

INSPECTION REPORT

Courtwood Primary School

Addington, Croydon

LEA area: Croydon

Unique reference number: 101774

Headteacher: Mrs Meg Gibbons

Lead inspector: Robert Helliwell

Dates of inspection: 26–28 January 2004

Inspection number: 260499

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Courtwood Primary School
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4–11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 205

School address: Courtwood Lane
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Croydon
Surrey
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Jane McAra

Date of previous inspection: 27 September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Courtwood Primary School caters for 205 pupils between the ages of four and 11 years and is of average size for its type. Children begin school in September after they have become four years old. They have a normal range of skills and understanding for pupils of this age. The school is nearly full and over-subscribed for entry in 2003. Most pupils live in the area and remain here from joining to leaving at 11 years of age. Most homes are owner-occupied, with a slight increase noted in recent years in homes rented from housing associations. About eight per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, below the average proportion, and a few speak English as an additional language. Eighty-four per cent of pupils are of white, British origin: the remainder comprise a few pupils each from several minority ethnic groups such as British Asian or British Black backgrounds. There are three asylum seekers. About ten per cent of pupils are registered as having special educational needs, fewer than the average number for a school of this size. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need, with speech, language and communication learning difficulties. The school won an achievement award for improvement in 2003.

There is a still the regular turnover of staff that was reported at the previous inspection. Five teachers left during the past two years. The school attributes this to teachers' desire for the better pay prospects of nearby inner London schools and the limits to promotion in an average size school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
5535	Robert Helliwell	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Physical education English as an additional language
9092	Ron Elam	Lay inspector	
32142	Beryl Richmond	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education Special educational needs
20963	Judy Keiner	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Foundation Stage

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	8
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is effective and gives satisfactory value for money. After much improvement in recent years the standards attained in national tests are now high at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are above average and pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. There has been much improvement in science and information and communication technology, but standards have slipped in some other subjects. The quality of education is sound. There is more good teaching than at the last inspection, especially in Years 1 and 2. Teaching assistants greatly augment the quality of teaching and learning and enhance achievement: in information and communication technology the impact is substantial. There is a positive ethos. Governors support the school well. Pupils and parents are greatly satisfied. Much of the school's energy, rightly, has been devoted to raising standards successfully in English and mathematics, science and information and communication technology. To some extent, provision in some foundation subjects¹ has suffered, partly also because of the rapid turnover of staff.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are good: there has been substantial improvement in the main aspects since the previous inspection.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2.
- Attainment in English and mathematics in national tests are well above averages at the end of Years 2 and 6: pupils' achievement compares very favourably with similar schools.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good. They get on well with each other and their personal development is good. The atmosphere is friendly and calm.
- The curriculum is enhanced well by a good range of other opportunities.
- Assessment in science, information and communication technology and most foundation subjects is unsatisfactory and is depressing standards.
- Provision in some foundation subjects is unsatisfactory and is affecting quality and standards.

Since the previous inspection, the school has worked well to overcome the challenges of teaching staff turnover and has become more effective, first to improve and then maintain the standards achieved in national tests, and to rectify weaknesses. Pupils' skills in science and information and communication technology have improved a lot: pupils are now achieving satisfactorily in these subjects. The continual assessment of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is now very good, and is particularly effective in writing. National strategies have been established for literacy and numeracy which have helped teaching to get better and it is being monitored much more rigorously. In part, this accounts for the improvements in English and mathematics and in the quality of teaching. Provision for the Foundation Stage is better. However, assessment in the foundation subjects has not improved – too much is unsatisfactory. Some standards in art and design at the end of both Years 2 and 6, and in history, design and technology, religious education and physical education at the end of Year 6, have suffered to dip below those expected.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	A	A	A
mathematics	B	A	A	A
science	D	D	B	B

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.

¹ Foundation subjects are: art, design and technology, information & communication technology, history, geography, religious education, physical education and music

Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in national tests are high at the end of Years 2 and 6 and compare very favourably with other schools. In recent years, the school's results have improved faster than national trends. Compared with similar schools, many pupils achieve very well. Children settle in well and make steady progress in Reception, where a good majority attains the goals they are expected to reach and a third exceeds them. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. They achieve well, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, and accomplish standards above average by the end of Year 2. Through Years 3 to 6 they maintain their achievement, and make steady progress to attain average standards overall, but still above average in English and mathematics. Boys tend to achieve better than girls. From Reception to Year 6, pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make good progress and catch up a lot. In other subjects, many pupils could achieve more. Although improving, standards are broadly average in science and information and communication technology at the end of Years 2 and 6. They are below those expected in art and design at the end of Years 2 and 6, and in design and technology, history, gymnastics and religious education by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' personal development is good. Development of spiritual aspects is good; moral and social development is very good, and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have positive attitudes. Usually, they work well in class and on the whole behave very well. Attendance is satisfactory, and the vast majority arrives on time. Attendance levels suffer because a number of parents insist on taking holidays during term-time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory on the whole and has improved since the previous inspection because much less is unsatisfactory and more is good. It is good in Years 1 and 2. Here pupils learn well. In Years 1 to 6, learning is enhanced substantially by high quality teaching assistance and special classes. Pupils of below average attainment, with special educational needs, asylum seekers and those with English as an additional language benefit in particular. Teaching is strongest in reading, writing and mathematics: in these subjects pupils learn most and make good progress. Assessment of English and mathematics is very good, but in most other subjects, including science and information and communication technology, it is unsatisfactory. This is affecting the quality of learning and suppressing standards.

The curriculum is satisfactory: it is suitably broad and much enriched by other opportunities such as clubs, trips and visitors. The extent of opportunity and overall quality are restricted by insufficient work and depth of study in some foundation subjects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. There are many more strengths than weaknesses. A firm and determined lead has resulted in much improved test results and effective management has met the challenge of staff turnover well. Good management of teaching assistants is having a substantial impact on pupils' achievement. The governing body is well organised and effective. It knows the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensures statutory requirements are met. However, provision in some foundation subjects is unsatisfactory. This has depressed some standards, reduced overall quality and narrowed the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school and particularly like the family atmosphere and good relationships. There was a very high response to the questionnaires and the support for the school was clear at the parents' meeting with inspectors. Parents very much appreciate the ethos of care and the good quality information they receive about their children's progress in the major aspects.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Improve assessment in science, information and communication technology, and also in most foundation subjects to aid a recovery in standards.
- Improve provision in some foundation subjects and so broaden and deepen the quality of education.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. After Reception, pupils begin Year 1 with average standards on the whole. Achievement in English and mathematics is good through Years 1 to 6 leading to high standards in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and boys tend to achieve better than girls. Pupils achieve better in national tests in the core subjects² than pupils in similar schools. In science, information and communication technology and in some foundation subjects³, standards should be higher: a number of pupils, particularly higher attainers, could achieve more.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in reading and writing at both key stages and work is above average.
- Pupils' mental facility in mathematics is good; a lot of pupils calculate fluently and accurately.
- In Reception, achievement in speaking and listening, personal and social development and physical development is good.
- Pupils' grasp of science and information and communication technology has much improved since the previous inspection; standards are now around those expected.
- Boys achieve better than girls in the core subjects, but both groups exceed the national average. Some work in art and design through Years 1 to 6, and design and technology, religious education and history and physical education through Years 3 to 6, are no longer at the standards expected.

