

INSPECTION REPORT

GOOD SHEPHERD RC SCHOOL

Downham

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100722

Headteacher: Mr Paul Moriarty

Lead inspector: Mrs Sheila Browning

Dates of inspection: 14-15 June 2005

Inspection number: 266882

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	214
School address:	Good Shepherd RC School Moorside Road Downham Bromley Kent
Postcode:	BR1 5EP
Telephone number:	020 86984173
Fax number:	020 86797003
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Canon John Kavanagh
Date of previous inspection:	14 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Good Shepherd Roman Catholic Primary School, with 104 boys and 110 girls aged three to eleven, is about the same size as most primary schools nationally. Pupils are predominantly Catholic and most come from the surrounding area of Downham, an area of high social and economic deprivation. On entry to the nursery, the children's attainment is well below that usually seen for children of this age. The percentage of pupils having special learning needs is above the national average. Most of these pupils have specific, moderate and autistic learning needs. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is also broadly in line with the national average. There is a high number of pupils drawn from different ethnicities and a very high number with English as an additional language. Forty-five pupils are at the early stages of acquiring English. The school is involved in local and national initiatives such as Education Achievement Zone, Excellence in Cities, Small Schools fund and Sure Start. The school gained the Schools Achievement Award in 2003. Pupil mobility is considerable. There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1510	Sheila Browning	Lead inspector	Art and design Music Personal, social and health education
11414	Ann Bennett	Lay inspector	
23036	Jennifer Nicholson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education
23056	Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Design and technology English as an additional language
35071	Elizabeth MacIldowie	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology
35222	Sara Wiggins	Team inspector	Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Open Book Inspections
6 East Point
High Street
Seal
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN15 0EG

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6-7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8-12
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12-17
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17-18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	19-31
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is reasonably effective in providing a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils but it has serious weaknesses. Standards are not high enough. In the 2004 national tests overall standards, when compared with similar schools, were very low. Achievement overall is unsatisfactory. More able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Though teaching and learning are unsatisfactory recent improvements are evident. Recent changes in the leadership and management of the school have identified the weaknesses and these are quickly being addressed. Improvements seen during the inspection have not yet had time to raise standards but the school is an improving school. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The recently appointed headteacher has significantly improved the way the school is led and managed.
- Staffing changes over a considerable period have caused instability in the pupils' learning and the development and management of the curriculum.
- Very recent improvements in teaching and effective support from classroom assistants are helping to improve pupils' learning. From low starting points children achieve satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage.
- The school's Catholic ethos contributes well to pupils' personal development; as a result pupils show good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are well cared for and every child is valued.

Significant changes within the school since the last inspection in June 1999 affected the rate of improvement, which until very recently has been slow. Results in national tests have declined and achievement is unsatisfactory where it had been judged to be good. The unsatisfactory teaching and learning reflects the past staffing turbulence that the school has experienced. Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships remain good. The issues identified in the last inspection are being addressed and this, combined with greater rigour and improved leadership and management, is rapidly moving the school forward. The school now has permanent staffing and a clear plan for improvement that focuses on raising standards and improving teaching, learning and the quality of education.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	E	E
Mathematics	C	D	E	E
Science	D	E	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

Achievement is unsatisfactory. Many pupils are admitted to the school with attainment that is lower than that nationally, particularly in the basic skills. Because of their low starting points, most are unlikely to reach the nationally set goals in all of the areas they are expected to. Pupils do not reach the standards expected nationally and results in national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2004 were well below average overall. In comparison with schools where attainment at age seven was similar, results were below average. Comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals shows the 2004 results to be very low overall. The school set realistic targets for raising standards of achievement in 2004 but these were not met. In Year 2 to Year 6, work seen during the inspection shows standards to be well below average in English, mathematics

and science. In information and communication technology and geography, standards are average. In history, standards are in line with those expected in Year 2 but are below average in Year 6. Religious education was not inspected. Sampling of pupils' work in other subjects indicates that standards meet national expectations and pupils achieve appropriately. As a result of very recent developments in the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement is improving. Standards are therefore set to improve too.

Provision for pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes towards their work.

Attendance has improved and is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory and improving. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall because, although few individual lessons are unsatisfactory, too few are good or better. There has been insufficient time for the renewed focus on raising standards through good teaching and learning to have had a direct impact on standards. Marking is not sufficiently rigorous and more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Teachers, classroom assistants, and the use of specialist staff encourage pupils to learn independently. The curriculum is satisfactory and is due to be reviewed in terms of the balance and time allocated to all subjects. Extra-curricular opportunities are recently improved. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. Resources have very recently been improved with the exception of the library and for information and communication technology. Staff ensure that pupils are included, well cared for and feel supported. There are strong links with the church and the Catholic community. Links with parents are satisfactory but more could be done to involve parents in raising standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Leadership and management by the headteacher are good and are a significant factor in the school's focus on improvement. As a result, the school is building on its strengths and improvements are evident. Staff share the headteacher's determination to raise standards, and they are now being enabled to do so. The governing body are supportive of the school. Recently the work of the governing body has developed and they realise that greater rigour and challenge are required from them to support the school successfully. Statutory requirements are met. Financial management is secure.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school, which most have chosen because it is Catholic. They realise that standards have dropped since the last inspection but have confidence in the newly appointed headteacher who they say is turning the school around. Pupils have positive views and enjoy being at the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and in all subjects for the more able pupils.
- Build on the improvements seen in teaching and learning and implement assessment and marking procedures securely in all subjects.
- Improve the accommodation particularly for the library, information and communication technology and the Foundation Stage.
- Ensure that governors provide the challenge and rigour to move the school forward successfully.
- Develop the role of co-ordinators.
- Encourage greater parental involvement in their children's learning - for example, through homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Standards in national tests in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well below average in Year 6. Standards in English, mathematics and science seen during the inspection are well below average across the school. Children in the Foundation Stage are overall working at levels below those expected nationally for their age but their achievement is in line with their lower starting points. Standards are not high enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In national tests, standards are well below average in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 1 through to Year 6.
- Children in the nursery achieve well in personal development.
- In reception children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development, and in mathematical, physical and creative areas.

