

INSPECTION REPORT

THE WILLIAM PENN SCHOOL

Slough

LEA area: Slough

Unique reference number: 130372

Headteacher: Mrs J Girle

Lead inspector: Mr J Parsons

Dates of inspection: 5 - 7 July 2004

Inspection number: 258174

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 373.5 (full-time equivalent)

School address: Penn Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Fort

Date of previous inspection: 10 June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The William Penn Primary School is much larger than most other primary schools with 423 boys and girls aged three to eleven. Approximately 40 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and this is much higher than most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above what is usually found. Many of these require significant support. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above national figures. More than three quarters of the school do not speak English as their mother tongue and many are at the early stages of learning the language. Nearly nine out of ten pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the majority of Pakistani origin. The mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is exceptionally high. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are much lower than elsewhere. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is well below expectations. The school has gained the following awards: Investors in People 1999, School's Achievement Award 2000, Silver Healthy School's Award 2003, and National Film Award for the best film made by under-elevens.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22546	J Parsons	Lead inspector	Design and technology Physical education
9457	G Bindoff	Lay inspector	
1710	T Edwards	Team inspector	History Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage
24528	G Muton	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs
32606	V Derwas	Team inspector	Science Geography
15023	A Hoaus	Team inspector	English Art and design English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, very good management and support of key staff, and good governance have significantly developed the school. The consistently good teaching and learning and very innovative curriculum enables all pupils to learn and achieve well. The school is a harmonious place. However many pupils are significantly disadvantaged. The majority of pupils do not speak English as their mother tongue, a high number have special educational needs, many come from low socio-economic backgrounds, and the number of pupils who leave and join the school at different times is very high. **It offers good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the school no longer has serious weaknesses
- pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue, quickly become proficient in speaking and listening skills, and make good progress
- standards overall in core subjects by Year 2 and Year 6 are below average
- the very innovative curriculum is raising standards and achievement and pupils' personal development
- the good teaching is supported by effective assessment procedures in English and mathematics, but these procedures are not as consistent in other subjects
- teachers do not always take fully into account pupils' abilities when planning lessons to pitch work to challenge pupils
- arrangements for physical education and information and communication technology are very good
- the opportunities to play and participate in musical activities, especially out of school are not well developed
- Attendance is well below average.

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in June 2002. Pupils achieve well, standards are rising, but are still below expectations overall. The quality of teaching is consistently good, provision in the Foundation Stage is good and all key issues have been fully addressed.

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	D
science	E	E*	E*	E

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

Achievement is good overall in the light of the pupils' difficulties and handicaps. Standards on entry to the Foundation Stage are well below expectations; many children do not speak English well. All children make good progress especially in speaking and listening due to good teaching and achieve well. However, most do not reach the goals expected overall by

the end of reception. The school recognises some white and Pakistani origin pupils' progress less quickly than others throughout the school. It is making good efforts to address this underachievement through good teaching and an innovative curriculum and recent significant improvements in standards confirms this. The teaching engages all pupils. They consolidate the skills they have learned well and by Year 2 standards broadly match those expected in speaking and listening. However, standards overall are below average in reading, writing and mathematics although they are average in ICT. Pupils continue to progress well and by Year 6 their speaking and listening skills match expectations, although standards overall are below average in English, mathematics and science they achieve well in light of their backgrounds. The highest standards are in ICT and in physical education due to the very good arrangements and good expertise in teaching and standards match expectations throughout the school. Results are better in 2004 than they were in the 2003 national tests showing an improving picture. The many newcomers to the school throughout the year and the large number of pupils who have special educational needs make good progress but their standards are well below expectations and depress results in the national tests. In all other subjects standards broadly match those expected except for geography by Year 2 and Year 6 which is below expectations. However, this represents good achievement overall in these subjects as children's standards are well below expectations on entry. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall.** The curriculum provides for many planned opportunities to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem. It is enriched with a good range of out of school activities. Pupils have very good attitudes to school, behave well, attendance is well below average but punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good overall. The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and pupils learn well. The effective curriculum enables teachers to plan for the needs of all pupils and especially the majority for whom English is not their mother tongue. The range of opportunities out of school is good overall and especially in sports. Technology and other resources are used very effectively and teachers set work that both engages and challenges pupils enabling them to develop their learning. Assessment of pupils' progress is effective in English and in mathematics but less so in other subjects and is satisfactory overall. In a few lessons teachers do not always plan taking fully into account pupils' abilities. The very good use of teaching assistants, some of whom are bilingual, makes a very strong contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils like school. The attention to the care, welfare and guidance of the pupils is good overall, they feel valued and relationships are excellent. The school has good links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. The very good management of the school, together with the very good support of key staff, in particular the deputy headteacher, and good governance have led to good development of the curriculum and a good improvement in teaching. The headteacher's excellent clarity of vision, sense of purpose, team building and professional development of staff has led to a rapidly improving picture in the school. The appointment of effective teachers and assistants have made a strong contribution to the school's success.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a positive view of the school and pupils like it. Parents consider the initial contact with school through the 'reach out' worker is very effective.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards especially reading and writing, mathematics, science and geography;
- continue to develop and strengthen the actions taken to raise attendance rates;
- continue with the development of assessment procedures and marking to give pupils a better understanding of what they need to do to improve in all subjects;
- ensure that all teachers plan their lessons so that the work matches the range of pupils' ability and attainment in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement throughout the school is good overall in light of pupils' difficulties and handicaps and this is due to the consistently good teaching. Standards are below average in core subjects by Year 2 and Year 6, but pupils make good progress overall regardless of background as most children start school with standards that are well below expectations. The school recognises that some Pakistani and white origin pupils do not achieve as well as others. The inspection confirms this but the consistently good teaching and innovative curriculum are addressing this underachievement well and there have been recent significant improvements. Pupils are ethnically diverse and most do not speak English as their mother tongue. A large number of pupils have special educational needs, they achieve well but standards are often well below average. The school has a well thought out policy for those pupils identified as having special gifts or skills and these are noted in teachers' planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of pupils that do not speak English as their mother tongue, a majority, is good especially their speaking and listening skills and personal development and they achieve well.
- The creative and innovative curriculum and consistently good teaching engages and stimulates all pupils regardless of background contributing well to their learning and achievement.
- The use of bilingual teaching assistants is very effective at developing those pupils who do not speak English well.
- The large number of pupils who start school at different points in time depresses standards overall, as most do not speak English well.
- Pupils achieve well in physical education and ICT due to the good teaching and very good curriculum.
- The school has reversed the trend for the underachievement of girls and there are no significant differences in performance between boys and girls.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.1 (24.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.4 (23.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	24.7 (24.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