Commentary

1. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has improved much since the previous inspection, and achievement in English, mathematics and science through Years 1 to 2 is now better than in similar schools. Most pupils enter Year 1 after satisfactory progress in Reception to attain satisfactory standards overall in the early learning goals⁴. Pupils achieve most in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Thereafter, standards of work show differences between Years 1 to 2 and Years 3 to 6. Generally, standards of work are somewhat lower than the high standards achieved in the tests. Work seen in mathematics and science is not as strong as in the national tests, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and progress is slower in these years. In the first two years, pupils' progress is more rapid than in the next four, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science because learning is stronger on the whole. In writing, pupils' achievements are much helped by a system to monitor progress using regular samples of pupils' work to compare with the standards they should achieve. Standards in mathematics are much helped by pupils' fluency in mental calculations.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.3 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.3 (16.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.8 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Presently, in Years 3 and 4, progress is steady: pupils maintain their achievement in these subjects. Progress is a little slower in Years 5 and 6; pupils do not learn so consistently well as in

² Core subjects are: English, mathematics and science.

³ See the summary for a list of these subjects.

⁴ Personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; creative development.

the previous years. This is particularly so in science because teaching is not as strong as in the other two core subjects, and does not profit from extra lessons. However, learning is gainfully boosted for many pupils through the backing of teaching assistants, special programmes and special classes. It is these promising contributions that enable most to make steady progress and achieve well in the national tests by the end of Year 6, particularly in English and mathematics. Targets have been revised upwards in recent years because they have been met or exceeded. Although science remains the weakest core subject, particularly through Years 3 to 6, standards have improved. Achievement in information and communication technology and science is satisfactory now – much better than when the school was last inspected. Standards in these subjects are around average by the end of Year 6. In religious education, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards are about average by the end of Year 2. Through Years 3 to 6 most pupils could do better and standards are below average by the end of Year 6.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (28.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.8 (28.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.6 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Pupils with special educational needs achieve much and catch up a lot. Although standards are below those expected for the pupils' ages they are satisfactory in relation to their identified needs and targets. These targets are clear, specific, achievable and suitably challenging. The pupils are helped by regular, good quality assistance from teaching aides in class and well-targeted teaching in special groups. Because adults value pupils' work they try hard. This is particularly so when staff promote the use of language skills. Higher attainers achieve well in English and mathematics, but some could do more in many other subjects.
4. Boys tend to do better than girls in national tests, although both groups achieve better than their national counterparts. There is not so clear a difference in their written and oral work. Nevertheless, the school has made an effort to improve boys' achievements, particularly in writing - and has succeeded. School records show that pupils with very little grasp of English upon arrival make good progress and are catching up. Most other groups make similar progress to the main, British group – but no minority ethnic group is large enough to provide data that is reliable to use as comparison. In class, everyone is treated equally and included.
5. Although not much work has been produced in the foundation subjects, what there is shows that progress is much slower in art and design, history, religious education and gymnastics than in most other subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There are insufficient examples of work and evidence from school records to make judgements about design and technology in Years 1 and 2, and in geography, music and physical education in Years 1 to 6. There are no records to tell if pupils are able to swim satisfactorily by Year 6. Nevertheless, the quality of the work seen in these subjects is not as good as when the school was last inspected. To some extent, energy was used where it was most needed. Therefore, in the quite challenging circumstances of staff coming and going, the school has maintained its now high standards in English and mathematics and has improved them in science and information and communication technology. It is now planning, rightly, to turn its attention to the foundation subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, pupils' behaviour is very good and their attitudes to school are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good. The pupils' personal development is good. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers expect pupils to behave very well. They do, and have positive attitudes to work and enjoy being here.
- The school's very good provision for social and moral development leads to good relationships around the school. The 'buddies' scheme works well and there is very little bullying.
- Lessons begin promptly.
- The school insists on good attendance. It is improving, but some parents insist on taking holidays during school time.

Commentary

6. The table below shows the attendance figures for the school. The level has usually stayed around or above the national levels in recent years. Absences are mainly for medical reasons but a substantial number of families insists on taking holidays during term-time. This affects the achievement, not only of the absent pupils, but also of others in the class because teachers have to spend time helping the absentees to catch up. Quite properly, the governors have asked the headteacher to minimise such absences, and there is an improvement in the current year. Effective arrangements in the morning lead to pupils quickly settling into class and result in prompt starts to lessons.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.3	School data:	0.3
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

7. Pupils' social development is very good. High quality opportunities are provided for pupils to interact with classmates in group work, paired discussions, and by assisting with tasks in each class. A successful 'buddies' scheme provides a chance to help each other; which is particularly successful for one pupil who started after the normal time for admission. The pupils in Year 6 have a range of responsibilities, which assist the smooth running of the school. The school council enables pupils of all ages to team up and appreciate some aspects of becoming citizens. Charity fund-raising for developing countries gives further opportunity. Awareness of the wider world is enhanced with the varied range of visitors, inter-school sports matches and talks by representatives of charities. Pupils' good relationships with their peers and adults play a part in the quality of work in lessons and the progress they make. Thereby, they gain the confidence to ask and answer questions.
8. The opportunities for pupils to gain insight into values and beliefs in order to develop their spiritual awareness are good. As well as providing time for reflection, school assemblies each week help pupils to develop a sense of belonging to a whole school community and to celebrate the contributions and achievements of others. The awards of merits and certificates help pupils to appreciate their own worth and to raise their self-esteem. There is a positive ethos of family and harmony. Assemblies, which now properly include a daily act of worship, are well linked to the school's key values, such as caring for others, living in harmony and recognising diversity of culture and belief.
9. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The study of world faiths in religious education helps pupils to appreciate others' practices and beliefs. Art and design and music help to develop aesthetic awareness. Nevertheless, not all subjects take complete advantage of providing pupils with a fuller understanding of the world's cultural groups. However, good use is made of occasions such as Black and Asian history week and in asking pupils to talk about their own cultural traditions.
10. The vast majority of pupils say they are very satisfied with their school. Nearly everyone's attitudes towards learning are good. This includes those pupils with special educational needs. As a rule,

most pupils are interested in what happens in school and they enjoy their work. They listen attentively, follow instructions well and are prepared to contribute their ideas. Nearly all settle quickly to group work in lessons and maintain their interest even when not being directly supported by adults. These positive attitudes reflect the quality of teaching and the variety of interesting activities built into the lessons. Nevertheless in a few lessons seen, the work was not presented in an appealing way. This led to a lack of attention by a few pupils and the unsettled atmosphere limited learning. Also, very occasionally a group of pupils does not have the skill to work independently.

11. Overall, the pupils respond very well to the moral guidance. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong. They are aware of how their behaviour affects others and many have developed self-discipline. They are open, polite to adults and normally to each other, and welcoming to visitors. Even the youngest, in the Reception class, wait patiently in assemblies for others to arrive. The school uses an assortment of positive strategies to encourage good behaviour and they, in the main, are used well by all the staff. However, in a few lessons, inconsistent management of the pupils limits the learning taking place by not adhering to the standards expected. Pupils and parents confirm that there is no bullying or aggression. Last year just one pupil was excluded as can be seen in the table below.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
142	1	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall, with most strength in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is satisfactory. Provision is best in reading, writing and mathematics. Although enriched by extra activities such as clubs and special events, the curriculum is sound overall because some foundation subjects lack quality and breadth.

