons and challenges. She has inspired confidence by leading and monitoring planning for the progression of science enquiry skills and provides an excellent role model for the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses are

- The quality of teaching and learning of ICT skills throughout the school is good.
- The good use of resources and good links with other subjects.
- The good leadership and management provided by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

58. All pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, most attain standards which are above expected levels. The good standards observed in the previous inspection have been maintained.
59. Pupils in Year 2 are keen and confident when working at a computer, either on their own or with a partner. They carefully follow instructions from their teacher to access selected programs. In a lesson in Year 2, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of skills to assemble and amend text and select a particular font style and text size to create a letter. Pairs were grouped so that lower attaining pupils received regular support from their working partner or an adult to help them achieve the targets.
60. By Year 4, pupils extend their knowledge and skills in good links with literacy by creating and amending text to sequence a series of instructions for a cooking recipe. Pupils in Year 6 are aware of the wider uses of ICT, and that they can use equipment for controlling events, such as using data-logging with sensors to measure changes in light, temperature and sound levels. In a lesson observed in Year 6, pupils worked mostly in pairs to assemble a multimedia presentation in the form of a book for younger pupils in reception and Year 1 classes. They organised text, images and sound to create a story, taking account of the needs of their intended audience. Higher attaining and average pupils demonstrated skills above expected levels for their age. The small minority of below average pupils received regular reassurance and help without over-direction to enable them to achieve expected levels.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. This is because teachers have worked hard and successfully to make the fullest use of the computer suite and to develop their own technical skills and confidence. They plan lessons well and make good use

of the server and whiteboard in the suite to demonstrate and reinforce skills. As a result, the activities are imaginative and exciting and are set at the right level of challenge for pupils of different capabilities in their classes. Pupils enjoy using computers and this is clearly reflected in their enthusiasm and very good behaviour and their willingness to share ideas and support their work partners. Another good feature of lessons is the way in which teachers, the technician and teaching assistants make themselves available to support individuals, encouraging more confident groups to explore new techniques, whilst supporting those who are less skilled. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs achieve well to meet their personal targets.

62. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for a year and provides good leadership and management. She has created a positive learning atmosphere within the subject which supports and enhances learning in other subjects and enables computers to become an integral part of day-to-day learning. The quantity and quality of resources are good. National funding has been used effectively to improve resources and increase the competence and confidence of staff. Her current priorities include stronger links to levels of ICT skills in the assessment procedures.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. ICT is used to good effect to support learning in most subjects. This is demonstrated most effectively in literacy through text work and word-processing, the use of data-handling and control work in mathematics and in the use of art programs. Supervised use of the Internet enables pupils to carry out research into a wide range of geographical, historical and scientific sources. This information is used effectively to enhance pupils' work in these subjects.

HUMANITIES

64. Within the school's timetable coverage during the inspection week, it was only possible to observe one lesson in **Geography**. From this lesson, from evidence of planning and pupils' past work it is clear that the school's provision meets statutory requirements. **Religious education** was not part of this inspection and will be reported on following a separate Section 23 inspection.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses are

- Standards are above those expected nationally.
- Teaching and learning extends pupils' literacy and creative skills.
- The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual development.
- Leadership constantly seeks ways of enriching the curriculum.

Commentary

65. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be at expected levels. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well due to the imaginative strategies used by teachers. These include the good use of artefacts and the good links with literacy. Following interesting discussions and challenges, pupils have a very good idea of the passage of time and of different ways in which events in the past have been recorded. This was demonstrated

well in a lesson for Year 2 pupils about the Great Fire of London. Pupils used their own display of house silhouettes on 'fiery' backgrounds and recalled their good knowledge to sequence events and independently write accounts as 'eye witnesses' at that time. The teacher had good expectations of pupils to offer explanations and reasons relevant to the different levels of pupils' capability in writing, based on good levels of historical knowledge.