- Standards in the national tests 2003 by Year 2 were very low in English and mathematics and below average in writing. By Year 6 they were very low in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2 and they are below average in English and mathematics and well below in science by Year 6. However, results have improved in the recent national tests of 2004 and this is an improving picture. The inspection found that standards, overall, were below average in the core subjects by Year 2 and 6 but this represents good achievement as children start school in the Foundation Stage and at other points in time with standards that are well below expectations.
- Children start nursery mostly with skills that are well below those expected and very few achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. Particularly weak are personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy skills. When they start, the school targets the development of these skills. It is particularly successful so that by the end of reception they achieve satisfactorily, although standards are still below expectations.
- The trend in results in the national tests is below that found nationally. However, test results do not give the full picture. Most of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and do not speak English as their mother tongue. The good teaching is successful in raising standards and in particular developing pupils' speaking and listening skills to enable pupils to function and progress well. The school has carefully planned the introduction of assessment procedures and although not yet fully implemented in all subjects they are particularly effective in tracking those pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue. The very creative and innovative curriculum has had a significant impact on pupils' development. However, the process that most pupils go through of learning English as an additional language inevitably slows their overall development. This is further compounded by up to half of each class, sometimes more, leaving and joining at different points in time and almost all of those joining have little English. These factors pose major challenges to the school, which it has addressed well. It has established consistently good teaching and learning throughout the school. Those pupils who are in the early stages of learning English are effectively targeted and benefit from the support provided. Specialist staff, including bilingual assistants, are effectively deployed and make a very positive impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers and their assistants are very successful in enabling pupils to settle quickly and feel secure. Their good knowledge and skills and the effective leadership of the coordinator and senior managers makes a strong contribution to improving pupils' learning and achievement.
- The group of underachieving pupils, mostly of Pakistani and white origin, identified by the school have been successfully targeted raising standards effectively. Many innovations such as the use of 'brain gym' and the development of 'thinking skills' in the curriculum are addressing their needs successfully through the consistently good teaching. The school has a high proportion of pupils who have been identified with special educational

needs including an above average number with a formal statement. Often, their standards are very low and depress the results in the national tests, especially when clustered in Years 2 and 6 apparent in the past two years. However, they achieve satisfactorily because of the well designed curriculum, the consistently good teaching, and very effective support in the classroom. A significant number of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. These pupils thrive in school because of the arrangements made for example, the provision of a 'reach out' worker who helps vulnerable pupils and families to make the best of what the school has to offer.

5. The very good provision in ICT and physical education and consistently good teaching means that pupils reach a higher standard these subjects. The school effectively uses ICT to extend and develop pupils' learning in other subjects especially developing their research skills. In all other subjects standards broadly match those expected except for geography by Year 2 and Year 6 which are below expectations. However, this represents good achievement overall as children's standards are well below expectations on entry.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to school and enjoy learning. Excellent relationships between pupils and staff contribute to pupils' good behaviour and their achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop self-confidence and self-esteem because they have excellent relationships with the adults in the school.
- The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is good because expectations are consistent and well understood.
- The school has effective strategies for improving attendance and punctuality.
- Extended holidays overseas have an adverse impact on the learning of some pupils.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

6. Attendance is well below the national median and in the bottom ten per cent of all schools. The low levels of attendance arise from the nature of the community the school serves and the socio-economic circumstances of the area. In the current year nearly six per cent of all absences are caused by illness or other medical reasons. Days for religious observance account for one per cent of absences and extended leave, especially for visits to Pakistan, account for nearly two per cent. Pupils want to come to school and almost all families make a good effort to ensure that their children come to school when they can and that they arrive on time. The levels of unauthorised absence is very small and is line with that in most schools. This good effort is a result of the strong emphasis the school places on attendance, its good contact with parents and its good

strategies for encouraging and rewarding good attendance. Effective analysis of the learning of the group of pupils who miss significant periods of their schooling through extended holidays shows that they do fall behind and take some time to catch up. The school is working with parents to limit this disadvantage.

7. Pupils feel happy and secure at school because there is a very friendly and welcoming atmosphere and a very real sense that each person is valued. The symbol of the 'Tree of Life' defines the ethos of the school and is used widely to convey to pupils that each individual is important and equally that each has a contribution to make to the wider community. This creates a shared sense of purpose and a very positive environment for learning which help pupils to achieve well. In nearly all lessons pupils work hard and collaborate together well to find things out and to discuss ideas. Pupils support each other very well, especially where pupils have recently joined the school and their understanding of English is still at an early stage. They help each other, often in their home language, and this helps new pupils to settle in well.
8. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together and there is a high level of racial harmony in the school. Excellent relationships between pupils and adults and the very good strategies for encouraging personal responsibility lead to good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils know what is expected and respond well to praise and encouragement. Both pupils and parents have some concerns about behaviour but they agree that any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. Very good support is given to those pupils who have difficulty managing their own behaviour and are at risk of being excluded from school. As a result, nearly all pupils remain in school for most of the time. Fixed term exclusions are used as a last resort and the required procedures are followed. In the current year fixed term exclusions have accounted for nineteen days and have involved a total of six pupils.
9. Pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue mix well with their peers whatever their background and are very keen to participate fully in activities and school events. They are highly motivated and very keen to learn. This contributes significantly to the progress they make. Pupils with special educational needs share the good attitudes and behaviour of their classmates. However a small number of pupils have been identified as having particular emotional and behavioural difficulties and the behaviour of these pupils can be very challenging at times.
10. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. Assemblies give pupils very good opportunities to reflect on the way they treat each other, how they feel in different situations and how they can 'be the best they can be'. In one assembly for Year 3 and 4 pupils very good use of mime to depict different feelings and emotions ensured that all pupils understood and were fully involved including pupils who learn in English as an additional language and those pupils who had recently joined the school and who were still at an early stage of English acquisition. Pupils have very good opportunities to take responsibility. Older pupils especially enjoy the times when they work with younger pupils as 'reading buddies'. Very good support is given to vulnerable pupils helping them to develop social relationships and self-confidence. Pupils show interest in and respect for each other's faiths and cultural customs and the ethnic diversity of the school community is widely celebrated. Pupils with special emotional or behavioural difficulties are very well supported and guided by the 'reach out' worker who works closely with the teachers and classroom assistants on behaviour management programmes.

11. The school has effective induction procedures for pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue so that they settle quickly and are fully integrated. Effective support is also provided for pupils' social development and this clearly contributes to the progress they make. The school's monitoring procedures are effectively used to focus on specific needs such as those of refugee pupils or those whose parents need extra or specific support. This is clearly reflected in the effort the school makes in providing opportunities for family learning and recent initiatives in involving Somali parents who are relative newcomers to the school.

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	39	5	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	26	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	165	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	13	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	5	0	0
Black or Black British – African	13	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	2	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

Overall, the quality of education is good. The quality of teaching is good overall, assessment is effective in English but is more inconsistent in other subjects and lesson planning does not always take into account pupils' prior attainment enabling them to pitch work to challenge different abilities. However, the planned and measured introduction of detailed assessment procedures makes them satisfactory overall. The curriculum is good, creative and very innovative. Care, guidance and support of pupils are good overall and pupils feel valued.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is overall, consistency in the good quality of teaching and learning across all age groups.
- There is good teaching by specialist staff of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- There is particularly good use of teaching assistants and language support staff in the classroom.
- Teachers engage pupils very well in their work.
- The creative and innovative methods used in teaching are effective and pupils learn well.
- Teaching methods are effective in developing speaking and listening.
- Marking is being developed effectively English but is not as effective in other subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	10 (21%)	24 (51%)	11 (23%)	0 (0%)	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.

12. Most of the teaching was good or better. Good practice was seen throughout the school. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection.

13. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of primary subjects and the National Curriculum. The school's promotion of creative and active learning through the innovative curriculum, with its emphasis on developing thinking skills, has resulted in teachers presenting lively and interesting lessons that engage their pupils very well. This helps to address the underachievement of groups of Pakistani and white origin pupils identified by the school. It has enabled them to achieve better and succeed in lessons and standards have recently improved. Very good use is made of classroom assistants who help groups and individuals in their work and, where necessary, translate for those who are not yet proficient in English and might not fully understand. The quality of support for pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue is good. This is because assessment is used effectively to analyse pupils' needs and build carefully on their prior learning. Pupils in the early stages of acquiring English are effectively targeted and often benefit from intensive small group support by the ethnic minority coordinator and assistants.

14. In the majority of lessons seen, teachers carefully identify opportunities for developing pupils' language skills and put special emphasis on developing their vocabulary. In the best teaching, this approach has been developed into a routine where skilful questioning, high expectations and a range of highly effective approaches well suited to bilingual pupils are used to draw on their previous knowledge and extend their learning. This was amply illustrated in a literacy lesson in Year 1 where the expertise of the teacher was fully deployed and where the achievement of pupils was good. The clear emphasis placed on

speaking and listening across the school is of great benefit to pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue and enables them to rehearse language orally before attempting to write. The coordinator and the designated assistants for pupils who speak English as an additional language work in close partnership with teachers and tasks are devised to activate pupils' prior knowledge and build on it through the use of talk and active learning. For instance through carefully modelled activities. Where support is occasionally less effective, this is due to pupils working as a group without the opportunity to learn from their stronger peers or in withdrawal groups, where technical language is used when pupils are not ready to fully grasp it. All members of staff have the same high expectations that pupils will learn, succeed and behave well, though a few teachers have to spend more time than others managing pupils' behaviour. Very good use is made of ICT in many of the lessons observed. There is a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening.

15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and frequently very good. Teachers, teaching assistants and language support staff work very well as a team. Routines are well established and children are helped to feel secure. The nursery environment, in particular, is bright and stimulating. In both nursery and reception, best use is made of the accommodation and resources available. All the staff have good expectations of the children and they respond well. They share their observations of how well individual children are progressing and plan accordingly.
16. In the rest of the school there is a thorough system of assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics and for those whose mother tongue is not English and it is used well to provide for the needs of individuals. The use of assessment in other subjects is less well developed and used. For example, in mathematics, there is little difference in the work given to pupils of different levels of ability in the subject, and in a few classes it is common practice to allow pupils to call out the answers to questions in unison without, then, putting specific questions to individual pupils to assess that they have understood. In science and ICT, teachers' pay too little regard to the differences in pupils' prior attainment when planning their lessons. Marking is helpful to pupils in English but is sometimes inconsistent in other subjects. However, as procedures to address these issues are due for a rapid and planned introduction and implementation is well underway although not yet embedded, and assessment is satisfactory overall.
17. Teachers and classroom assistants give pupils with special educational needs good support in classrooms. Teachers write individual education plans for their pupils with special targets for them to work towards. The quality of these are variable but satisfactory overall. Some of the targets are too loosely phrased so that measuring progress against them is difficult. The extent to which progress towards targets are tracked varies between classes.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- It is very creative and innovative.
- It is very well tailored to pupils' needs.
- Support staff are very effective.

- Planning for the development of speaking and listening, ICT, physical education, thinking skills and active learning is very effective.
- Support for all pupils as they move into secondary schools is very good.
- Provision for pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue is good.
- The opportunities for developing creativity in music are not as strong as other aspects of the school.
- In a few lessons teachers do not always plan for the range of ability in their classes.

Commentary

18. The very innovative and creative curriculum is part of a three year planned cycle of change. The school realises that with the very recent high turnover of teachers it will need time to become fully embedded in school practice. The school has adapted the standard curriculum well to suit the distinctive needs of the pupils of this school, many of whom join the school with little or no English. The Primary Strategy has been adapted effectively across all subjects so that all lessons follow a common format. There is a strong focus on developing speaking, listening, and thinking skills, and the promotion of physical activity as well as the use of ICT by teachers and pupils. This approach addresses the underachievement of groups of Pakistani origin and white pupils identified by the school and some significant recent improvement in standards confirms this. In most classes, pupils are grouped with thinking and talking partners that enables frequent purposeful practice of those skills. In addition, teachers particularly focus on developing key words in different subjects and this adds considerably to the quality of pupils' learning. In their planning in English, teachers recognise the different levels of attainment within their classes, but this does not always happen in other subjects. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It provides balanced learning opportunities firmly based on the recommended areas of learning. The programme for personal, social, and health education is very well established and has led the school to be a harmonious place. Whole school assemblies give classes opportunities to lead collective worship.
19. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities especially in sport. The fitness coach provides pupils' with opportunities to play a range of sports, which led the school football team to win the local Football Festival competition and go through to the final. The good range of visits and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and extend pupils' learning in a variety of ways. The Environment Week project recently enabled pupils to investigate the extensive school grounds and woodland studying habitats. The School Council visited the Houses of Parliament as part of their citizenship understanding and development. The use of support provided through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and the Education Action Zone is highly effective. Pupils benefit in a variety of ways from being taught to juggle, participating in a recent dance festival and photography workshop to individual support, lead by either the school-based reach out worker or an educational therapist, for pupils anxious about transferring to secondary school.
20. The 'Voices Foundation' has trained staff in the use of singing and rhymes to gain and maintain pupils' attention, but there are no planned opportunities for pupils to learn to play instruments or take part in choral singing. Resources are good and used very well. For instance, there is ample, accessibly stored science equipment for all pupils to take part in practical work. Accommodation, although it is spacious and well utilised is housed in several old buildings on a large site which means staff and pupils have to move around outside in all weathers. There are plans to build a new school on part of the extensive

grounds. Three well utilised ICT suites, located in the different year group buildings are suitably equipped for different age ranges. For example, in a very good Year 6 geography lesson, pupils ICT skills were used effectively to develop their geographical and research skills. Library provision has also been enhanced recently with addition of a new ICT based research library that promotes opportunities for learning for both pupils and the wider community.

21. The recent huge turnover in teaching staff has enabled the school to appoint staff committed to the management plan for improvement. The learning support assistants are experienced and well trained; many are bi-lingual which benefits those pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition. Support staff are very well matched to the needs of pupils many speaking one or more of the community languages within the school enabling them to interpret during lessons.
22. Opportunities are carefully planned and harnessed in a number of subjects and outside the taught curriculum to celebrate and enhance cultural diversity. This is carefully done by providing pupils with a wide range of learning experiences through visits and a range of people and organisations who visit the school and share their skills with pupils. As a result of this emphasis, pupils feel proud of their multicultural identities and are more inclined to explore other cultures openly and spontaneously. Resources and displays strongly reflect pupils' diverse backgrounds and create a positive learning environment. This is further enhanced by the staff's own diverse cultural backgrounds. The school uses many innovative approaches to ensure that pupils draw maximum benefit from their time in school even when they are on leave for long holidays. A good example of this innovation is the opportunity for pupils to use cameras provided by the school to record their experiences and share them with their peers when they come back.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. A particular strength in the provision is the extent to which the development of language and communication underpins much of the school's work. Pupils are often partnered with someone who will enhance their learning and there are many opportunities for discussion in pairs and in groups. These opportunities are especially helpful for pupils with special educational needs to access various topics within the curriculum. There are many special groupings within the school for pupils who have difficulties with different aspects of literacy.