Teaching and learning

Overall, teaching is satisfactory. It has improved since the previous inspection. Teaching is strongest and good in Years 1 and 2: in these years pupils achieve well. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught best and learning is good. Although some aspects of assessment are now very good, assessment overall is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is very good and has much improved since the previous inspection. Measuring progress in writing is particularly good.
- Teaching in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 is good overall.
- Targets for pupils in English and mathematics are useful in guiding them and helping teachers to teach to their needs.
- Teaching assistants are a great strength and are having a substantial impact, especially in information and communication technology.
- Teaching and support for special educational needs, and extra classes such as 'booster', are having a lot of impact.

- Teaching is less strong in several foundation subjects than in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- Assessment of science, information and communication technology, and most foundation subjects is ineffectual and a drag on standards.
- Work samples show that progress is slower across Years 3 to 6 in most subjects. The effect is most noticeable in Years 5 and 6.

Commentary

12. Less teaching is unsatisfactory now than at the last inspection and more is of good quality. Teaching in the foundation stage is good in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. In Years 1 and 2, consistency of approach, good marking and well-used assessments produce good levels of productivity. Pupils learn well in the core subjects⁵. There is good quality teaching, for example, in reading and writing, that makes it possible for most pupils to achieve well. In mathematics, good teaching ensures that work is provided at suitably challenging levels for all groups and makes the most of targets that are set. Assessment in reading, writing and mathematics gives teachers and pupils clear information about what they have achieved and what to do to improve. Additionally, pupils with special educational needs are aided well by good quality backing from well-qualified teaching assistants in all years. They are managed well by class teachers to provide many pupils with lots of well-judged support.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (12%)	21 (51%)	12 (29%)	3 (7%)	0	0

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

13. Through Years 4 to 6, the same good quality teaching support is provided. This influences many pupils' learning, keeping many of them suitably focused on their set work and allowing them to review their learning. There are many good examples of teaching assistants asking first-rate questions that encourage thinking. The teaching of information and communication technology is very much enhanced by teaching assistance. This is having even more bearing than in other lessons. Standards have improved a great deal as a result. As in Years 1 and 2, most pupils' behaviour is managed well in Years 3 and 4, where most progress steadily and maintain the above average standards they have reached by Year 2. Nearly all pupils get on well with their work, behave very well and are productive.
14. In Years 5 and 6, progress is more erratic because teaching is less strong in later years and learning less productive. Work samples show that marking is not consistent in quality or frequency. At times in several lessons, pupils do not concentrate so well because they are not properly challenged about some lax attitudes towards listening and working. Several examples of pupils' work show deterioration in presentation – a sign of lowering expectation. In some lessons, a few pupils attempt to disrupt others by engaging in inappropriate discussions or silly games, but remain undetected for too long. Such attitudes have a damaging effect on these and some other pupils' productivity and progress.
15. Pupils' learning is much enhanced by extra classes, especially through the later years by such extras as separate 'booster' groups that are taught really well. Higher attainers in mathematics are assisted to maintain their good achievement through the provision of extra work.
16. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because pupils have been accurately assessed, using outside agency support if necessary, and their individual education plans are set carefully to help them learn. Most teachers use a wide range of successful

⁵ Core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

strategies to motivate, involve and challenge such pupils. They regularly monitor pupils' progress towards achieving their targets and provide guidance. These records are well maintained and regularly updated. The effectiveness of teaching assistants' work is usually very good when they are working with individuals, groups or the whole class. Teachers and teaching assistants work as a team very well; for example, in supporting pupils with English as an additional language. Consequently, pupils benefit from effective, well-aided teaching that greatly assists their achievement.

17. Examples of very good teaching occur in English and science in Year 4, in English in Year 2 and Year 3, and in mathematics in Year 5. In these lessons, pupils are drawn very consistently into the lessons through the use of interesting resources, clear explanations, and many chances to respond to good quality questions. Teachers' intentions are made clear and good advice and guidance are given. Pupils are praised and encouraged when they merit it and suitably guided when they do not. Consequently, pupils are productive, often deeply interested or rise well to various challenges. This enables them to sustain past achievements. Pupils of all levels of attainment have chances to think further or are encouraged successfully to review their learning in the light of advice. Teaching assistants know their responsibilities and back up very well. Such lessons are very good packages of diverse ways to learn.
18. Since the previous inspection, assessment procedures have much improved in reading, writing and mathematics, and the information gleaned is used well to set targets for pupils. In writing, the system is precise enough to reveal progress very clearly and provide good information for using in lessons with different groups. Reading is assessed well, at regular intervals. Pupils with special educational needs are monitored well and provided with very suitable targets that aid their progress substantially. Assessment of many other subjects is imprecise, has a negative effect on progress and is depressing what pupils can achieve. It is unsatisfactory in science, information and communication technology, design and technology, history, geography, art and design, physical education and music. Marking and work samples show that there is insufficient assessment of all these subjects. It is impossible to monitor progress and define standards. Too little time is spent teaching some of them. Sufficient homework is provided: the impact is greatest in mathematics and English.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory and improved since the previous inspection. It is suitably broad with good opportunity for pupils to develop interest further through clubs, visits and visitors. There is unsatisfactory provision in some foundation subjects. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for personal, social and health education.
- Teaching assistants make first-class contributions to supporting and enriching the curriculum.
- All pupils are included well in curricular opportunities with pupils of higher attainment offered some chances for more challenge.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is too little depth and consistency in the provision of art & design and design & technology, which slows pupils' progress.
- Limited hardware resources for information and communication technology restrict curricular time for subjects and cause some inefficiency.
- There are fine opportunities for pupils to participate in the arts and sport.
- There is a decent range of curricular resources.
- There is no access to some parts of the school for pupils with physical disabilities.

Commentary

19. Since the last inspection the school has improved provision well by successfully introducing the new Reception curriculum, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and strengthened curricular plans. It now devotes a higher proportion of curricular time to English and mathematics. The good provision for personal, social and health education has been enhanced by a suitable drug awareness programme.
20. Work samples show that too little time is available for the foundation subjects, and that this results in a lack of depth and quality in art and design through Years 1 to 6, and in design and technology and history through Years 3 to 6. Pupils' progress in these subjects is unsatisfactory. Although information and communication technology is used well to support learning in mathematics, it is not always planned well to link with learning in other subjects.
21. Pupils benefit from a range of special events, such as a 'Book Week', visiting theatre and musical groups. A residential programme for Year 6 suitably enriches their curriculum. Attractive displays in the library, hall and foyer of the school celebrate the contribution to British culture of people from some ethnic minorities. For example, an attractive display by a Korean pupil of her perspective on life in England, including some comments in her own language, showed the richness of her culture to everybody. However, some opportunities are missed to promote different cultural traditions within Britain and the world.
22. The curriculum in the Reception Year is satisfactory. The teaching team promotes speaking and listening and the children's personal, social and emotional development admirably through giving them many opportunities to talk about what they are learning and the events in their lives. Curricular planning provides well for links across the different areas of learning, and for the needs of all the children.
23. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils achieve splendidly because the extra adult support they receive enables them to succeed. Good systems ensure that these pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. In addition, some teachers plan easier tasks for these pupils so that they can complete them on their own and consequently improve their independence. However, in a number of lessons they are asked to do work that is too hard. Then, they make slow progress. The provision outlined in the pupils' statements of special educational needs is properly established and reviewed as the code of practice advocates. It is not yet possible for physically disabled pupils to access different levels within school, although there are plans to solve this. Access to the main hall has been provided from the outside.
24. There is no register for gifted and talented pupils. However, there are some extra opportunities to provide challenge, such as an art club. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is helpful. Although there are not many of them, they achieve well.
25. There are many chances for all pupils to participate in the arts through a range of performances, paid individual music tuition and extra-curricular clubs. The school builds well on parental and local community links, such as the 'Croydon Sports Partnership', to broaden the range of clubs, such as instrumental music tuition, football and netball.
26. Teaching assistants are very well trained. Despite the substantial turnover of teachers, the school has been able to manage replacements well. Since the last inspection, the outdoor area for the Foundation Stage has been improved by an attractively resurfaced play area. More information and communication technology resources have been acquired – in part responsible for the rise in standards. Seven out of eight teachers have laptops, and there are two small information and communication technology suite areas – but these are limited by constrictions on space. However, because the suites are only large enough to teach half-class groups, information and communication technology and some other subjects have to be duplicated each week for all pupils to cover the work. This reduces the efficiency of information and communication technology and lessens the curricular time available for foundation subjects.