Commentary

1. Children enter the nursery at three with low starting points and many have very little prior experience of books and mark making. For many children communication, language, literacy and social development are the weakest areas. Attainment on entry is lower than at the time of the last inspection. In the nursery and reception, children are receiving an appropriate curriculum. Children achieve well in the nursery, especially in personal development; in reception they achieve satisfactorily overall. Children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development, and mathematical and physical areas. Most children are likely to achieve the goals set nationally in these areas and in creative development. Because of low starting points they are unlikely to reach the goals for communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. It is difficult to compare standards with the last inspection because of changes to curriculum requirements and to the age range since that time. However, they are lower, but in line with the lower starting points.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (13.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.1 (12.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.3 (13.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were well below those of other schools in 2004. Teacher assessments for science were well below average. In comparison with similar schools, ie those with a similar proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, results were similar. It is important to note that the number of pupils receiving free school meals was just on the cusp of the next banding which would have resulted in more favourable comparative outcomes. Results for the higher levels (Level 3) were well below those nationally for writing, mathematics and science, and were very low for reading. This indicates that more capable pupils were not being appropriately challenged. The school's results were within the range of the lowest quarter of schools for reading, writing and mathematics nationally. The overall trend of improvement over the last five years was below the national trend.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.5 (26.2)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	24.8 (25.8)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	26.3 (27.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well below average in English, mathematics and science and were within the range of the lowest quarter of schools across the country. The overall trend of improvement over the last five years has been in line with the rising national trend. In 2004, comparisons with schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals show that results were very low overall; again this number was just on the cusp of the next banding which would have resulted in more favourable comparative outcomes. The progress made between Year 2 and Year 6 (value added) for most pupils was well below that expected. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher level (Level 5) was below average in mathematics and science, and in English was average - again indicating that more capable pupils were not appropriately challenged.
4. There were no significant differences between boys and girls in the national test performances. Girls outperformed boys in reading and writing and they outperformed boys in mathematics at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 the gap narrowed, with boys and girls achieving similarly in mathematics and science but not in English where girls outperformed boys. The school has identified a small group of boys under-performing and has good strategies in place to support their needs. The school has also recently focused on stretching the more able pupils in Years 4 to 6. The whole-school pupil tracking system indicates a rise in attainment for the Year 6 tests in 2005. However, as yet there has been insufficient time for these initiatives to have embedded and impacted significantly on standards.
5. Standards have declined considerably since the last inspection. Barriers to achievement experienced by pupils at the school have been significant over a prolonged period of years. The school has experienced severe staffing mobility, including those at senior management level, and some pupil mobility. This contributed to the decline in many of the areas and especially in standards achieved, which were judged to be good or better in the previous inspection. The profile of the school has also changed. Children are joining with lower starting points, there are similar numbers of pupils with special educational needs and more pupils join the school each year speaking little or no English; all this has compounded the overall standards on entry. Exclusions were high last year and expectations of what pupils were capable of and their behaviour were unsatisfactory.
6. Some of the factors that are instrumental in helping pupils to succeed are only very recently in evidence and as yet have no bearing on overall standards. The school's ethos is appropriate in raising pupils' self-esteem. Pupils have the capacity to tackle new tasks and learning. Attendance has improved. Pupils' behaviour is good although some time is still lost ensuring that pupils remain well focused. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was no better than satisfactory. Factors which continue to affect pupils' achievement and standards attained are: pupils' low starting points, teachers' expectations of what they can achieve, the effectiveness of teaching methods including the use of assessment, the pace of some lessons, and homework not being used consistently to reinforce learning.
7. Standards seen in lessons and in sampling of pupils' work, in Years 2 and 6, indicate that pupils are currently working at well below average levels in English, mathematics and science. In information and communication technology and geography in Years 2 and 6 standards are average. In history standards are average in Year 2 but are below average in Year 6. Throughout the school weak literacy and numeracy skills adversely impact on pupils' achievement in subjects across the curriculum. Sampling in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education indicates that standards meet expectations.

Religious education was not inspected; it will be subject to a Section 23 inspection later in the term.

8. More able and gifted and talented pupils are not generally appropriately challenged, as can be seen from the test results showing comparisons with similar schools. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils and has planned support and intervention plans to meet their needs. Nevertheless, further challenge could be provided through lesson plans, clubs and additional activities. Evidence shows that some pupils from ethnic minority groups and those learning English as an additional language (EAL) achieve well especially when they have mastered the English language. They participate well in group activities. Records show some good achievement by pupils with special educational needs; overall they make satisfactory progress in their learning.
9. In 2004, the school did not achieve the targets it set in English or in mathematics. Targets for 2005 and 2006 are challenging and, if achieved, will represent a significant improvement on current performance. The leadership team shows strong determination to raise standards by developing staff expertise and through focusing on improving teaching and learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Pupils of all ages behave well and have good attitudes towards their work. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is improving as a result of school action and parents' support.
- Pupils want to learn and they behave well.
- Relationships throughout the school are good.
- The school's Catholic ethos contributes well to pupils' personal development.

Commentary

10. Pupils are polite and friendly. They say they enjoy coming to school and they feel they have to work hard. They are enthusiastic about after-school activities. Pupils arrive without the social skills to help them concentrate. They develop these well, so that they become willing learners. Pupils want to get on with the tasks they are set, but sometimes, without clear explanations from their teachers, they are unable to focus and learn. Younger pupils run out of concentration when tasks last too long, or when instructions are not clear enough. Year 5 pupils grasped a difficult science concept well because it was delivered in short chunks, reinforced with interesting video clips. Pupils co-operate with each other well but say they don't always find lessons interesting and fun.
11. The level of exclusions was high last year, but there have been none so far this year. Playground behaviour is energetic, and issues of unkind behaviour are quickly resolved. Pupils behave well, in class and around the school. Behaviour is best when teachers use their presence to wait for pupils' full attention. Pupils behaved very well in the headteacher's assemblies, listening attentively and contributing when asked. They behave well at lunch, waiting patiently for grace before their meal.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	67	3	0
White – Irish	8	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	1	0
Asian or Asian British - any other Asian background	7	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	16	1	0
Black or Black British – African	33	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	5	0
Parent / pupil preferred not to say	2	0	0
Total	160	0	0

12. The school makes good provision for its pupils' personal development. Its Catholic ethos means that each individual is valued and this enhances his or her spiritual, moral and social development. Displays and photographs around the school show that pupils and their special events, like first communion, are valued and celebrated. Many classrooms display pupils' self-portraits, which helps to raise self-esteem. Assemblies make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development, as they are encouraged to see their actions in a Christian context. Pupils enjoy the corporate aspect of singing well together as they practise hymns they will use in church. The headteacher has a good manner with pupils, and models behaviour management well, talking through with pupils how they could deal with disagreements. The school routines happen in an ordered manner; teachers have effective reward schemes which pupils value. Pupils know what is expected of them and willingly undertake routine tasks and school council members take their roles seriously. They know right from wrong, and this is helped by a consistency of approach between home, school and church.
13. Many pupils come from different ethnic backgrounds but all work and play well together. Relationships are good throughout the school. A few reported incidents of racial name-calling were properly dealt with and the parents involved have been supportive. The way pupils work and play together shows that they are more aware of their similarities than their differences. There are prints and proverbs, from various eras and philosophers, around the school to broaden pupils' cultural awareness. Black history month is a feature of the autumn term, and there are plans to celebrate further the various cultures present in the school.
14. Attendance last year was broadly in line with the national median, but has improved during this year as a result of the support of parents and the school's actions in monitoring and introducing a competitive element between classes. Unauthorised absences are similar to the national median. Almost all pupils arrive punctually in the mornings

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6%
National data	5.1%

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3%
National data	0.4%

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, overall. Teaching, learning and assessment are unsatisfactory. There is an appropriate curriculum. The school makes good provision for the welfare of its pupils. Links with the community, especially through the church, are good.