Care guidance and support

Pupils feel valued because their relationships with staff are excellent and provision for their care and welfare is very good. Procedures for health and safety are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support for vulnerable pupils is excellent.
- Excellent relationships between adults and pupils ensure that pupils have support when they need it.
- Very good induction arrangements for pupils helps them to settle in well.
- Assessment procedures are not always used effectively to ensure that all pupils have good guidance about their academic progress and personal development.
- Not all staff are sufficiently aware of child protection issues.

- Pupils have good opportunities to express their views about the school.

Commentary

24. The school has a strong commitment to the care of each child and has introduced several strategies to ensure that pupils have the best support they can. In particular the work of the 'reach out' worker with emotionally and socially vulnerable pupils is of very high quality and helps pupils to remain in school, to gain some self-esteem and to build relationships with other pupils. The trusting relationships between the 'reach out' worker and the pupils she supports are fundamental to the success of her work and are characteristic of the excellent relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school. Parents value the care the school gives to their children and the secure and friendly environment for learning.
25. Good provision is made for the welfare of pupils with special educational needs and they are supported particularly well in the preparation for the transfer to secondary school. The school also provides well for pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue. They are the largest group of pupils in the school and they have very good support from specialist language development teachers as well as their class teachers and learning support assistants. The school is developing a range of teaching strategies which help pupils who are not confident users of English to achieve well.
26. Guidance for pupils through assessment of their progress is a major priority of the school but is not yet consistent. Pupils know what they must do to improve in English but not always in other subjects. However, plans for the introduction of assessment procedures for all subjects are at an advanced stage are being rapidly introduced, and assessment is satisfactory overall. Pupils who learn in English as an additional language are assessed effectively and have good guidance about what to do next. Assessment is also used well in the nursery and reception class to respond to individual needs. Pupils' personal development is not monitored consistently throughout the school but there is very good practice in the use of pastoral support plans for some individual pupils.
27. Many pupils join the school during the year and they settle in well because class teachers are well aware of their needs, they have good support from external agencies and everyone in the school community makes them welcome. There are also good arrangements for children to make a good start when they enter the Nursery. The good links between home and school and rapid familiarity with school routines helps children to feel confident and happy and they soon learn to listen carefully and follow instructions.
28. Provision for child protection is good. Procedures are in line with local requirements but there are not enough opportunities for all staff to have up to date training on child protection issues. Good provision for health education, including sex education and drugs awareness gives pupils opportunities to learn how to protect themselves. The school's good practice has resulted in the achievement of the Healthy Schools Silver Award. Very good assessments of risk are made for educational visits outside school.
29. The school council is effective in involving pupils in the life of the school and in giving pupils good opportunities to express their views. Members of the council have organised a campaign to improve problems of litter and have promoted the concept of healthy eating. Pupils are keen to help to improve the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is good and contributes to pupils' good achievement. Good links with the community extend and enrich pupils' experience.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with parents of children in the nursery help them to support their children well.
- Parents have good information about how their children are getting on.
- Parents feel comfortable approaching the school and are welcomed.
- Parents have some very good opportunities to be involved in the life of the school.
- Good links with the community and with other schools benefit pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to share and experience music within the community.

Commentary

30. The school's partnership with parents is good and is improving in its effectiveness. The school monitors the impact of links between home and school, it has evidence that more parents are becoming actively involved in their child's learning through more involvement in homework, through: improved attendance and punctuality, and an increasing interest in school activities. Examples of this interest are in the high number of parents who contributed their views to the inspection. Sixty-six per cent of all parents returned questionnaires and fifty- three parents attended the pre-inspection meeting.
31. Parents have good information about what their child will learn and about their progress. They have good opportunities to see class teachers and to discuss their child's learning and they have many opportunities to share assemblies, special events and visits out of school. This good practice helps parents to support their child at home and this contributes well to pupils' achievement.
32. Parents value the welcoming atmosphere in the school and feel confident to ask questions and share their concerns. As there are twenty-six languages spoken by parents, communication with pupils' families is sometimes a challenge but the school is very good at overcoming difficulties and ways are found to ensure that all parents can access the information they need. Good support is given to parents of pupils who join the school during the year and this helps pupils to settle in well. The majority of these pupils learn in English as an additional language. Parents of pupils who enter the nursery are visited at home before their child starts school and have very good opportunities for informal contact with staff. Information about what children are learning is shared very effectively and parents are encouraged to join in many activities. This helps them to understand how young children learn and to use similar activities at home. Close contact with parents of pupils with special educational needs contributes to their good achievement.
33. The Active Learning Library is an excellent resource for parents and is very well used to encourage parents to be interested in what their children are reading and to read with them at home. There are other very good initiatives to help parents gain the confidence

to share activities with their children and the reach out worker provides an invaluable link between home and school.

34. The school arranges for many visitors from the community to talk to pupils and to work with them and this gives pupils a perspective of life beyond the school. Pupils have gained from the experience of museum staff and from members of Reading Football Club and from a team who work with Year 6 pupils supporting their personal development. Volunteers from the community help pupils to gain self-esteem through an after school club which provides well planned activities and gives very good support. The school also helps pupils to contribute to the life of the community by performing at an annual dance festival and singing at the local community centre at Christmas. Further opportunities are needed for pupils to gain experience of making music through extending links with the wider community. Parents of pupils with special educational needs who are at the 'school action plus' stage or have a statement of educational provision are given the opportunity to have consultations with teachers on three consultation evenings.
35. Good links with local schools help pupils to develop skills in sport and to improve their learning, for example in mathematics. The good partnership with secondary schools helps pupils to transfer smoothly by developing a thorough programme for pupils to prepare for the transition and by developing continuity in teaching in English and mathematics between Year 6 and Year 7.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Leadership of other key staff is very good. The effectiveness of management is very good and governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's sense of purpose and clarity of vision and leadership of the curriculum and teaching are excellent.
 - The extent to which leaders have created effective teams is excellent.
 - The continuing professional development of staff is excellent.
 - The contribution made to the leadership of the school and the effectiveness of management by other key staff is very good.
36. The headteacher has an excellent grasp of what she needs to do to improve the performance of the school and has used her outstanding leadership qualities to take the school through a time of considerable difficulties and set it on a course for continuous improvement. All the measures taken to secure a better quality of teaching, higher achievement, excellent relationships and the inclusion of all pupils have been informed by the headteacher's knowledge of the latest educational research and proven successful strategies. The head teacher's vision for the school is visually represented by the 'tree of life' symbol which, because it has meaning for many different cultures and view points is beginning to achieve its goal of including everyone in the schools' mission to succeed, despite the many challenges it faces.
 37. The school has employed excellent recruitment and strategies so that the considerable instability of the teaching staff inherited by the headteacher has been completely reversed to the extent that only one teacher is leaving at the end of the year. A new

leadership team has been formed which represents every part of this large school, which together with the excellent communication systems ensures that all staff know what they are working towards. The effectiveness of the teams within the school is further enhanced by the creation of 'leading teacher' posts and appropriate delegation of responsibilities to team leaders. The school is very good at evaluating its own performance. Key staff have been involved in a relentless monitoring programme, centred mainly on the core subjects of English and mathematics and the collection of data about pupils' performance has been rigorous. However, this does not yet extend to other subjects but there is a measured planned approach to developing assessment procedures. The information from these processes has been used to very effectively tackle weaknesses within teaching and learning and is continuing to be used to bring about further improvements. It is especially used very effectively to address the underachievement of some white and Pakistani origin pupils and their standards have risen recently. There is an active programme to use the successful strategies developed in literacy and numeracy to improve teaching and learning within other subjects.