Care, guidance and support

On the whole, the arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good and help pupils to learn. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is good. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- The adults in the school are very caring, know the pupils well and offer very good guidance and advice for personal development and behaviour.
- The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to express opinions about life in the school.
- In reading, writing and mathematics staff effectively monitor and guide pupils' academic progress through the school.
- There are effective procedures for ensuring a healthy and safe environment.
- The school has very good arrangements to enable new pupils to settle in.

Commentary

27. Various, suitable risk assessments are in place for activities around the school. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science and design and technology, which helps their understanding. The procedures for child protection are good. Suitably, staff members receive guidance from the trained designated person on how to deal with any concerns that may arise. The arrangements for first aid are good with several trained staff, records kept of treatment and letters to parents if pupils bump their heads.
28. As at the time of the previous inspection, staff show proper concern for the needs of the pupils and are good role models to assist learning about good relationships. Parents are pleased with the level of support their children receive, seeing the school as a caring community, where staff members are approachable with problems. In particular, parents agree that their children were well supported when they first arrived, including asylum seekers. Parents give warm praise for how the 'Buddies' system is used to promote their confidence that their children will settle in easily. The school arranges visits to families at home before entry to the Reception class and this is an effective start to the build-up to involvement in their children's education. Pupils judge that they are supported very well by the staff and know to whom they would go if needed. They also believe that teachers listen to their ideas. For example, pupils on the school council discussed matters with inspectors in a mature way and explained clearly how the school followed up their suggestions for improvements in the playground.
29. Since the previous inspection, a much improved assessment and target-setting system has been established. This works very well to assess and monitor progress in reading, writing and mathematics. From the information gleaned, well-judged targets are set for pupils and used productively to guide teachers' planning. Consequently, extra or extended support is directed well at target groups. This is particularly effective in writing. For most other subjects there is little information upon which to base support and guidance, and assessment is unsatisfactory – as set out under the section in teaching. A lack of information leads to some unsatisfactory progress and under achievement.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good overall. Links with the local community and other schools are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in high regard.
- There are good chances for parents to hear how their children are getting on, but many annual reports provide only limited information about children's progress.
- Parents' support at home and in school makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The involvement of a range of organisations and people in the community extends experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development.
- Links with primary and local secondary schools are good.

Commentary

30. In the very high response rate to the questionnaire, parents show that they are pleased with what the school provides. Monthly news is sent home and other letters about general matters and what the pupils are learning are provided. Parents are pleased particularly with the four chances for parents to meet teachers during the autumn and spring terms. At the beginning of each term is a get-together to hear what the class will be covering - written details are also sent home. Later on, meetings are held to discuss children's progress. However, the quality of the annual report on pupil progress in the summer term varies between different classes. Some teachers provide a useful summary of what the pupils know and can do, but many others provide only limited information, with very general comments. Sometimes, targets are not sufficiently understandable.
31. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good addition to its work and to the achievement of the pupils. Pupils confirm that their parents ensure that they do their homework. Parents usually make certain that pupils arrive regularly and on time. However, a substantial number still restricts their children's progress and that of others by taking them away for holidays in term-time.
32. The school regularly sends out questionnaires that provide very good opportunities for parents to influence what happens in the school. A few help regularly in school and many more accompany on trips out. The very active parent teacher association successfully organises both fund-raising and social events, including ones for the pupils. These efforts assist the 'family' and cooperative atmosphere.
33. Good links with the community and other schools help to broaden the experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development. Their sporting skills are enhanced by the support of local football clubs and the competitions with other schools. Their understanding of society is enhanced by the contact with local ministers, charitable organisations and staff from public bodies such as the police and fire brigade. The mainstream curriculum is enriched by trips out to places in the local area and further afield. The good links with local playgroups smooth children's arrival into the Reception class. Contacts at the secondary level also help to ease the transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. There are more strengths than weaknesses; over recent years the school has become much better. Leadership is good, management effective and governance of good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The drive for improvement has led to achievement in English and mathematics that is very good, when test results are compared with similar schools. These are much improved since the previous inspection, as have standards in science and information and communication technology.
- The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and acts well to influence improvement. Governors' imaginative form of organisation is efficient.
- The school is very orderly, efficiently run and well managed. The budget is managed well.
- Teaching assistants have been managed very well to lend a hand in combating teacher turnover and to enhance pupils' achievement.
- Leadership of the Foundation Stage and special educational needs is good.
- There is good team work. For example, the headteacher and deputy work well as a team and the school assesses itself well in the core subjects.
- The school has not thought through a strategy for maintaining continuity in leading and managing subjects in the light of staff turnover, and provision is unsatisfactory in some.

Commentary

34. Governance is good, and efficient. Governors have been imaginative in establishing much contact with the school and successful in reporting on their findings to each other. This is based on a well-coordinated series of visits, links and efficient and well-run meetings. From the broad range of data that they gather, they have formed a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide suitable challenges and offer good support. Statutory requirements are met.
35. Leadership is good on the whole. Much has improved in recent years. The head gives a firm lead and has a comprehensive view of her school. Good teamwork results in a strong sense of direction and a drive for improvement within the school plan. Relationships are good and teams work well. In particular, the head and deputy make a good team: their strategies to improve attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have worked very well. Overall, the school's performance is as good as most other schools, but much better than most in reading, writing and mathematics. Good teamwork between teachers and assistants much enhances pupils' achievement. Most energy has been placed where it was needed and so standards in the fore-mentioned subjects have all improved. The special educational needs co-ordinator leads well. For example, she has written a range of useful guidance leaflets for the teaching teams so that they can identify whether pupils may be experiencing difficulties with their learning because of a specific need. Leadership in this aspect is much assisting pupils' progress.
36. Nearly all the weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been eradicated. However, provision in some foundation subjects is unsatisfactory. Standards are not always in line with those expected nationally and not as good as before, for example in art and design in Years 1 to 6, and religious education, history and design and technology in Years 4 to 6. There was little evidence of work done in some other foundation subjects such as geography and music. In part this decline in standards and provision in the foundation subjects is the result of a high staff turnover, for which the school has not thought through a successful strategy to pass subjects on to new managers. This has led, for example, to the standards of gymnastics being below those expected by Year 6.
37. The school is well managed. It runs like clockwork, despite some 'tight' arrangements with some lesson change overs. Office staff contribute well and aid efficiency. The caretaker works well as part of the team: the building is well cared for. The school's performance has been monitored much more successfully in recent years: judgements about it are sound overall, but good in major aspects. However, performance in monitoring foundation subjects has faltered. Conversely, teaching is rigorously monitored and, in the subjects where most observation has taken place, improvement is noticeable. Performance management is properly conducted with targets linked well to the school's ambitions. In general, initiation into the school for both new and experienced

teachers is good. However, there is a lack of strategy to alleviate the rapid turnover in subject leadership. Upon take-up, new co-ordinators lack basic information of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie in relation to their subjects. This is most noticeable in mathematics and many foundation subjects, and causes more turbulence and inconsistency than desirable.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	551 093
Total expenditure	599 550
Expenditure per pupil	2 595