66. In all year groups pupils respond well, writing reports in many forms and letters in the role of people in past times. Some pupils then use different methods imaginatively to age the documents to make them look authentic. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use good enquiry skills to research projects and extend their knowledge and understanding. They make good use of ICT to gather information and present their work in styles of print relevant to the time. They make effective use of dates and graphics to illustrate their work. In response to good teaching, pupils show high levels of interest as they interview each other in the role of Victorian children, discussing daily life at that time.
67. Teachers' planning is good. They set the scene well creating stimulating situations for pupils to feel part of an event or experience. In one inspirational lesson observed, pupils in Year 6 empathised very well with a visitor who was an evacuee and the quiet emotion in the room stimulated them to feel the loneliness of an evacuee so that once they started to write 'in evacuee mode' they did not want the lesson to end. The lesson was very effective in increasing pupils' understanding of the main events and changes in the history of Britain.
68. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject and uses ideas very effectively to improve the quality of the curriculum and monitors planning and achievement in the subject. Visits to places of historical interest for all year groups enrich pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has plans to extend these visits to provide for a local study in even greater depth.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. During the inspection, there were no lessons timetabled for **design and technology**. From an analysis of planning documents, samples of completed work and pupils' evaluation of their own work, it is clear that the subject meets statutory requirements.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards achieved by pupils are good.
- Pupils have a good range of experiences using a variety of media.
- Extra projects and good subject links mean that art and design contributes effectively to the enrichment of the curriculum.
- Leadership is strong.

Commentary

70. All pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards which are above expected levels. The range of work is extensive and this breadth of experience contributes to the good quality of art produced. Teachers use imaginative strategies which lead to high levels of interest and creativity from pupils. Pupils enjoy good opportunities to work well with a variety of media, like watercolour, collage and sculpture.

71. Pupils in Year 1 achieve well, exploring the similarities and differences in the work of famous artists, such as Picasso and Paul Klee. Good sensitive intervention by the teacher and modelling of relevant skills, encouraged pupils to produce good quality portrait sketches of their own with good attention to the use of lines to emphasise facial details. Good use is made of sketchbooks throughout the age range to enable pupils to demonstrate good understanding of the processes involved in design with increasing levels of challenge. Teachers make effective use of the good range of pictures on display around the school when they discuss styles of painting and stimulate pupils to attempt pictures of their own. The result is good quality finished products developed from a wide range of materials and processes.
72. Good teaching and learning continue in Years 3 to 6. Individual needs and talents of pupils are catered for well. This is achieved through a good balance of teaching specific skills, such as the use of watercolour or pastel. Good links are created with other subjects, such as through history and the development of mosaics. Levels of challenge are realistic and result in pupils being very interested and productive. ICT links are further extended at relevant times when pupils gather information about famous artists and study their different styles.
73. The subject leader is justly proud of the development of art in the school. She has effectively supported teachers by providing additional materials and resources. She has initiated projects for pupils which link effectively to other subjects and these have added relevance and richness to pupils' studies. She has perceived the need to concentrate on the development of specific skills like sketching to continue to raise standards in the subject even further.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**.

Main strengths are:

- Very good teaching results in increasingly good achievement.
- Pupils show great interest and enthusiasm in the subject.
- Good leadership and management provide a rich programme of learning.

Commentary

74. All pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards which are above expected levels. This maintains the good standards judged in the previous inspection. The school recently identified the need to introduce specialist teaching to the subject. The quality of teaching and learning is now very good overall and pupils benefit greatly from the excellent subject knowledge of the specialist teacher who joined the staff at the beginning of this term. This decision has greatly improved the provision and teaching in the subject and as a result, pupils' achievement has already improved and there is considerable potential for even higher standards. Pupils with special educational needs also enjoy the subject greatly and make good progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well and with the same high levels of interest.
75. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing tunefully and with good expression. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed good knowledge by identifying that there were eight notes in an octave and sang up and down the selected scale, pitching notes accurately. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are further extended in their listening, appraising, composing and performing skills by the very good teaching. This was demonstrated effectively by Year 4 pupils when singing and playing accompanying phrases with good control and rhythmic accuracy using untuned percussion instruments. Pupils in Year 6 performed very well and showed the high levels of confidence

and pleasure that all pupils are gaining from the subject. They sang songs which reflected different times and places, such as a Rocky Mountain song and a modern pop-tune. The enthusiastic and stimulating teaching motivated pupils so much that in the final sequence every pupil in the class was involved in playing a tuned instrument and did so well. The excellent subject knowledge, high levels of challenge and sensitive prompts by the teacher encouraged all pupils to attain above expected levels.