38. The effective deployment strategies, combined with the headteacher's inspirational leadership have resulted in every member of staff being actively involved in professional development. Key staff take part in the government's 'primary leadership programme', and new teachers are supported by more experienced colleagues. The headteacher is very mindful of the workload of staff and has used available funding wisely to give teachers some release time for planning and other duties. Induction arrangements within this culture of development are very good.
39. The headteacher's overall strategic leadership for pupils with special educational needs is very good and she is supported by an effective coordinator and support team. The team have devised a system of 'mapping' the support for pupils with special educational needs, which is being used as an exemplar for other schools in the local education authority. The coordinator has worked effectively to significantly increase the number of pupils with a formal statement and to secure the appropriate provision. The present arrangements do not allow sufficient time for the coordinator to monitor closely the overall provision for special educational needs but further developments in this area are planned.
40. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is effectively targeted and supplemented through the school's own budget to provide for specialist staffing and other resources. The school has very thorough and detailed procedures for monitoring and analysing pupils' progress in English and mathematics. This is part of a considered strategy to make assessment as effective as possible and to be introduced across the curriculum. It is still at the relative early stages of implementation and assessment is not embedded in all subjects. Assessment procedures for pupils who do not speak English as their mother tongue, developed by the headteacher are very effective and used effectively to respond to their needs. The English coordinator provides very good leadership and is very effectively supported by senior managers. The headteacher's exceptional knowledge of issues in this multi-ethnic situation and excellent leadership skills are having a clear and very positive impact on pupils' achievement and very recently on standards. Finance is well managed and the school development plan is carefully costed. The principles of best value are used in the purchase of goods and services and the large balance carried forward is historical and due to changes of staff salaries. Funds are ear marked for further curriculum and staff development.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,240,049
Total expenditure	1,188,763
Expenditure per pupil	2,830

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	100,243
Balance carried forward to the next	162,455

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Most children enter the Foundation Stage at the age of three, joining one of the part-time nursery classes. They enter a bright and stimulating environment, are made welcome and are given strong and consistent support by the nursery staff. Most of the staff are multi-lingual, speaking several community languages. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children until they have settled in. This encourages the children and helps to foster the very good links the staff have with parents and the community. Provision is good, overall, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, provision is better for nursery than reception children. Reception children do not have ready access to outside areas and work largely in rather cramped classrooms. Very good use, however, is made of the resources and accommodation available and reception teachers regularly share nursery accommodation for part of the day.

The vast majority of children enter with little or no English and the school's assessments show that most are well below expectations particularly in English language development and personal, social and emotional development. Mathematical, physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world are also well below expectations. In the nursery and reception classes there is a good system of assessment of the individual child's progress. This is regularly shared with parents. Informative records are kept. The new Lead Foundation Professional in the nursery is developing a particularly good way of demonstrating to parents the educational value of play, through photographs of children engaged in particular activities. Collections of photographs of each child in action are likely to be interesting to their parents and helpful as a basis for regular discussions with staff.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, and frequently very good. As a result, children make good progress and, even though few of them will reach all of the early learning goals by the time they move to Year 1, they achieve satisfactorily.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- The teaching is very good.
- Teaching assistants give very good support.

Commentary

41. Children in the nursery take turns and share equipment, learning to work together and make choices. They work well as part of a group and independently. They are eager to explore new learning and practise new skills, such as helping to build a wall. They enter the classroom very readily at the beginning of the morning or afternoon. They settle quickly for the early activities and for the register to be taken. In reception, children respond sensibly to the carefully established classroom routines. They work comfortably

in whole-class sessions and most can organise themselves well to work as a group. They develop excellent relationships with other children and with the many adults who work with them.

42. Children's personal, social and emotional development is a strong focus because of the wide-ranging backgrounds and needs of the children. Some have settled home backgrounds; others are very new in this country and some have had traumatic experiences. Often they make very good progress because the adults are consistent in their approach and in their expectations and achieve well. Staff are very good role models in the way they speak calmly and politely to the children and to one another. Children are helped to feel secure. There is very good team work amongst the adults in the nursery and reception classes.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve satisfactorily.
- The teaching is good.
- Particularly good use is made of the community language skills of the teaching assistants.
- Excessively loud background music does not assist pupils' listening skills.

Commentary

43. Although few children will reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception, the majority of children make good progress in their understanding of English and some are beginning to speak clearly, read and write. In the Nursery, a good selection of books is invitingly displayed and children settle to look at them when they come into class in the morning and the afternoon. They understand that print carries a meaning and, in English, it moves from left to right. They listen carefully to the repetitive stories and join in with pleasure. Most are attentive, copy sounds and words and sometimes show their understanding by trying to respond in English or by using actions. Many follow very simple instructions, relying heavily upon visual or contextual clues. The children in reception listen carefully and, while few answer fluently in English, many show, by responding appropriately to instructions, that they understand more English than they speak. In their reading development, about half recognise a good number of basic words and a few are beginning to read and understand small books. In their writing, some children produce clearly formed letters in a very simple sentence, copy words and write some from memory. Most children are learning that English letters usually have a particular sound and some can build words. Overall, they are achieving satisfactorily.
44. The teaching is good and is enhanced by the very good support of the multi-lingual assistants. Attractive books and children's work around encourages them. Photographs show that when a new story is being told to the children, the staff act it out so that all enjoy it and understand. In both the nursery and reception, teachers speak clearly so that the children have the best chance of understanding and learning English. When the background music, being played in the nursery is too loud, though, it can detract from this.

Mathematical development

The provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve satisfactorily, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of counting and numbers.

Commentary

45. Children in the nursery enjoy the rhymes which help them count and very readily help their teachers to do the Register by counting how many are present; counting around the circle. In a selection of activities, some seen in class and others in photographs, children sort and match objects and collect a set of 'yellow things'. In the outside area, those on the bikes learn to be aware of space as they speed around. In a delightful session, the youngest children learned colours and guessed which of two coloured eggs would be heavier. They watched carefully as the teacher placed them on a balance and clapped with pleasure when they had guessed correctly. In Reception children passed a toy around a circle and correctly added on one each time up to 21. Some showed they could then count backwards. All eagerly joined in counting to 20 in twos. With support from adults, they successfully tackled the problem of deciding how many different kinds of sandwiches they could make from a limited number of ingredients. Photographs show children drawing around other class members, looking at the figure shapes and measuring.
46. Teachers plan and organise activities well and there are good links between one area of learning and another. Because of this the children achieve satisfactorily, even though many do not reach this early learning goal. They helped one another in discussions and readily took turns to write down the combinations of sandwiches made, using the initial letters of the English words.

Knowledge and understanding of the World

The provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide an interesting curriculum where the children have a broad range of experiences.
- The children achieve well in this wide-ranging area of their learning.
- The teaching is very good.