Teaching and learning

Over time the quality of teaching and learning has been unsatisfactory; in the lessons during the inspection, teaching observed was largely satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory. The marking of pupils' work lacks rigour and consistency.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the nursery.
- The small reception classroom and adjoining area impede active learning and there are not enough adult-led activities each week, hindering the achievement of older children.
- Withdrawal sessions sometimes mean that pupils with special educational needs miss the whole of their mathematics lessons.
- Assessment, including marking and homework, is not used well to consolidate and extend learning.
- Good relationships with teachers and plenty of encouragement mean that pupils are keen to learn.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

Commentary

15. The headteacher and deputy headteacher together with staff are working hard to raise the quality of teaching and learning. As the table below shows, during the inspection the teaching observed was largely satisfactory. A few unsatisfactory lessons were seen but not enough teaching was good and no teaching was judged to be very good or excellent. Over time it is clear that teaching has been unsatisfactory, resulting in gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. This, combined with teachers' low expectations of what pupils are capable of, acceptance of work which is not good enough, insufficient written work and inconsistent marking and assessment, reinforces the judgement that teaching and learning overall are unsatisfactory. The decline since the last inspection reflects the turbulent period that the school has experienced. This also confirms that the school leadership's emphasis on improving teaching and learning is well focused and is already beginning to have an impact.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (35%)	15 (48%)	5 (17%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. Teaching across the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the nursery but at the time of the last inspection it was found to be very good. Teachers provide a wide range of interesting, relevant and practical activities that children freely access, inside and outdoors. Learning outdoors has a suitably high profile and encompasses all areas of learning including imaginative and energetic play. Children are very keen to be outside and sometimes settle at activities for extended periods. The balance of adult-supported activities and those that children can select for themselves is good in the nursery. In reception, however, there are not enough adult-led activities each week, hindering the achievement of older children, particularly as they approach Year 1. In addition learning opportunities are sometimes lost, for example when tidying up takes too long. The small reception classroom and messy area impede active learning. Movement between tables is restricted for adults and children. Children become restless when sitting too close on the small carpet area and behaviour deteriorates, especially when not managed effectively enough.
17. General weaknesses throughout the school are that the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow, or too much time is spent on the introduction of an activity. As a result, pupils remain inactive and become restless. Limited time is given to practical and independent learning skills, and on occasion teachers will talk over the noise of pupils and a disproportionate amount of time is spent managing behaviour to the detriment of pupils' learning.
18. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught soundly but pupils have gaps in their previous knowledge and understanding and this is adversely affecting their achievement across several subjects. Opportunities to use ICT skills in other subjects are sometimes missed; nevertheless, good examples were seen in mathematics, science, art and design and in history. Homework is not used well to consolidate and extend learning. Many parents are not reading frequently enough with their children, and their involvement in homework is inconsistent.
19. Teachers plan lessons to meet the needs of all pupils. Classroom assistants make an effective contribution to make sure that all pupils take part and learn. However, withdrawal sessions sometimes mean that pupils with special educational needs miss the whole of their mathematics lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are supported well in small groups by specialist staff. Liaison between class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is to be improved by the school. These pupils make appropriate progress against their targets. Specialist help for pupils with English as an additional language is thinly spread, one year at a time, with some years not receiving support. Teachers and classroom assistants support pupils well in class and as a result they actively participate in group and class tasks. More able pupils and gifted and talented pupils are not consistently challenged.
20. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Assessment systems are in place for the core subjects of English and mathematics, but assessment in science and in other subjects is developing. The system for tracking individual pupils has been progressed and developed by the deputy headteacher. This is beginning to be used effectively to track pupils' progress and to set targets for the whole school and for groups of pupils. As yet pupils are not clear about how to improve. In the Foundation Stage detailed observational assessments provide a useful picture of what children can do but, as the school is aware, do not point towards the next learning steps clearly enough. Throughout the school, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, and in some cases does not help or inform pupils enough as to how they might improve, or praises work when it is not justified, so lacks rigour. Teachers use the results of assessments to ensure that work planned for pupils of average ability, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is matched appropriately to their needs. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are not confused with those of pupils with special educational needs and support. Nevertheless, teachers' expectations of more able pupils are sometimes too low, and there is insufficient challenge in the work set for them.

21. Most pupils respond and participate actively. Relationships are positive and pupils are encouraged to be self-assured and to express themselves, but they can become easily frustrated and lose concentration. They are increasingly confident as they progress through the school, but are not always articulate. They enjoy sharing their views with others. When given the opportunity pupils undertake research independently and successfully. Pupils work well together. They access resources for themselves and enjoy using new technologies, especially the interactive boards.