76. The quality of teaching is very good overall and ranges from excellent to good. In addition to class lessons, many pupils are given opportunities to learn individual instruments from Year 3 onwards. Many pupils choose to do so and are encouraged to play a wide range of instruments in the school orchestra, where the quality of performance is good and pupils show high levels of commitment and enjoyment. Assessment procedures are detailed and help teachers match activities more accurately to the individual needs of the pupils.
77. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management by ensuring that the strengths in teaching are used for the benefit of teaching staff and pupils. Teachers use the subject very well to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and also to suggest how others might improve their performances. Pupils speak confidently and accept each other's helpful criticisms well. The programme of learning is broad and enriched with good, relevant links to other subjects. Pupils also benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities. Resources are of good quantity and quality and are used regularly by pupils of all ages and capabilities.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a rich programme of activities.
- Pupils achieve well and develop very good attitudes and personal qualities.
- Good leadership and management by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

78. All pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attain above expected levels. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when standards were at expected levels. This includes swimming with all but two pupils already reaching or exceeding the expected 25 metres. Every pupil is likely to achieve the standard before they leave the school with at least half swimming more than 500 metres. There is a good range of activities that ensures pupils experience all aspects of the subject. Support for the development of a good range of skills has been carefully planned through lessons, after-school clubs and a residential visit.
79. Teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils, including those who are talented or have special educational needs, are fully and actively involved in their lessons. Often this is with the valuable support of teaching assistants. There is no difference in the standards reached by boys and girls.
80. In gymnastics, pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore basic actions and think carefully about good balance and co-ordination in their movements. Older pupils extend their skills in floor work and then are sensitively encouraged to transfer their quality movements to larger apparatus. In games, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught well to consider the need for rules and to develop skills of attacking and defending. Pupils in Year 6 were observed working well together. The teacher took the opportunity very well to ensure that the more talented pupils demonstrated good hockey skills and also supported the less able, to consolidate and improve their skills. In dance, Year 2 pupils were observed moving in very expressive ways to portray different moods of happiness and sadness, focusing on more refined movements of arms and fingers in their gestures. Teachers ensure that good cultural links are made at relevant times of the year when work focuses on American Indian dance and Asian dance.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The skilful management of pupils' behaviour is a strength and this creates very good relationships and responses with all pupils co-operating fully with teachers and with each other. Pupils are given every encouragement to plan, perform and evaluate their movements in order to help them improve. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and provides good leadership. The subject contributes very effectively to pupils' personal development by encouraging them to pursue their own interests and to work with others. There is a good range of extra-curricular sporting opportunities, involving boys and girls, and they compete successfully against other schools. Resources are of good quantity and quality and are used effectively by teachers to support pupils' learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are given good opportunities to discuss important issues.
- Teachers value pupils' opinions highly.
- Provision makes a significant contribution to the personal development of the pupils.
- At present there is no dedicated policy.

Commentary

82. Although, at present the personal, social and health education policy is being developed and specific lessons are planned in only a few classes, the quality of care and sensitivity to issues raised in many subjects, gives pupils ample opportunities to address complicated matters. For example, older pupils discuss very thoughtfully, the moral issues involved in whether a new road should be allowed locally and so spoil the site of an old Roman township. Where special lessons do take place, discussions are lively and challenging and lead to good understanding of issues, like how rules are necessary at all levels of life, from within the classroom to outside. Teachers deal sensitively with feelings and attribute value to all answers and suggestions. Many issues that are important for all pupils are discussed sensitively and the result of this is reflected in the calm, caring and supportive atmosphere of the school. Pupils discuss difficult ideas concerning their families, trust and friendship. There is also the particularly successful innovation called the "buddy system". The very sensitive and caring approach by all adults contributes significantly to the very good quality of pupils' personal development in the areas of social and moral development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