Commentary

47. In the Nursery, children learn about the properties of different materials. One group mixed plaster of Paris, carefully ladling spoonfuls of water and noting changes while, outside, groups of interested 'apprentices' wearing their own hard hats watched a qualified bricklayer mixing cement. They observed the technique carefully and then tried it out successfully for themselves, taking instructions from the bricklayer who spoke to them in English and in several community languages. They later made their own bricks to incorporate into the garden wall which was being constructed. On the first day of the

inspection week, the nursery and reception children enjoyed a day in Legoland. The visit was used well as the basis for much discussion and other work in the classroom. In Reception, teachers had set up a 'ticket office' and this provided a good opportunity for the children to take on different roles and re-enact what they had seen the previous day. Children use computers competently and photographs show that the Reception children have studied caterpillars and have seen how they develop into butterflies. They have been able to look closely at owls which were brought on a visit from the Hydestile Wildlife Hospital. Nursery and Reception children enjoy the different religious festivals and, in a very good discussion in Reception, some children carefully explained that their religion allowed them to eat some foods and not others.

48. The children make good progress in this wide-ranging area of their work. Not everyone will attain this entire early learning goal; especially as some children have entered the school part way through the Foundation Stage and have been in school for only a short time. Nevertheless, they achieve well because teachers provide interesting learning experiences for them.

Physical development

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is satisfactorily.
- The activities provided are effective in developing physical skills.
- Provision is better in the nursery than reception because nursery has more flexible accommodation.

Commentary

49. Children are making good progress in the development of fine motor skills, which are seen when children use pencils, paint brushes and other fine tools. In both the nursery and reception, the skill of using pencils is well taught and most children are developing suitable control. In the Nursery, children show they climb and handle large objects and their gross motor skills are developing well. The children, who helped to mix cement, showed they could manage the technique of handling a trowel. When throwing plastic bags of water at a wall, the group used good power and shoulder action. When Reception children had a physical education lesson in the hall, the teacher's very good management skills and pleasant manner kept the lesson brisk and ensured that children worked hard as they marched and moved around the hall in different ways.
50. Many children will reach this early learning goal. Nursery activities show a good use of community contacts to make learning interesting for the children. In both nursery and reception, good organisation and management makes the best use of accommodation available.

Creative development

Too little work was observed or was available for study and so this area of work was not inspected. Displays in the classrooms are bright and stimulating and contribute to children's learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led and managed.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result pupils achieve well.
- Speaking and listening skills are effectively developed in the subject and across the curriculum.
- Assessment procedures are thorough and detailed and performance data is effectively used to intervene and support pupils.
- The promotion of literacy skills other than speaking and listening in other subjects is not systematically planned and evaluated.

Commentary

51. Although overall standards in English are below those found nationally by the end of Year 2 and 6, given their starting point, the majority of pupils including those with special educational needs, those who do not speak English as their mother tongue and those from ethnic minority backgrounds make good progress by Year 6. This is due to good teaching and the effective tracking of pupils' progress to ensure that they are doing as well as they can. Very effective intervention strategies, including targeted support for those with English as an additional language, additional literacy support and the use of the Education Action Zone resources are being effectively deployed to raise pupils' achievement. These especially address the needs of those white and Pakistani origin pupils who have been identified by the school as underachieving and their standards have recently improved significantly.
52. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Although many pupils' speaking is constrained by a limited vocabulary, they contribute well when discussing texts and when presenting their work at the end of lessons. This is because speaking is well promoted both in English and in the rest of the curriculum, often through the frequent use of partner talk and modelling by teachers. This approach supports their language development and often encourages more pupils to contribute to discussion and participate more actively in lessons. The introduction of thinking skills and the frequent use of talk as a means of learning is clearly making a difference in terms of pupils' increasing confidence. Pupils progress well in their reading. From a very low starting point most develop strategies for reading unfamiliar words and use the context to guess meaning. More able pupils express clear preferences with many using public libraries. The majority of pupils show good skills in finding information and many older pupils use books and the Internet to develop their research skills. Guided reading is used well and is effectively assessed against clear objectives with good diagnostic information being used to set targets for improvement. The attractive school libraries and their use in encouraging pupils to read have a positive impact on the progress they make. From a start well below expectations, pupils make good progress in writing by Year 6. This is largely due to the effective approach to rehearsing this skill with teachers, carefully guiding pupils, and demonstrating this skill in shared writing. However, many pupils do

not use joined handwriting even by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and although they often have standards that are well below average, they progress well.

53. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of English, often reflected in the range of methods used. The use of questioning and prompting, combined with effective demonstrations and the skilful rehearsal of language enable pupils to practice it in a meaningful context. Lessons are often effectively structured with pupils intensively listening at the beginning and gradually moving on to guided practice and more open ended tasks where they apply the skills rehearsed during the introduction. Marking has improved and gives pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing and what they have to do to improve. In the best practice, improvements needed are expressed as targets which are then checked in subsequent work. Where teaching was occasionally less effective, this was mainly due to lessons finishing without an explicit opportunity to assess learning and the tendency of some teachers to choose volunteers to answer questions while those who are reluctant responders are not actively involved. ICT tools like electronic white boards are used effectively to enhance teaching and learning.
54. The subject is very well led and managed. Careful monitoring and high expectations by the headteacher and the subject leader are having a positive impact across the school. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted satisfactorily in other subjects with some good examples in history and geography with pupils for instance using their trips and visits to report on the experience or when interviewing adults. Additional opportunities like 'Learning through Action' are effectively used to extend pupils speaking and drama skills. However in a number of subjects, opportunities to extend literacy skills are not planned systematically.

MATHEMATICS

The provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Leadership of the subject is very good.
- Overall standards are below the national average.

Commentary

56. Overall, standards in mathematics has been affected by a number of important factors:
- The high numbers of pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue.
 - The continual changes in the school population.
 - The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs depresses standard in the national tests.
 - Inconsistency in the quality of teaching in the past.

57. From starting point well below expectations pupils achieve well. Although standards by Year 2 are below average they have improved significantly from last year and evidence from work seen in Year 1 indicates that standards are rising. The factors affecting standards have had more impact on pupils in Year 6. Although they progress well the majority do not reach the expected standards by Year 6 and overall standards are below average.
58. The quality of teaching is good overall and improving. This is a significant improvement from the time of the previous inspection. The management of pupils is good in all lessons and as a result pupils behaved well and are attentive. In the better lessons teachers have high expectation of their pupils and use effective methods to engage pupils' interest. A particular strength of these lessons is the opportunity given to promote pupils' learning through discussion. In particular teachers are developing the learning well of some pupils of white and Pakistani origin that have been identified by the school as underachieving and there has been significant recent improvement. An outstanding example of this was observed in one excellent lesson when a very skilled teacher encouraged pupils to solve challenging problems through discussion and collaborative work. This approach helps all pupils and is particularly effective for those who do not speak English as their mother tongue. These pupils were very well supported in some lessons by bilingual classroom assistants and made good progress. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported in most lessons and also progressed well.
59. Teachers take care to try to match learning tasks to pupils' abilities in most lessons. Occasionally, the more capable pupils are given extra work if they finish rather than being challenged at a higher level immediately. Analysis of pupils' work also shows that sometimes pupils are tackling the same work, and on these occasions higher attainers are not always challenged. In addition to the well developed opportunities for discussion other strategies are being effectively developed. These include a system of group target setting to ensure that pupils are challenged at the right level. Together with an improvement in marking, these clearly show pupils what they have to do to improve and these assessment procedures are effective.
60. Since the last inspection the subject leader has worked tirelessly with excellent support from the headteacher to improve provision for the subject providing very good leadership and management. There has been a relentless drive for improved achievement through a continual programme of monitoring which is starting to show results especially with the underachieving groups identified by the school. The subject leader and the local education authority consultant have monitored lessons and given teachers points for improvement. Pupils' performance throughout the school has been tracked constantly and targets set for improvements. Standards have also been monitored by analysing pupils' work. Training programmes have been arranged to improve teaching in the subject. The full effects of the improvements achieved in lessons have understandably not yet been reflected in the national test results. However the much-improved teaching has secured good achievement for all pupils and inspection evidence shows that standards within year groups are rising. Improvement from the time of the last inspection has been very good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