The curriculum

The overall curriculum provision is satisfactory. The curriculum meets statutory requirements including provision for personal, social and health education including citizenship, and the provision of collective worship. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and constrains the delivery of the National Curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Accommodation is unsatisfactory.
- Resources are very recently improved.
- Links between subjects are not planned sufficiently.
- The timing and rotation of subjects other than literacy and numeracy in the curriculum requires review to ensure a more balanced curriculum.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is broadly based and is inclusive. Statutory requirements are met. Planning documents indicate that all subjects are taught and are allocated the time recommended. Nevertheless, work sampling, the timetable during inspection and talking with pupils revealed that Year 6 pupils had no recorded work in history. Inspectors have concerns about the amount of time afforded to some foundation subjects, particularly geography and design and technology, and the ability to cover the set curriculum. The school explained that this was because teachers had focused on the core subjects running up to national tests and that these subjects would be provided in the remainder of the school term. Inspectors do not consider this to be a reasonable explanation. The issues raised in the last inspection have now been largely addressed. Continuity and progression are addressed in art and design, music and physical education. Swimming is offered at Key Stage 2. However, more could be done to provide opportunities for performance and notation in music, and the emphasis on painting and drawing remains in art and design.
23. The quality and the range of learning opportunities satisfactorily meet the pupils' needs and enable pupils to develop their capabilities. Year 5 and 6 booster classes are now in place to support pupils' learning and raise standards. The school seeks to make the curriculum relevant to pupils. The curriculum and lesson planning are currently under review by the headteacher to ensure a better balance between the subjects taught. The monitoring of pupils' work by senior managers and subject co-ordinators identifies areas for development, which are included in the recently reviewed school improvement plan. Co-ordinators have only recently been involved in the development and monitoring of the curriculum, which draws on national strategies and recommended guidelines. There is an over-reliance on worksheets, for example, in Year 6. This particularly hinders progress among the more able pupils.
24. Cross-curricular links, science and book week, and Black History Month focus on aspects of the curriculum effectively. The humanities curriculum is rooted in aspects of the subjects which have a direct relationship to pupils' backgrounds and where their families come from. Additional extra-curricular activities have recently been reinstated and extended to support pupils in their development and they make good use of these. Residential trips are to be reinstated in the next year. The headteacher also has plans to involve parents more actively in their children's learning.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language is appropriate. The curriculum opportunities encourage pupils to work together and learn from each other. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well included and make good progress. However, there are times when pupils are withdrawn for extra English support and this detracts from their experience of other subjects. The school is aware of this.
26. Learning resources are recently improved and are adequate but will benefit from further attention, particularly the library and information and communication technology. Teachers usually make good use of the newly installed interactive boards and ICT skills are generally well taught. Staffing meets the needs of the National Curriculum. Nursery nurses and trained classroom assistants make effective contributions to learning. Teamwork is very good.
27. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Staff work hard nevertheless, to keep it clean and welcoming. Cramped classrooms hinder learning for reception children, and for pupils in Years 1 to 4. The ICT room and the library are too small, as noted during the last inspection. The ICT room is poorly ventilated and the library is inadequate; improvements are planned for both. There are no doors on nursery toilets. Access between Key Stages 1 and 2, across the two halls, is restricted, and Foundation Stage classes are at opposite ends of the building, limiting liaison. In addition, steps throughout the site hinder access for children with mobility difficulties. Outside, play areas lack grass and trees and, for Years 1 to 6, although spacious, are bleak and uninviting. Play areas for the Foundation Stage are small but suitably equipped, providing a stark contrast for children as they enter Year 1. Covered areas provide shelter in all playgrounds, an improvement since the last inspection, especially in Years 1 to 2. Teaching space for physical activities, however, beyond the classrooms, is good, inside and outdoors. Since the last inspection, there has been limited improvement and that noted is very recent.

Care, guidance and support

The staff make good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Most teachers know their pupils well and provide satisfactory support and guidance. Pupils are satisfactorily involved in school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are good.
- Health and safety and child protection arrangements are appropriate.
- Good arrangements are made for pupils starting school.
- Pupils do not know how they are getting on.

Commentary

28. The adults in the school work well together to provide for pupils' welfare. Teachers are proactive in contacting parents over matters of concern. Enough classroom assistants are trained in first aid to deal with those who are unwell, and midday supervisors with those who are injured at play. Parents were concerned about the surface in the infant playground: there are a lot of injuries, but these are a result of energetic play. Arrangements for child protection are in place and health and safety matters properly monitored, involving governors. Year 1 pupils have lessons in road safety. Inspection evidence concurs with parents' concerns about road safety and thoughtless parking at the end of the day.
29. There are good arrangements for pupils starting school and transferring from Nursery to Reception classes. Teachers in these classes monitor their pupils' personal development thoroughly, but for older pupils this is only done informally. Pupils experience a consistency of guidance because of the common Catholic thread in their lives with similar expectations at home, at school and at church. Most know there is an adult they could turn to in case of need.

However, pupils do not know how they are getting on academically because teachers do not refer to National Curriculum levels, and this means they are not aware that their standards are lower than they should be.

30. The school cares for all pupils with special educational needs well. Individual learning plans are detailed and help teachers to meet pupils' needs. Good strategies are in place to help pupils deal with their emotions, and good classroom assistants and a learning mentor make sure that pupils stay on task, contribute to lessons and work hard.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with its parents and partner schools and colleges. There are good links with the community, especially through the church.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong continuity and common priorities for pupils' personal development between school, the church and home.
- Weekly newsletters keep parents well informed.
- Pupils' annual reports do not give parents enough useful information.
- Parents are not making a big enough contribution towards raising standards.
- Good use of visits, visitors and community provision.

Commentary

31. Parents are satisfied with the school, which most have chosen because it is Catholic. They realise that standards have dropped since the previous inspection, but have confidence that the newly appointed headteacher is turning the school around. They value seeing him in the playground before and after school and the fact that they can see their child's class teacher readily.
32. Weekly newsletters have improved and are being well used to support the school's priorities - for example, raising the profile of attendance and punctuality by weekly reporting on each year group. There are brief half-termly summaries of what each class will be learning, and teachers may add a brief message for the parents of their class, an efficient way of communicating. However, the information parents receive in their child's end-of-year report is only satisfactory. Many of the comments are too glowing, and parents have no information about how their child is getting on compared with national expectations for their age. Parents are not reading frequently enough with their children, and there has been some inconsistency in the setting and marking of homework. Parents are aware that their children are capable of more: a number told inspectors that they could be stretched further. Standards in the school are too low, and parents are not making a big enough contribution towards raising them.
33. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed as to their children's progress and are encouraged to give good support. They are invited to and most attend reviews of progress.
34. The new headteacher has surveyed parents, reported his findings and taken action on the three issues of most concern, for example, by adding extra after-school clubs for younger age groups, using qualified coaches from Millwall football club community scheme and an ex-pupil volunteer. Many issues raised by parents were the same concerns reported in the pre-inspection period: the quality of school meals, availability of after-school clubs and homework. He has made a good start at tackling these: he eats lunch with the pupils, is regularising homework, and has plans further to involve parents through Saturday morning football and curriculum information evenings.

35. There are strong links with the church and Catholic community and almost all pupils transfer to the Catholic secondary school and these links are good. This makes for a unified approach between church, school and home that contributes to the school's good ethos. Good use is being made of visits and initiatives to extend and enhance the curriculum. Pupils visit the theatre, museums, and art galleries and there are many visitors into school. Pupils get involved in local events and during the inspection Year 1 pupils were being taught road safety under a Transport for London scheme.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good, and are key factors in the school's recent and rapid improvement. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and governors. Management systems are rapidly improving. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is supportive but is not sufficiently rigorous. They show the commitment to move the school forward. The school's administration is effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership and management. He has high aspirations and a clear vision to move the school forward.
- There has been significant instability in staffing but this is now settling.
- The school improvement plan effectively focuses on the necessary priorities to raise standards and the quality of education.
- Opportunities for professional development are given a high priority.
- Governors are much better informed than they were but do not yet provide sufficient challenge and rigour.
- The role of co-ordinators is underdeveloped.