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	850 68
Balance carried forward to the next	366 11

38. Finances are managed well and thought through carefully. Expenditure is above the national average for this sort of school. Nevertheless, best value money is taken seriously and efficiencies found if possible. Taking all aspects into consideration, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

39. The attainment of children joining the Reception year is the same as levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. The children achieve satisfactorily during their time in the Foundation Stage. About a third of them make good progress and are likely to start Year 1 with better than expected knowledge and understanding.
40. The stage co-ordinator introduces parents and carers very well to the Reception class. All families are visited at their playgroups in June preceding their September start. Additionally, well-liked visits to school are arranged for prospective children and their families. Home visits in September help to strengthen both children's and parents' confidence. As a result, parents feel welcome, believe their children are in good hands and say they receive good information.
41. Planning in Reception is good and caters for the full range of needs. It is well based on the nationally recommended guidance for the Foundation Stage, and has good links between the different areas of learning. However, there are too few challenging tasks for the highest achievers. Good relationships exist with the feeder playgroups and nurseries. The information passed on is used well to form a fine starting point for planning that gets children off to a good start. Provision for the needs of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teaching is satisfactory overall but good for personal, social and emotional development. This strong aspect supports children's learning well.
42. The co-ordinator's leadership and management are good. Since her appointment, she has led successfully the introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum, which is now better than at the last inspection. Good teamwork results in the smooth running and organisation of the Reception year. Very detailed records are kept about what children can do, although there is a need to compare children's progress in relation to the national benchmarks for this age group.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's behaviour is very good.
- Children enjoy taking part in whole-class group discussions and take an interest in each other.
- There are too few opportunities for children to take responsibility.
- The curriculum and the classroom environment promote respect for cultural diversity.

Commentary

43. When children start school, their social skills are broadly average, although a good proportion is above average in social and emotional maturity. Good teaching ensures that children achieve well so that, by the end of the Reception class, most exceed what is expected nationally for the start of Year 1. The co-ordinator provides a good role model by her care for and interest in the children and their lives. Her calm, attentive manner has a pronounced effect on them. Consequently, they behave exceptionally well in the whole-class group, showing enjoyment and interest in what their classmates and their teacher have to say. They take good care of equipment and tidy their clothes away neatly when they change for physical activities. Carefully chosen stories such as 'Elmer the

Elephant' and 'Handa's Surprise' successfully engage children's interest in and respect for a world in which everyone is different and there are many rich cultures. Nevertheless, there are not enough chances for the children to make choices and take more responsibility; for example, by clearing up.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking and listening skills are very good.
- Children enjoy sharing stories and know how books are written and used.
- Insufficient work on letter-sound relationships is undertaken, particularly by higher attainers.

Commentary

44. Overall, children start school with satisfactory speaking skills and attainment in listening, reading and writing, which are at the levels usually seen for this age group. Teaching is satisfactory and, thereafter, children make steady progress to meet or exceed the expected goals by the time they start Year 1. Teaching is good in speaking and listening and children progress well. Most learn to speak in complete sentences, to listen quietly and take turns. The teacher plans very well to involve children with special educational needs. For example, she ensures that those with hearing impairment can always see the lips of those who are speaking. However, higher attainers lack enough opportunities to read and recognise more letters and combinations than their classmates. Reading skills are about average by the beginning of Year 1. Most children start school with some skill in using paper and pencil to communicate. They have many opportunities to build on this and so, by the end of Reception, they are beginning to write independently, at around the levels expected.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many opportunities are provided for children to use counting skills.
- Children are confident in mathematical problem solving.
- They know the right language for shapes, numbers, and directions.
- There is not always enough challenge for higher attaining children.
- Opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology to assist learning.

Commentary

45. Most children begin school with mathematical skills that are in line with those expected and chances are given to build on these, particularly in counting and recognising numbers. Most children know the proper names for shapes, numbers and directions because they are taught well. However, there is a need to extend the use of information and communication technology tools, such as robotic toys and simulation games to plan routes and put in simple instructions. By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve satisfactorily to reach the expected levels, and about a third of them achieve well. Teaching is sound overall, but some higher attainers have too few chances to practise and extend what they know already about numbers and their use.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher uses the outside and inside areas well to promote children's learning about the world around them.
- There are good opportunities for children to remember and talk about events in their lives.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology as a tool to support the children's learning.

Commentary

46. Children begin school with the levels of knowledge and understanding of the world, which are usual for their age group. By the time they start Year 1, most children have made steady progress to reach the expected goals. Teaching is sound: the teacher plans well for the use of the outside and inside areas to promote their learning. Displays help to serve as a focus for discussions about such aspects as the seasons and weather. Also, attractive displays show landscapes and cultures in other parts of the world; for example, the beaches, the wild life and the traditional art forms of Jamaica. Children build up a sense of past and present through the many opportunities provided. They regularly use the classroom computer to explore imaginary worlds; for instance, a house in which there are hidden corners and cupboards to explore. However, too few opportunities are created for use of a wider range of equipment, such as digital cameras and microscopes, 'talking' programs and CD-ROMs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical education lessons promote good achievement.
- Children show a good awareness of their own and others' use of space.

Commentary

47. When they start school, nearly all children have average levels of physical skills for their age. Teaching is good, and so by the end of the Reception year, most children are at the levels expected for the start of Year 1: about a third of children exceed them. When they move in the school hall or cycle in the outdoor space, they know how to do so without colliding. Their teacher also helps them learn about the best ways to take exercise, and the higher attaining children know that they need to do some warm up exercises to prevent muscle strain. There are many occasions for children to develop skills in throwing and catching balls and beanbags, using pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors, and they handle a computer mouse with poise.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children build up a good repertoire of action songs and poems and enjoy moving to them.
- Performance in singing is of a good standard.
- There is not enough scope to promote learning through role-play.

- The range and quality of media, materials and creative drawing tasks offered are too limited which slows progress.

Commentary

48. Children begin the Reception with an average level of competence for their age group. Teaching is sound. By the start of Year 1, they reach most of the expected goals. They enjoy the many times they have during the school day to perform action songs and recite familiar verse. The quality and range of the materials and tasks for creative development are incomplete. This inhibits progress. The children rarely use high quality materials to assist their expression and their own ideas to gain hold. Too many drawing tasks are simple and demand little imagination and skill by simply requiring colouring in. This inhibits the children's achievement in forming and refining their own images. The teaching team does not plan well to inspire the good use and application of materials which increase familiarisation with colours and shape.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are above average in Year 2. Standards in reading and writing are above average in Year 6.
- Teaching is effective in helping pupils achieve well overall.
- The assessment and tracking of pupils' progress in reading and writing has been very valuable in raising standards of attainment and maintaining them over the last few years.
- The school is good at seeing when pupils need some extra support to catch up and this backing is very effective.
- Pupil's attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Resources are good.
- There are not enough occasions to apply English skills across the curriculum through Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

49. Pupils start in Year 1 with the standards expected for their age. Pupils in Year 2 are on track to attain the well above average standards in both reading and writing in national curriculum tests that have consistently been attained over recent years. In Year 6, standards of attainment are above average in reading and writing and average in speaking and listening. Results in the national tests for English in Year 6 have been well above average in recent years and the trend usually has been above the national rate of improvement. Pupils are on track to achieve similarly in 2004. Most pupils are making good progress from entry.
50. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils, achieve well because work is planned properly to challenge or support pupils of all levels of attainment. The school is particularly effective in identifying when pupils need some extra support. This is successful in providing suitable extras such as 'booster' groups. These are well taught classes for Years 5 and 6. Also; specially trained teaching assistants run other forms of group support. As a whole, the package works well. Boys outperformed girls in reading in the national curriculum tests in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2003. However, the distinction was not clear in pupils' work or in conversations with them during the inspection. The co-ordinator is well informed about the issues affecting boys' and girls' attainment and of the steps taken to make the curriculum appealing to all.
51. Most pupils speak confidently, use a satisfactory range of vocabulary and listen well. Teachers plan some good opportunities in other subjects to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills.