This is a satisfactory part of the provision. Full advantage has not yet been taken of the opportunities available for the use and application of mathematics in other subjects. However the use of mathematics in combination with ICT is good when pupils produce graphs for example or use spreadsheets on the computers.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vision of leadership to increase teachers' awareness of strategies to promote higher standards and raise achievement further.
- Teachers good use a range of methods to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Standards are below average by Year 2 and 6, but pupils achieve satisfactorily overall from a very low starting point.
- Assessment is inconsistent and sometime teachers do not always tell pupils what they have to do to improve their own work.

Commentary

61. Teacher assessments by Year 2 are particularly low but there are indications of improvement in lessons. By the end of Year 6, standards remain below average despite an overall improvement from 2003 to 2004 in the national tests. However, this represents good overall achievement as pupils start school with standards that are well below average.
62. Teaching is good overall. The good or very good lessons seen are typified by high expectations of behaviour and achievement, planned questioning to develop pupils' speaking and listening, a good pace, and purposeful use of teaching assistants. These strategies give appropriate support to all pupils, whatever their level of ability or English acquisition. They tackle the underachievement of a group of white and Pakistani origin pupils identified by the school and there has been a significant recent improvement in standards. For example, the good teaching in a mixed Year 3/4 class enabled the pupils to understand the meanings of three new key words, opaque, translucent and transparent, and plan their own investigation. In weaker lessons, opportunities to enable these skills to be developed were missed; consequently pupils' learning was less directed and their progress was slower.
63. The school's new assessment policy has not been fully implemented in science as priority has been developing procedures in English. However, the implementation of procedures is improvising and is satisfactory overall. An examination of pupils' books suggests that tasks are not always matched to their needs, especially in classes where there are mixed age groups. Although there are some good examples of marking where teachers help pupils to improve their work, by posing questions and encouraging a written response, again this is not consistent. However, the school has detailed and measured plans to implement these procedures and assessment is satisfactory overall. Pupils do not have individual targets to work towards to give them a better understanding of their own learning and there is no systematic system for teachers' to assess pupils understanding at the end of lesson in order to inform planning for the next one.

64. The recently appointed co-ordinators have made a good start in identifying where further improvements can be made in order to raise standards and are beginning to have an effective impact, they provide good leadership and management overall. The school has employed an external science specialist consultant to provide training for teachers and advise in planning, as well as developing leadership skills for the coordinators. By using the information from monitoring, they have ensured that all topics taught throughout the school have sufficient and suitable resources. Areas for future development have also been highlighted. These are: to share the existing good practice in developing scientific vocabulary; to use probing questioning to improve pupils' understanding, and to use talking partners to improve speaking and listening skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision in ICT is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are excellent.
- Subject leadership is very good.
- Pupils achieve well overall.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is good.

Commentary

65. Pupils progress well throughout the school. From observing pupils at work, talking to them about their work and from their demonstrations using computers it is clear that by both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils reach standards that broadly match expectations. Overall improvement from the time of the last inspection has been good.
66. ICT is one of the key elements of the school plans for improvement and inspired by the determination and vision of the headteacher the school has continued its improvement in the provision of ICT facilities. The ICT development manager has used a great deal of energy and expertise to completely remodel the computer facilities. There are now three computer suites with enough computers in each to teach a whole class which ensures that all pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills. Pupils and staff alike access their work from any computer in the school and the school has its own 'intranet' (internal network) which greatly enhances communication and efficiency. It is particularly effective at engaging groups of pupils from Pakistani and white origin that have been identified by the school as underachieving, many succeed well in this subject.
67. The subject leader has worked very well with her team (which includes an ICT coach who assists teachers and pupils in classes) to ensure that both hardware and software provide the best curriculum opportunities for pupils and ensure that the resources enable pupils to make progress in all of their skills. A new assessment system has been developed as part of a whole school approach; it is detailed and is part of the school's measured introduction of these procedures. Although not fully embedded, it is satisfactory overall.
68. The overall quality of teaching is good and teachers' good subject knowledge contributes to effectiveness of pupils' learning. The use of interactive white boards has become an

integral part of teaching. Besides adding to the effectiveness of teaching in many subjects, these boards demonstrate to pupils the effective application of technology. Pupils are confident in lessons in the computer suites, they concentrate and are productive and the support given by the ICT coach is very good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

This is strength in the provision. Pupils of all ages use the Internet and the intranet to gather information and the older pupils follow their own lines of research. Pupils of all ages produce different types of graphs and the older pupils use spreadsheets in mathematics. Years 5 and 6 pupils produce multi-media presentations in subjects such as religious education and produce cause and effect diagrams in geography. However the opportunities provided by linking science and ICT are not fully explored.

HUMANITIES

History

69. It is not possible to make a complete judgment on the provision in history as only a few lessons were seen only in Years 1 and 2 and work and displays were analysed. These indicate that pupils are attaining the standards expected by Year 2 and Year 6, and this is an improvement from the previous inspection. Pupils follow an interesting programme of work which allows them to learn about different periods of history and compare and contrast how the Romans and Saxons lived and how Victorians lived compared with people today. Year 2 pupils were interested to learn about the Great Fire of London in 1666 and showed they could sequence events properly. Good use is made of the local area as Year 5 and 6 pupils travelled to a local village to study the church and houses from different periods. The quality of teaching ranged from good to satisfactory and was good overall. Teachers make good use of resources available to make the work interesting for their pupils.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' understanding and use of geographical vocabulary is being well developed.
- The use of ICT is helping to improve standards in lessons.
- Development of pupils' skills is not systematically planned.
- Higher attainers, especially younger pupils are insufficiently challenged.

Commentary

70. Judgements are based on observing three lessons, looking at pupils' work in books and in displays around the school, and discussion with the subject coordinator. Work in pupils' books seen during the inspection indicates that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is below expectations. Most pupils express views about the traffic flow in the road outside the school and more able pupils are beginning to explain why places have particular features and progress satisfactorily, overall this represents broadly satisfactory achievement as pupils start school with standards that are well below average.