Commentary

36. Governance is satisfactory. The chair of governors has a clear understanding of his role. He recognises that though the governing body are very supportive of the school there is an urgent need to develop their role as critical friends to move the school forward. Training for this is planned. The key issue raised in the last report, in terms of devising a mechanism for governors to monitor and evaluate the success of spending decisions and activating draft procedures for visits to classrooms, is only now being addressed. Governors are more actively involved in all aspects of school life. Through their committees and recent regular information, governors are better informed about the strengths and weaknesses within the school. The chair of governors works closely with the leadership team and staff. Statutory requirements are met. There has been recent improvement since the last inspection.
37. Leadership by the headteacher is good. His increasingly shared vision is based on all pupils reaching their full potential and on providing high quality teaching and support. He is committed to developing the school further as a self-evaluating school. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher in this. Their collective experience and knowledge and use of tracking individual pupils' progress as they move through the school are successfully raising teachers' expectations of what the pupils are capable of. The headteacher has a high profile around the school and provides support and encouragement to others. Parents told inspectors how impressed they were, and spoke of the recent improvements in the school since his arrival this term.
38. On the headteacher's arrival at the school, very little planning was in place for school improvement. Structures and systems were not developed. Immediate attention was needed to move the school forward in a positive direction. The headteacher has quickly identified key areas for improvement and has immediately set about addressing important and necessary issues. As a result rapid improvements have been made. Nevertheless, there has been insufficient time for these to have yet significantly improved standards. Weaknesses in

teaching, achievement, the curriculum and subject provision have been identified and are being addressed. Professional development has a high priority and staff are being enabled to develop their roles and responsibilities. Performance management systems are recently developed, with plans to cascade them through the school to all staff. A regular cycle of monitoring and evaluation of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' work has been put in place. As yet formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning other than by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are at early stages but plans are in hand to address this aspect alongside longer-term school improvement. The headteacher has successfully built on the ethos of the school, and consolidated the commitment and willingness of all staff. The school increasingly includes all groups and successfully promotes positive relationships and racial harmony.

39. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory until very recently. There has been significant instability in staffing, including at senior management level. There is now a permanent staff; they are willing and supportive and are an increasingly effective team. Teachers are better informed about performance issues and are provided with comprehensive information. This, along with regular morning meetings and support from leadership, helps staff focus on school improvement. With the openness of leadership and management and the planned intensive support programme from the local education authority starting in September 2005 the school is well placed and has the capacity to improve.
40. The special educational needs Code of Conduct is fully implemented. The leadership by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is satisfactory as she is not class based and is given much time to fulfil her role. She is well organised and successfully identifies special needs early. However, further liaison is needed between the SENCO and class teachers to ensure that the full curriculum is available to all and that pupils' needs are met well. The school is strongly committed to helping these pupils and allocates extra funds to make sure that their needs are met. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory apart from the fact that support is thinly spread across the school.
41. Leadership and management in the Foundation Stage are secure. The competent co-ordinator has a clear view of future development. She is working hard to improve provision despite the location of the two classes - at opposite ends of the school. She values particularly the partnership with parents and encourages involvement in their children's learning, through sharing books, for example, and playing games.
42. The school benefits from membership of the local Educational Action Zone (EAZ) (*now SAGE*) and various initiatives funded through it. These include learning mentors, and a number of intervention strategies are effectively managed. School managers make the most of the support provided by the local network of schools and outside agencies.
43. Financial control and administration are secure. The school works well within its budget. The school development plan clearly identifies priorities, with earmarked funding for specific developments, such as the urgently needed improvements for the library, information and communication technology and ongoing refurbishment. Procedures and systems are well managed and the budget is monitored and controlled carefully. Governors apply the key principles of 'best value' in purchases but achieve unsatisfactory value for money in the quality of provision across the school related to pupils' attainment on entry and standards achieved.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£850,854	Balance from previous year	£114,369
Total expenditure	£869,988	Balance carried forward to the next	£95,235
Expenditure per pupil	£4,065		

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in the nursery is good.
- Teachers provide a wide range of interesting, relevant and practical activities.
- The reception classroom is too small.

Commentary

44. Children enter the nursery at three with low starting points, especially in language and social development. Many have little prior experience of books and mark making. Attainment on entry is lower than at the time of the last inspection. The school provides appropriately for Foundation Stage children with particular learning needs, including those at early stages of learning English. A sensitive individual and practical approach, especially in the nursery, with teaching in small steps, enables these children to settle and enjoy activities as well as the other children. After a gradual introduction, children attend the nursery full time. They transfer to the reception class three terms later.
45. Children in the nursery achieve well, especially in personal development. In reception they achieve satisfactorily overall. They achieve well in personal, social and emotional development, and mathematical, and physical areas. Most children are likely to achieve the goals set nationally in these areas and also in creative development. Because of low starting points they are unlikely to reach the goals for communication language and literacy and for knowledge and understanding of the world. It is difficult to compare standards with the last inspection because of changes to curriculum requirements and to the age range since that time. Overall, however, they are lower, in line with lower starting points.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers place an appropriately high priority on personal development.
- Children are settled and secure in school.

Commentary

46. Good teaching enables children to achieve well in this area and most are likely to reach the national goals. Strengths of the nursery teaching are the teacher's sensitive appreciation of the impact for young children of starting school and the way she works to encourage secure settling. The caring, friendly approach helps most children to part with ease from parents and carers and be comfortable in the calm and welcoming environment. Children in nursery and reception enjoy coming to school and soon settle to the wide variety of interesting activities on offer. They are familiar with routines and move about the classrooms and outside areas with confidence. They are establishing good attitudes to learning. Overall, staff set clear guidelines for behaviour and as a result children in reception mostly behave sensibly. Their behaviour falters occasionally, however, when restlessness is not managed effectively enough. With patient reminders younger children try hard to share. Older children enjoy playing and working together. Teachers foster children's appreciation of cultural diversity well, using personal and

parents' experience to good effect. The suitably high priority that staff give to this area effectively underpins all other areas of work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide many opportunities for children to write independently but there are not enough adult-led structured writing activities in reception.
- Staff encourage children to talk.

Commentary

47. Teaching is satisfactory in this area. Children are unlikely to reach the national goals because teachers are not yet skilful enough to fully compensate for their low starting points. Children achieve satisfactorily overall. Teachers and other trained staff often join children in their play and encourage talk and ideas, especially in the nursery where much communication is non-verbal on entry. Younger children in particular make good strides and now are keen to chat, as are the older children. Often, however, they find it difficult to express their thoughts clearly. Children with English as an additional language are able to make their needs known, some with confidence. Higher-attaining children are on course to reach the set goals, especially in reading.
48. Teachers read books in lively and sometimes dramatic ways so that children across the key stage enjoy stories, joining in with familiar phrases. In reception, staff reinforce children's knowledge of sounds and letters appropriately and encourage children to build up simple words. Many children read short familiar sentences. Some higher-attaining children read fluently and with expression.
49. Teachers encourage independent writing effectively by providing a good range of materials for children to use in self-chosen activities. As a result children across the key stage write freely, making appointments in the vet surgery or farm shop, for example. In reception, however, opportunities to practise developing writing skills in a structured way are limited. Children, including those with the potential to attain highly, do not always achieve as well as they could in writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good links with other parts of the curriculum.
- In reception, there are insufficient adult-supported mathematical activities.
- Teaching groups are sometimes too big for all children to be fully engaged.