However, in lessons, some important opportunities are lost for pupils to discuss answers in pairs to teachers' questions or to work together cooperatively. The planning of these opportunities is not systematic enough. Teachers usually question pupils well, model language precisely and display vocabulary in the classroom. All this helps pupils to make the link between written and spoken forms. However, several sessions at the ends of lessons are not used well enough to enable pupils to reflect properly on what they have learnt or explain what has been successful and why. This robs them of chances to check their knowledge and be surer about their learning.

52. Pupils achieve very well in increasing their knowledge and enjoyment of books and improving their reading skills. This is because reading groups are used profitably to teach skills in reading and understanding texts. Very occasionally, teaching points are insufficiently explained, which leads to some confusion. Many parents encourage their children to read regularly at home, which greatly assists review of learning and provides good practice. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well in writing because they benefit from very knowledgeable and well-judged teaching. This ensures that they make systematic and rapid progress. They have opportunities to write regularly within other subjects of the curriculum. Presentation of work and handwriting is typically very good. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils have too few opportunities to write. Here, the quality of marking of writing is inconsistent; consequently several pupils are not getting enough detailed feedback to help them improve. In some classes pupils learn spellings set at correct levels, matched to their attainment; in some others, the match is poor and so learning is less successful.
53. Teaching is good. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good. In Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory but much assisted in these years by special groups and extra support. Most teachers plan purposeful and interesting activities, which help pupils to develop their literacy skills. Most of their teachers have high expectations of behaviour and achievement and, consequently, pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers use a good range of well-prepared materials and resources for lessons to make them appealing. Lesson objectives are written on the class board, explained well to pupils and their understanding is checked so that they have a clear grasp about what they are learning. The one interactive whiteboard was used well to teach pupils how to convert narrative into a play script.
54. The leadership and management of English are good. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and a good understanding of what is needed. There has been a very good improvement in provision since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pupils' language and literacy skills are often well developed through other subjects but this is not consistent, particularly in the juniors. Most teachers take good opportunities to develop these skills, but there is no overall plan. Pupils use computers well to present their work and to research topics but this area of their work is not sufficiently developed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics **is good**. The effect has been to raise standards substantially over recent years.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above national average at the end of Years 2 and 6, and compares very favourably with similar schools.
- Many pupils are fluent in mental calculations, particularly in number.
- Teaching is mostly good, particularly through Years 1 to 4.
- The curriculum is well planned and systematically ensures steady progress at above average levels. Planning is successful in producing work at suitable levels for different groups.

- Booster classes raise pupils' achievements in national tests in Years 5 and 6.
- Higher attainers are provided with extra chances to improve.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in class, especially for pupils with special educational needs and below average attainment.
- The national numeracy strategy is implemented well. There are some good links with information and communication technology.
- Written work is above average on the whole, but not as good as the test results achieved, and there are too few examples of the use of mathematics, investigations and everyday problems.
- The impact of changes in subject management is aggravated by a lack of strategy for handover of responsibilities.

Commentary

56. The work that pupils produce in mathematics is of a good standard, but progress tails off a little in Years 5 and 6. Written work is not at the very high levels achieved in tests. However, achievement in tests for many is boosted by extra classes and the extra assistance given to higher attainers. Pupils' mental facility to calculate fluently and accurately is above usual levels and this is contributing also to much success in mathematics. Taken as a whole, present achievements of this Year 6 group are not as high as one would expect at this stage to produce similar very high results in 2004 as were achieved in 2003.
57. Teaching is good overall; on the whole most pupils achieve well through Years 1 to 6. Work samples show levels of productivity that are high through Years 1 to 4 but tail off somewhat to satisfactory levels in later years. In Years 5 and 6 a few pupils slip from the previously high standards they have set themselves in presenting their work and some goes unmarked. In most lessons, the teaching quality is good or better. Teaching shows an expectation that pupils will be able to calculate swiftly. Methods are designed to oblige all pupils to respond to questions, and good questions are posed that challenge all. Pupils are given many opportunities for discussion and explaining their thinking. Clear explanations and demonstrations ensure that all pupils are taken further. This is characteristic also of classes provided in Years 5 and 6 for those who are behind to catch up. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils are absorbed, learn well and try hard.
58. In all lessons, teaching assistants add value by revising class work and assisting pupils to a great extent in getting on with their work. They back up teaching well. The result is that most pupils increase or maintain the levels of knowledge and understanding expected for their ages and aptitudes as they grow older. Continual assessment of their work, coupled with setting targets for groups, are also useful and of further help to pupils and teachers. In Year 6 pupils are provided also with helpful revision and further instruction for higher attainers.
59. Despite regular changeover in staff, systems have been maintained throughout. The national numeracy strategy is well established and effective in keeping continuity. Standards have much improved since the last inspection. There are good levels of resource. Staff training has been useful. Systems ensure that pupils' attainment levels are clear and help can be provided to catch up or push on. Changeover of subject leaders is not as efficient as it could be. There is no arrangement for providing the handover for the subject that will ensure a quick grasp of the necessary detail of the school's preferred systems and approaches. Neither is there any information about the current strengths and weaknesses to provide a starting platform for the new leader. Nevertheless, a clear action plan is being formulated.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Use of mathematics across the curriculum is sound. There are some good cross-curricular links, particularly with information and communication technology, where chances are given to apply mathematical knowledge at higher levels. Sometimes, good liaison between class teachers and assistants results in very suitable investigations and problem solving opportunities in mathematics. However, such aspects occur less frequently in written work. In science, measurements and

tables are in regular use. In other subjects links are less frequent, although they do crop up when teachers remember to promote them. Speaking and listening skills greatly assist learning in mathematics and number work assists chronology in history.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in national tests have greatly improved since the last inspection.
- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2.
- The co-ordinator demonstrates very good teaching approaches.
- There is good emphasis on building pupils' investigative skills through experiments.
- Work seen in the inspection was not as strong as in the national tests.
- Some weak teaching results from lack of guidance to pupils on how to manage investigative tasks in small groups, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- There is too little use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