71. By the end of Year 6, pupils know how to use the Internet to access information about mountain ranges to produce maps to compare the different seasonal conditions found. In some of the work seen, the tasks set are pitched at an average ability level and there is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils because of this. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. In a very good Year 6 lesson the class teacher's knowledge of the subject and skilled use of ICT enabled all pupils to explain the arguments for and against tourism in a mountainous area. In a Year 3/4 class the teacher made very good use of targeted questioning to develop the speaking and listening skills of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. Pupils are encouraged to know and understand the relevant vocabulary and also to use graphs to record data. Classroom displays reinforce the learning objectives of the topics being studied and stimulate interest, but there is very little pupils' work on display so opportunities to celebrate achievement are missed. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length.
72. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator has very clear plans to improve the teaching and learning in geography and to plan more opportunities for pupils to use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in their work. There has been insufficient time for her to implement her ideas but a good start has been made. An action plan for further improvement and monitoring of the subject has been created. The school has made satisfactory progress in geography since the last inspection.

Religious education

The provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attitude of older pupils towards the subject is very good.
- Achievement is good overall.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the development of spoken language.

Commentary

73. Pupils progress well and most have reached the expected standard in the locally agreed syllabus by Year 6. By Year 2 and they understand what is meant by the term religions and that people may have different beliefs and belong to different religions. However, discussion with pupils indicates that their knowledge and understanding is below expectations. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 talk freely and enthusiastically about religious education and say that they are very keen to learn about different religions and make good progress. The diverse religious and cultural backgrounds that pupils come from adds to pupils' overall experience of a variety of religions and enables them to make comparisons. Pupils respect the different beliefs of their friends and say that contributions from their peers 'adds interest to the lessons'. They make good overall achievement from a very low base.
74. The quality of teaching in lessons ranged from good to very good. Other inspection evidence including samples of work and discussion with pupils indicates that the quality of teaching is consistently good overall and often very good.

75. Teachers do not place a great deal of emphasis upon recorded work so that opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and other recording skills in the subject are missed. However, the development of speaking and listening skills in meaningful classroom discussions and other activities is a strength and develops pupils' understanding effectively. In one very well taught lesson pupils were highly motivated to make a board game based on the creation stories of different religions. In conversation older pupils were very articulate when sharing their knowledge and understanding as well as being delightfully open and honest.
76. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The coordinator has other responsibilities and her efforts have been concentrated on other school priorities. However improvement from the time of the last inspection is good. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development including their spiritual awareness and understanding of other cultures.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

77. Only two lessons were seen in art and design. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in these subjects. Evidence from displays and a brief discussion with the teachers indicate that standards match what is expected by the end of Year 2 and 6. and this represents a good improvement. The majority of pupils have a good range of opportunities to use a variety of art materials and to explore different aspects of art including drawing, painting, photography and three dimensional work.
78. Teaching is good overall, in lessons pupils are effectively enabled to draw on their previous learning, for instance when designing a sculpture or in using their sketchbooks to draw from observation. They are given clear guidance and good demonstration is used to model the work. Effective questioning is used to enable pupils to note specific features like shape and different shadings of light and dark. The teaching assistant who runs a successful art and design club makes a valuable contribution to the teaching in Year 3/4 with positive impact on pupils' learning. Good use is made of evaluation as pupils in Year 6 discuss their work in pairs and with the rest of the class.
79. Pupils use their sketch books well and these are appropriately annotated and assessed by teachers. Their work is enhanced through the use of ICT with effective use of the Internet to study the work of particular artists and consider specific techniques. Since the last inspection, more emphasis has been put on making the curriculum more creative with projects linked to themes like healthy eating and the environment resulting in pupils' work being exhibited outside the school. Pupils in Year 5/6 have successfully worked with a professional photographer and have learnt how to process pictures, using ICT.

Design and technology

80. There is too little information to make a judgement about the quality of provision, teaching and learning, standards and achievement. One lesson was seen during the inspection. From this, and the portfolio of work, with photographic evidence collected by the subject coordinator, the range of work covers the requirements of the National Curriculum at least satisfactorily. In the very well taught lesson seen in Year 1 after a session of 'brain gym' which focused pupils' attention, they designed a fruit salad. Pupils progressed well and

were able to name the fruits shown. There were good opportunities for language development pupils sounding out words sometimes with the effective help of two bilingual assistants. The very good teaching engaged pupils very well and encouraged them to concentrate on the task so that they learned very well during the lesson.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards match expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well.
- Class teaching is good.
- There is no provision for pupils to make music outside of class lessons.

Commentary

81. Standards match expectations and this echoes the judgement made during the previous inspection. Both boys and girls achieve satisfactorily. In lessons, most pupils sing tunefully and use their voices with good control, both when they sing in unison and when they sing solo. Teachers themselves sing confidently and lead their classes well when encouraging pupils to pitch their voices at low, high and medium levels. Teachers have clearly benefited from the in-service training they have received over the past two years and are confident in planning and delivering their lessons. This confidence is transmitted to the pupils and both boys and girls are very ready to sing solo pieces in 'call and response' songs and to use their voices in different ways.
82. In a well taught Year 2 lesson, pupils learned the difference between a steady pulse and a rhythm, beating them out by clapping their hands and patting their legs. A year 5/6 class, who already understood 'tempo' learned about 'dynamics' as they sang from their repertoire of songs, with varied pitch, tempo and loud or soft tones. Good use is made of ICT and pupils enjoy composing music and playing it back using computers. Pupils clearly enjoy their music lessons, but unlike physical education, the school has not fully used this as a technique to develop pupils personally and their confidence and self-esteem. Especially the group of pupils identified as underachieving by the school. For example, by giving them the opportunity to sing in a school choir or to learn to play musical instruments as part of their musical experience. The subject is well led and managed.

Physical education

The provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school employs a fitness coach to raise pupils' personal standards of fitness and coordination a very effective addition to the staff.
- Strong links with sports colleges has helped develop overall provision very effectively.

- The very strong curriculum leadership has impacted on teachers' subject knowledge and improved the quality of teaching.

Commentary

83. Pupils regardless of background achieve well in this subject because of the good teaching overall. Standards match those expected for their age by Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the previous inspection. The school has very effectively used the resources at its disposal to develop pupils' skills. The understanding that physical education is a good mechanism for developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem as well as their physical development has led to this very good provision. In particular the group of white and Pakistani pupils identified by the school as underachieving benefit from this as they can often achieve as well as their peers in physical education. It is part of the school's innovative curriculum. The use of a fitness coach for example has not only raised pupils' fitness and sporting levels but also teachers subject knowledge and improved the curriculum both during and outside of school hours.
84. Sports coaches provided by the Educational Action Zone also play their part, coaching particular sporting skills. For example, during the inspection they were effectively teaching the triple jump, a complex series of movements which effectively developed pupils' co-ordination. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have improved their subject knowledge through having many role models in the school and this good teaching makes a strong contribution not only to the standards pupils achieve but to their personal development. These very good arrangements also provide for those pupils who have gifts or talents for example, in football to receive extra coaching. The subject is well managed and forms one of the planks of the school's creative and innovative curriculum and enabled it to gain the Healthy School's Award in 2003.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

85. The school's strong ethos based on a concept called the 'Tree of Life' encourages pupils to be reflective and care for others. This was evident throughout the school which is a harmonious place in which pupils who are ethnically diverse are fully integrated and fully included in the life of the school. There is no hint of racial tension. The good curriculum which is creative and innovative aims at an individualised approach to pupils so that all regardless of background are given every opportunity to succeed. The planned programme covers the danger of drugs and provides a sensitive approach to sex and relationships education and meets statutory requirements. The school council give pupils a real say in helping to develop the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
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	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	1
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).