Commentary

50. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Most children are likely to reach the national goals. They achieve satisfactorily. Teachers provide appropriately challenging tasks and a suitably practical approach. Children in reception manage simple computation, checking answers with fingers. Teachers exploit the mathematical potential in stories and classroom routines. They make good links with other parts of the curriculum, so practical symmetry in the nursery complements learning about butterflies, for instance. They encourage children to recognise numbers in the environment. Staff join children in their chosen play and often introduce

counting. In independent play children practise writing numerals such as telephone numbers. Overall, however, in reception, there are not enough adult-supported mathematical activities, and teaching groups are sometimes too big for all children to be fully engaged.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a good range of living things to stimulate children's curiosity about the natural world.

Commentary

51. Teaching is satisfactory overall in this area in the aspects seen during the inspection. Because of low starting points children are unlikely to fully reach the national goals. They achieve satisfactorily overall. In scientific aspects, teachers provide a wide variety of living things that stimulate curiosity effectively. The butterflies, for example, fascinated reception children. Children enjoy construction play and sometimes make extended structures such as the church interior. Children approach computers with confidence and in reception some can complete a simple game. Teachers raise children's awareness of the wider environment effectively through visits to other parts of the school, the locality and further afield. Nursery children, for example were particularly stimulated by the extensive view from the sports field, drawing large pictorial maps and saying such things as 'Look I can see Crystal Palace. I can see the whole world. I can see the tower with a flag. It's Crystal Palace'.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have ample opportunities for energetic play.

Commentary

52. Children achieve satisfactorily and most are on course to reach the national goals. Many older children have good manipulation skills and use tools such as pencils, scissors and glue sticks with dexterity. Younger children enjoy squeezing, rolling and pressing dough. Teachers use the small outside areas well. They provide children in nursery and reception with ample opportunities for energetic play. Regular appropriately structured physical sessions encourage older children to practise and improve skills such as throwing and catching. On occasion, however, learning opportunities are lost, as when reception children waited too long for a turn with the ball. Their attention waned and behaviour deteriorated. Overall, teaching is satisfactory.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to play imaginatively.

Commentary

53. Little direct teaching was seen in this area. From observing children working independently and looking at displays, indications are that children are likely to reach most of the set goals. They achieve at least satisfactorily. Teachers provide an appropriate range of activities for children to experiment with colour. Staff regularly sing with the children and many join in the wide variety of songs and action rhymes with enthusiasm. In independent play they experiment freely with musical instruments including, in the nursery, a piano. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to play imaginatively and make up their own stories, as nursery children did in the farm cottage.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are well below average and have declined significantly since the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening meet expectations by the time that pupils leave the school.
- Over time the quality of teaching has been unsatisfactory. During the inspection it was satisfactory overall.
- Leadership of this subject has had too little impact on raising standards.
- The library is inadequate but improvements are planned.
- The writing curriculum is too narrow and links with other subjects are not planned and organised sufficiently.

Commentary

54. Standards are well below average across the school. Test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2004 were well below the national average for reading and writing. This matches inspection evidence but currently the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 in Year 6 is below average, not well below. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language but this has not changed significantly since the last inspection. Pupil's progress over time is too slow and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen significantly since the last inspection.
55. Pupils speaking and listening skills are average in Year 6 as they are given many opportunities to develop their thoughts and ideas. They plan their work and review what they have done with their teacher, teacher assistants and classmates. Older pupils use a reasonable vocabulary, and because of good relationships, are confident and keen to talk to the whole class. Pupils are challenged to explain what they mean and extend what they have to say. This is a good improvement from Year 1 when pupils are shy and speak in quiet voices. Achievement in this area is satisfactory for all pupils as much emphasis is placed upon this area of the curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
56. Overall reading skills are well below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school pupils have limited strategies to decipher new words. They struggle to use 'sounds in words' or phonics to tackle new or difficult words such as 'stomach'. In Year 2, pupils' limited vocabulary and general knowledge mean that they do not understand some descriptions such as, 'ornamental dagger'. Some pupils read with expression, retell stories with good detail and find and use non-fiction books. This is difficult with a library, which is inaccessible for the younger pupils and unattractive, with too few books for research for the older pupils. Many books are too old and in poor condition. They are difficult to find, as organisation and the

quality of books are poor. Even older pupils do not visit the library regularly although many belong to the local library. 'Reading records' are well maintained but they do not give parents, teachers and their assistants specific pointers as to areas for improvement or suggest ways to help.

57. Standards in writing are well below average as pupils, particularly the more able, are not challenged to complete work and develop a good style to meet the needs of different audiences. In Key Stage 2 there is too little creative writing and poetry. Too much time is given to developing individual skills and not putting these together to produce extended, improved pieces of writing. Currently, ideas developed during speaking and listening times, where pupils work well together, are not sufficiently impacting upon the quality of written work. Time given to writing is often too short so too little written work is produced. However, in some classes good efforts are being made to give pupils opportunities to develop their ideas by extending and improving their work.
58. Over the past few years, there has been a high turnover of staff and teaching has been unsatisfactory overall. However, teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall with some good and little unsatisfactory teaching. Currently, classroom assistants work effectively to make sure that all pupils are included. However, help for pupils with English as an additional language is spread too thinly across the school. Some years receive no specialist help. Teaching is best when a variety of activities are provided which excite and challenge pupils' interest and the pace is good- for example, when a rap poem was performed and taped. Pupils related to the topic and nervously enjoyed hearing their performance so that they were able to improve. In less successful lessons the pace is too slow, partly because the designated time is too long and teachers do not ensure that all are attentive and expected to produce a good quantity of work. Marking of pupils' work is often unsatisfactory. In a few classes teachers mark their pupils work well and give good opportunities for creativity. Rarely does marking give good suggestions for improvement. Sometime it praises work when this is not justified. Teachers' expectations are sometimes too low for the quality and quantity of work expected.
59. Overall leadership of this subject has been unsatisfactory, as standards have fallen. However, the relatively new leader of English has had too little time to raise standards but has made several efforts to do so. There is very good teamwork and the whole school aims to improve. Due to the current leader's initiatives and study good ways are provided to do this such as 'reviewing the whole curriculum' to provide good guidance for developing English skills in other subjects. At the moment these links exist but are not well organised. Also the library is to be improved to help raise standards in reading.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Currently the timetable and plans do not provide sufficient, formal links between subjects in order to use time efficiently and maintain pupils' interest. Literacy skills are developed through other subjects informally. The school is seeking to improve links and so a new curriculum is being developed. The aim is to make the curriculum more interesting and exciting.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the best lessons observed, all pupils were engaged in their learning and experiencing success.
- Most teachers use information and communication technology (interactive whiteboards) effectively to support teaching and learning.