61. Standards in the most recent national tests were above national averages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when they were below national averages. A strength in all years is the good emphasis on experimental work. This builds pupils' investigative skills well because the range of experiments is wide. Also, pupils develop a good understanding of how to set up fair tests and they record results carefully. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average because pupils cover a broad range of topics in enough depth to build good levels of knowledge and understanding.
62. On the whole, by the end of Year 2 achievement is satisfactory. Although most pupils make good progress, those who start with lower attainment make less progress than their classmates because the written tasks set are not well enough adapted for their knowledge and understanding. Work seen during the inspection shows standards at the end of Year 6 that are not as strong as in the previous national tests. They are in line with national averages. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily because they cover the required topics well enough to meet national expectations, but there is not enough challenge for pupils of higher attainment. The lowest attaining pupils do not make as much progress as they could because they are often set written tasks that they do not complete.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching in Year 4 is good. The approach offers a good model for science teaching. Pupils follow carefully structured and guided investigations. In the very good teaching seen, in a lesson about the best material for keeping baked potatoes warm, the pupils were carefully taught the key language. The teacher made sure that they drew on their previous work on heat retention and understood the structure of the investigation. As a result, they succeeded in carrying out fair tests, and were able to give good explanations about their data. Very appropriately, the teaching assistant encouraged lower achieving pupils to discuss their findings and helped them to learn. Very suitable questions helped them to identify the best insulating material from their records. Other good teaching showed similar strengths of well structured and guided investigations, with carefully focused discussions and writing formats which assisted pupils of all levels of attainment. Those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language made good progress.

64. By contrast, some older pupils were set to do experiments without clear guidance about what to look for and how to focus their investigations or record work. Pupils were given also too little guidance in how to work together in groups to share out tasks for their investigations. So, they either took too long to get started, or resorted to working contrary to instructions.
65. The quality of marking varies, but it is unsatisfactory overall, because in some years it offers little guidance to pupils. This slows progress because pupils miss the chance to understand how they have fared.
66. Only recently in post, the co-ordinator provides good leadership through her first-rate subject knowledge and approaches to teaching. She is keen to improve standards. She has worked well with a local adviser to give individual guidance to teachers about being consistent. She has begun to analyse pupils' test papers and results. She has started to check the quality of lessons, but has not had training in how to use recognised measures to guide this process. She is aware of the need to identify and introduce a more effective system of assessing the standards reached by pupils. Although there is a satisfactory range of resources to support science, very little use is being made of information and communication technology equipment, such as digital microscopes, cameras and data sensors, to help pupils in their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist information and communication technology teaching assistant makes a very good contribution to teaching and support systems.
- Provision has improved greatly since the last inspection. Now standards are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- Assessment systems are unsatisfactory: they do not enable attainment and progress to be measured against the expected standards.
- There is too little effective use of information and communication technology to support learning in subjects other than mathematics.
- Information and communication technology lessons contribute well to the development of pupils' mathematical understanding.
- Older pupils do not know the rules of safe Internet use.
- The lack of a whole-class set of computers slows pupils' progress because teaching has to be repeated for each half class.

Commentary

67. Pupils of all groups and levels of attainment achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of the very thorough and well-organised lessons run for all classes. Pupils cover all aspects. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be patchy and achievement unsatisfactory. At the end of Year 2, pupils are aware of the key safety rules they should follow when using the Internet, those at the end of Year 6 are not.
68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good teaching by the school's specialist information and communication technology teaching assistant supports teachers very well. She gives very clear instructions and uses good materials to enable pupils to keep track of their learning. Also, she helps pupils to learn well by well guided observation of errors they make. Lessons are well organised and allow pupils to keep trying. A further strength is getting pupils to discuss and review what they have learnt at the end of each lesson. This helps to cement their

learning. The folders of printed work that she creates for each class build up over the year to give a very clear oversight of what classes and individual pupils are producing over time. The teaching assistant also ensures that there is good technical support for the school's systems, which frees teachers and keeps systems in order.

69. Less successful use of information and communication technology occurred when a group of older pupils were set to work unsupervised. Too little guidance was given about what to do, how to manage work in pairs and suitable ways to write down the results. Consequently, some pupils worked unproductively and others switched to doing another task, not asked of them. There are also some occasions when teachers do not make links between the class work and information and communication technology lessons. During the inspection, computers were not often in use during lesson time for other subjects.
70. The leadership and management of information and communication technology are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been appointed only recently, but has a detailed action plan for improvement. He is aware that the lack of an agreed assessment system means that the school does not know how the pupils are progressing in relation to national expectations. Provision has been much improved by the addition of two small information and communication technology suites, an interactive whiteboard and laptops for all teachers. However, the lack of whole-class access to information and communication technology facilities is inefficient because it takes twice as long to teach. Also, teaching needs to be repeated in other subjects. This limits the rate of pupils' progress in information and communication technology, as well as in the subjects that are arranged in parallel.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Network facilities are lacking. In most cases, teachers cannot readily use the Internet as a resource for classroom sessions. Also, class teachers make insufficient use of the class-based computers in many lessons. This robs them of chances to offer work at different levels, matched to pupils' attainment, enrich teaching, back up work by the teaching assistant or establish sufficient links to encourage learning in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Provision in history and religious education is satisfactory. Teachers provided samples of pupils' work in these subjects, and planning was available. Conversations were held with older pupils. It is not possible to provide a judgement about provision in geography because not enough evidence was available and no teaching was seen. It was possible only to talk to some pupils about their previous work and not much written work was available.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adapted national guidelines are used as the basis for planning in history.
- A start has been made in assessing pupils' work.
- Standards in history are average for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2, but below average for the end of Year 6.

Commentary

72. Pupils are not achieving as well as they could by the time they leave the school. Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory sense of chronology but their knowledge and understanding of historical periods is not sufficiently detailed.

73. In the two history lessons observed, the teaching was satisfactory in the infants' and good in the juniors' class. Both teachers have good subject knowledge, planned some interesting tasks for the pupils to do and resourced the lessons well. Their questioning of pupils was good and, consequently, pupils benefited from chances to explain and justify their reasoning. However, in the infants' class, the group work was too challenging for many pupils because they were unsure of the vocabulary.
74. It is evident from the work of the junior pupils that they do not have enough opportunities to develop their literacy or information & communication skills through this subject. Insufficient work was written up. Conversations with pupils show that they have benefited from a small number of visits and visitors whose contributions have helped to make the subject interesting and stirred them. However, in discussions with them, pupils had not grasped important aspects of the subject, such as where events fitted, which were important and why, or of the changes which happened.
75. The subject leader has only recently taken on responsibility for this subject. At the present time, monitoring is unsatisfactory but subject leader has begun to do this. She identified that resources needed to be better organised and has completed this task. Assessment systems and their use are currently not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged or that they acquire the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding. The school is unable to make sound judgements about its work and standards have dipped since the previous inspection.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in religious education are average for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2, but below average for the end of Year 6.
- Assemblies contribute well to religious education and comply with regulations.
- Since the previous inspection statutory requirements have been regarded and now are met.
- The school's own good scheme of work complies with the locally Agreed Syllabus.

Commentary

76. School assemblies link strongly with different religious festivals and religious education to promote more understanding of cultural diversity. A telling example was the assembly on Holocaust Day, which took place during the inspection. Pupils in most year groups have good opportunities to take part in special assemblies with religious themes. For example, in Year 2 pupils took part in a special assembly on the Nativity 'It's a party'.
77. However, it was evident following discussions with pupils in Year 6, that they have not retained sufficient knowledge and understanding of different religious faiths. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those expected. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding are below those expected. Achievement is unsatisfactory over Years 3 to 6: more could do better.
78. Teaching in Year 5 was satisfactory and in Year 6 it was unsatisfactory. In the satisfactory teaching, pupils were given the opportunity to see a video on Hinduism. They were asked to make notes on the differences and similarities with Christianity. However, the video was rather long and the teacher did not direct the pupils sufficiently on the key points that he wanted them to learn. This limited learning opportunities. In the unsatisfactory teaching, the pupils were expected to sit and listen too long without enough resources being used to challenge and interest them. Consequently, they became fidgety. They did not have enough chance to discuss and explore the key points. Learning opportunities were limited.

79. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. Recently, the co-ordinator has taken on the role and already has identified how she will improve the scheme of work so that pupils can learn more readily. Currently, this change is being implemented. There is a file of work that sets out examples of what is expected by certain ages: it is a useful guide. The use of information and communication technology is impoverished in this subject. Standards have declined since the previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **unsatisfactory**. Standards are below those expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are a few examples of work at satisfactory standards relative to pupils' ages.
- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below those expected: most pupils could achieve more.
- Plans are in hand to improve matters.
- The agreed programme of study is not being followed and so not producing suitable progress in the skills needed to apply media, such as paint, with enough dexterity and skill.
- Most teachers are not using sketchbooks as intended and there is no assessment of work on a regular basis.
- Turnover in staff has detrimentally affected leadership and management of the subject.

Commentary

80. Work samples show that, despite some good examples - the clay masks and pots in Year 3, some good pastel work in Year 1, a few pencil sketches and crayoning in Year 2 - progress is slow in developing the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. Standards are below where they should be in every year except 1 and 3. Nearly all pupils underachieve. This is below the standards reported at the previous inspection.
81. Only a little teaching was seen. This was in Year 1 and it was of good quality. The instruction and guidance were clear, the subject was made interesting and pupils were given suitable choices. Consequently they were interested and productive. The models were produced at the standards expected for most pupils and some achieved more. Suitable encouragement was given to choose materials and colours to create a planned effect. Other work from this year was of a similar standard.
82. There are plans in hand to improve matters. The subject leader is new to the responsibility; and has a good grasp of the school's needs. She is aware of the standards expected and of the need to devise a simple but effective means of assessment to gauge progress and attainment. She plans to provide exemplars of pupils' work. Already, work has begun in putting a folder of examples together. Teachers' planning has been checked and an action plan drawn up. An art club has been established to encourage those with aptitude to do more work. The school is also attempting to achieve an 'Artsmark' award and believes this will help to improve standards. Although in the early stages, preparations are thorough and suitably detailed.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **unsatisfactory**. There is too little work available to make overall judgements about standards in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is too little work available.
- Not much work is sustained and quality suffers from this and a lack of continuity.
- The work seen was below average.
- Assessment of work does not take place.
- Little use is made of information and communication technology to improve skills in this subject.
- A new co-ordinator has not been furnished with information to enable a quick start to be made in taking responsibility for this subject.

Commentary

83. The standard of the small amount of recent work available was below average, particularly through Years 3 to 6, because pupils had done too little sustained work on researching and developing products to a good standard. Brief observations of a lesson in Year 1, scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and discussions with staff and pupils show that pupils complete a varied range of design-and-make projects, including work with food, paper, card, textiles and mouldable materials.
84. Since the last inspection, some improvements in provision have been made. There are now curricular plans, which cover national requirements and identify links with other subjects. However, scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and discussions with pupils show that there is too little learning about designing and evaluating. The associated skills are not consistently improved. Teachers do not assess pupils' work against National Curriculum levels. There is not yet enough use of information and communication technology as part of the design process. The co-ordinator is keen to improve the subject, but has only recently been appointed and has not yet had training for her role. She has yet to find information about and check the quality of teaching and learning. She does not know what standards pupils usually attain.

Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**. There is insufficient information to make an overall judgement about standards. Two lessons only were seen, some assemblies and a little extra-curricular work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has benefited from good training and curriculum guidance from the local education authority advisory service.
- Good teaching was seen in Years 3 and 4.
- All pupils learn the recorder in Year 4 and extra-curricular individual tuition is arranged by the school for playing the clarinet, flute, saxophone and the fife.
- There are performances led by each year group, which also include good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate musical skills they are learning outside school.
- Links between music studied in information and communication technology lessons and music subject lessons are not strong enough.
- Assessment of pupils' progress and attainment is not yet established.

Commentary

85. Teaching and learning were good in both lessons seen. Pupils achieved well because the teachers built effectively on previous lessons and set well organised tasks, which enabled the pupils to develop their strengths by working towards a performance. In one of the lessons, there were good opportunities for pupils who receive instrumental tuition in and out of school to use their skills in the lesson.
86. Since the last inspection, provision has been improved through the adoption of good curricular plans from the local education authority. Staff have benefited from individual training on how to implement them. Although information and communication technology subject studies include the use of electronic music composition programs, pupils' work is not linked to the composition they do in their music lessons. This causes discontinuity. Pupils practise hymns they will sing at assemblies and in performances and standards are satisfactory. However, little opportunity is taken to extend the pupils' appreciation of the music of different times and cultures. For example, there is little information given about music that is played at the start and end of assemblies.
87. The subject leader has only recently taken up the post. She has played a major role in organising the performances and is using tape recording to evaluate standards. She has not yet begun checking the quality of classroom teaching and is aware of the need to introduce an effective assessment system: presently, there are no complete arrangements, but plans are in hand.

Physical education

Provision is **satisfactory**, but standards tail off in Year 6 in gymnastics. Not enough information was gleaned during the inspection to make an overall judgement about standards. Only three lessons were seen, all in gymnastics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good scheme is being followed.
- School teams are successful in competitions, particularly netball.
- The subject co-ordinator is new and not able to say what current standards and quality are. No records were available from the school at the outset.
- Plans are in hand to improve the subject further, particularly assessment.
- No records of swimming proficiency are kept.

Commentary

88. Three lessons were seen, in Years 4, 5 and 6. The teaching quality was satisfactory on the whole, but good in Year 4. In this lesson instruction was clear and offered suitable challenges to which all pupils rose well. They showed good aspects of control in moving about. A good variety of self-selected movements were well linked and fluent. Most were at the standards expected for this year and a few of them attained good standards of expression, control and fluency.
89. At times all teachers spend too much time in discussion with pupils at the expense of pupils moving and exercising enough. However, unsatisfactory standards of control and lack of imagination in developing their ideas, plus carelessness, adversely affect standards in Year 6. Most could do better at gymnastics. Many in Year 5 were inefficient and careless in getting out equipment. This detracted from lesson time and adversely affected what could be achieved. Teachers were torn between taking a lot of time to manage pupils' behaviour, insist on safety and care and providing enough time for instruction.

90. Staff work well as a team in this subject, assist in training pupils for competitions and in providing extra opportunities through clubs. These suitably extend pupils' opportunities and enhance skills. All pupils are eligible for attendance, which adds to the ethos of equality and inclusion. The subject leader is new, and carries also the dual responsibility for information and communication technology. There has not been time to get a handle on physical education. Information made available at handover did not assist this process. No records of swimming proficiency are kept. Nevertheless an action plan has been set up that includes intentions to monitor teaching and create an assessment system. These aspects are much needed. Standards in gymnastics are below those reported at the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. Pupils are developing a good sense of community and citizenship right from the outset in Reception, where help is encouraged. Further social responsibilities are developed through partnerships between established and new pupils and through assemblies where achievements are celebrated. In discussions, pupils from the school council showed a growing understanding of working on behalf of their school community. The school promotes healthy eating and life skills in its general work.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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