- Standards have been too low for a number of years but the school has recently developed a rigorous plan to raise attainment.

Commentary

61. Standards in the Year 6 and Year 2 tests in 2004 were well below national averages. These standards have declined since the last inspection in 1999 when they were both above national averages. Nevertheless, standards in Year 6 in 2004 were in line with those achieved by schools where the children had achieved similar results at the end of Year 2. Many pupils' progress in lessons is satisfactory but there is a lack of achievement at higher levels. At the time of the last inspection, progress was judged to be good. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is satisfactory. The need to raise standards in mathematics is a key focus of the school improvement plan and there are plans to begin with the rigorous analysis of this year's test results.
62. By the end of Year 6, standards are well below average. Pupils' achievement in the lesson observed was good because they responded well to the teacher's high expectations and inclusive teaching. In mental mathematics most were accurate and many very fast in their calculations. They explained clearly a variety of methods of calculation and this was obviously well embedded practice. They used technical vocabulary and their numerical knowledge was appropriate for their age.
63. Standards are also well below average by the end of Year 2 but pupils made good progress in the lesson observed. All pupils understood what they had to do and displayed a keen sense of satisfaction, achievement and enjoyment. Children chose and applied the correct operation (addition or subtraction) to problem-solving scenarios and identified the appropriate specific vocabulary that related to them (*e.g. 'sum', 'total', difference'*). They were familiar with and competent in explaining their methods. Pupils with English as an additional language and with special educational needs were enabled to experience equal success by inclusion in pairs and groups offering peer support and by additional teaching assistant support.
64. Teaching is satisfactory overall although it was good in only two of the six lessons observed. Lesson planning is satisfactory overall, with all plans identifying a lesson objective that is shared with the class (both orally and visually) and recorded by pupils. Although all lessons are structured in three parts, some devote too much time to the whole- class opening activity, leaving insufficient time for pupils to develop independent learning skills in the main part of the lesson. In one lesson in Key Stage 2, however, pupils were expected to operate independently on a task for which they had received insufficient whole- class teaching and practice. Lesson plans identify methods and tasks for different ability levels and in the best lessons these result in pupils making good progress from their own starting points. The teacher introduces more challenging tasks and questions to extend the learning of more able children whilst a range of strategies and resources supports children who find the work more difficult. In other, less successful lessons, more able children are insufficiently challenged and the work is sometimes too difficult for pupils with special educational needs. The use of interactive boards has enhanced the quality of teaching and learning and provided instant visual reinforcement. The boards were underused in some lessons.
65. Pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 produce a substantial amount of work in their books. In both year groups the overall standard achieved is below average mainly because there is little evidence of higher levels of attainment. There is broad curriculum coverage in Key Stage 2 whereas in Key Stage 1, the strong numeracy focus leaves other aspects of the subject less well covered. In Key Stage 2 the presentation of pupils' work is generally satisfactory or better but some adult comments recorded in children's books are untidy, thus providing poor models. In both Key Stages 1 and 2, marking is regular and encouraging but sometimes does not give specific guidance for improvement, particularly to pupils who experience greater difficulty with the work.

66. The school has rightly identified the raising of standards in mathematics as a major issue and this is a key focus of the school improvement plan. Areas for planned development include data analysis, pupil assessment, tracking and targeting, regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, scrutiny of planning and pupils' work and the training and development of staff. The mathematics co-ordinator's role is developing and she has a clear vision for improving provision in the subject. She has already arranged for the purchase of additional resources including those to support problem solving.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory although relatively limited. Examples include bar charts, graphs and the recording of various measurements in science and using tables in ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have been too low for a number of years.
- Overall the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory.
- There is a lack of specific advice to pupils on how to improve.
- Continuing professional development in science for teachers has not been sufficiently addressed.
- The well-informed subject co-ordinator has made a start on raising the profile of science across the school.

Commentary

68. Standards in the Year 6 tests and at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well below national averages. Standards in Year 6 were below average when compared with schools where the children had achieved similar results at the end of Year 2. These standards have declined since the last inspection in 1999 when, although they were below average when compared with all schools nationally, they were average when compared with similar schools. A significant number of children enter the school with well below average attainment but the progress made by the time they reach Year 6 (value added) is well below that expected when compared with similar schools and all schools nationally. In the majority of lessons seen pupils' progress was unsatisfactory, whereas at the time of the last inspection it was judged to be sound.
69. It was not possible to observe a science lesson in Year 6 because science is not timetabled for the class during the second half of the summer term. Work in pupils' books demonstrated broad coverage of National Curriculum science with pupils following the appropriate units of study. Pupils' work ranged from average to well below with no evidence of higher levels of attainment. Achievement is therefore unsatisfactory overall. Entries were often infrequent, for example, monthly. This is in sharp contrast to the amount of work that pupils produce in other core subjects. All pupils appeared to tackle similar tasks but at their own ability level. Pupils who experienced more difficulty, however, had incomplete or missing items of work. What was recorded suggested a lack of comprehension or inability to decode text, indicating that below-average literacy skills are adversely impacting on achievement. Several pieces of work across the ability range appeared to be copied. There were some examples of fair testing and investigative work. The teacher did not always record a response to pupils' work in their books and there was a lack of specific guidance on how to improve. There was less evidence of completed work in this core subject than in others and it appeared less rigorous and intense.

70. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils made unsatisfactory progress in the lesson observed. They lacked the mathematical skills and knowledge to conduct a fair test that involved measuring and recording their results on a bar chart and some were too easily satisfied with fast, inaccurate results. They did not appear to have grasped the concept of a fair test. Pupils did not get a sense of satisfaction from the lesson because their results were incomplete or poor. Work in pupils' books ranged from average to well below and attainment is therefore below average overall. Pupils are working through the units of study with broad coverage of National Curriculum. Children demonstrate varying ability to use methods of recording. Pupils who find the subject more difficult produced less work or were supported by a teaching assistant or the use of alternative worksheets. Where work was incomplete, the pupils' grasp of new knowledge was unclear. Poor writing skills were hampering the progress of a minority of pupils. More able pupils were increasing in competence, maturity and the length of their work across the year. They were beginning to include examples of technical vocabulary. The majority of work seen was regularly marked with examples of pupils' self-evaluation using smiley and sad faces. There was limited specific guidance to pupils on how they could improve.
71. Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in two of the six lessons seen. In one lesson, in Key Stage 2 where teaching and learning were good, pupils knew from their investigative work that condensation and evaporation are opposite processes. They were completing a summary of practical experiments carried out earlier in the week, giving them a record of what they had learned. Their interest was maintained by the use of the interactive whiteboard to drag and drop answers into the text. The teacher had good class management skills. In another lesson in Key Stage 2, when pupils were investigating force and friction, teaching, learning and pupil progress were unsatisfactory partly because of the disproportionate amount of time spent managing behaviour to the detriment of pupils' learning. The clear lesson objective was not achieved because of their preoccupation with 'playing' with equipment. This came close to becoming a health and safety issue because of children dangling and bouncing heavy weights from force meters rather than using the equipment for the intended purpose. They were expected to do too much during one lesson and many were unable to achieve this. They appeared to have little concept of a fair test and their teacher did not take the opportunity of using their conflicting findings for them to consider this. In other lessons there were examples of investigative work although immature approaches to learning suggested a low baseline of prior attainment and experience. Pupils were presented with equipment rather than encouraged to select the most appropriate for the task. They demonstrated a need to play with it at the expense of achieving the lesson objective. Although they were allowed to 'get things wrong', then think and try again, the balance between the two was not always productive.
72. The well-informed science co-ordinator has raised the profile of science across the school including the establishment of a successful science week. She is aware that there needs to be further development of investigative work and fair testing. The school acknowledges the need to raise standards and, to this end, the co-ordinator has developed assessment and recording systems where before none were in place. There are plans for the tracking and targeting of pupils in line with practices for literacy and numeracy. The tracking system will include pupils' self-evaluation. Resources had previously been poor but priorities now identify the extension of ICT resources together with the raising of expectations. There has been some moderation of pupils' work with feedback and targets given to teachers. There are plans to extend this. The co-ordinator has identified a lack of staff development opportunities and has delivered training herself. The use of interactive whiteboards has already improved provision and engages pupils in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been an improvement in provision since the last inspection and further improvements are planned.

Commentary

73. Standards are average overall as indicated by individual assessment using a graphic readout of pupils' skills and levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This system provides summative and formative assessment allowing areas for development to be targeted. There are plans to develop detailed computer analysis of information and communication technology skills and progress for each pupil.
74. Only one full lesson in Key Stage 2 was seen during the inspection although two small groups supported by classroom assistants were also observed in the small computer suite. Standards were average in all three whilst the teaching, learning and achievement in all three were good. Most pupils made good progress while engaged in a task appropriate to their age and achieved well. Clear and direct teaching together with additional support where required ensured that pupils with a range of abilities were able to succeed. They were very interested in the task of using a drawing package to create a plan of their ideal bedroom. Pupils selected the required programme independently and explained clearly which toolbar to use and the appropriate drawing icons to choose. They used the correct terminology at the insistence of the teacher. They knew how to add and amend text and how to save their work. In Key Stage 2, a small group of four pupils, well supported by a teaching assistant, downloaded a set of digital photographs that they had taken on a recent trip to The National Gallery. They demonstrated their ability to use the memory cardholder and download process. Pupils were skilled at pasting these into PowerPoint presentations for which they were also competently writing text. Some children chose independently to search The National Gallery website for photographs of paintings they had seen on their trip and paste these into the presentation instead. Techniques with which they were familiar and competent included cutting, pasting, dragging, cropping and resizing and creating various text effects including scrolling, spiralling and many more. All children in the class were subsequently able to give demonstrations of their work using the class computer and interactive whiteboard. Attractive work was displayed that demonstrated their abilities using Microsoft Publisher. Pupils had produced three-column leaflets incorporating Clipart images and showing their ability to manipulate text and graphics together to create an advertisement.
75. At the end of Year 2, pupils' work showed an average range of attainment. Pupils demonstrated a range of skills. Pupils had also created an attractive corridor display using 'Paintbrush' very effectively to manipulate digital photographs of themselves to achieve a variety of effects and distortions.
76. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of her subject. She has been in post since the last inspection, during which time there have been a number of improvements. There are more computers installed in the suite and there has been an increase in the numbers of laptops for both pupils and teachers. These measures, together with a review of the timetable for the combined use of these resources and training provided for both teachers and classroom assistants, have resulted in more effective use of resources and better coverage of the curriculum. The installation of interactive boards in each classroom (with training for staff) engages the pupils' attention and has the potential to improve the learning in all other subjects. The school has plans to extend the computer suite and this will significantly enhance the provision in this subject. The monitoring and scrutiny that the co-ordinator has carried out have been on an informal basis but lesson observation and work scrutiny are identified for further development. She is aware of the need to extend the school's work in control technology.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. The school has invested in interactive whiteboards for each classroom to make teaching and learning more interactive. Teachers were seen using this technology effectively in a number of different lessons. When pupils were asked about the subjects in which they used information and communication technology, their answers included: writing stories, playing mathematics games, using the internet for research, for revision for tests (Year 6), to make graphs in science and to conduct fair tests in science (measuring heat, sound and light).

HUMANITIES

78. Judgements for geography are based on lessons seen, work sampling, and other evidence available. Two lessons were observed in geography and two in history. The scrutiny of work and evidence of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils also support the judgements that follow. Religious education was not inspected.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their skills because there is insufficient time to fully deliver the scheme of work.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are good, enabling pupils to learn through discussion.
- There are too few formal opportunities to check the quality of provision in this subject.

Commentary

79. Standards in Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 are average. Year 2 pupils understand that people live in different places and that the physical features are likely to be different. They can draw a simple plan. Year 6 pupils identify the physical and human processes that contribute towards the change of use of a field. They show appropriate understanding of the ways in which decisions concerning places affect the quality of life. However, too little work is completed across the school. Although achievement is satisfactory overall the work seen in books indicates that the more able pupils lack sufficient challenge to develop their skills to achieve the higher levels.
80. No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1. However, judgements based upon pupils' previous work indicate that teaching is satisfactory in quality. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 are mostly satisfactory. In the lessons observed the teachers displayed good subject knowledge and used questioning well to develop pupils' thinking. In a Key Stage 2 class, tasks were well matched to pupils' differing abilities and were used well to challenge the pupils and make them keen to find out about life and places in India. They all remained on task throughout the lesson. The good relationships between the teacher and the pupils enabled everyone in another Key Stage 2 class to talk very effectively and in depth about Africa and its economic problems. Throughout the school pupils use appropriate geographical terminology, with younger pupils describing Asia as a continent and Great Britain as a country, and older pupils displaying a good understanding of the equator and knowledge of differing climates.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. While some monitoring of books has been done, the co-ordinator has not yet checked whether provision is consistent in all classes. Teachers' marking varies considerably, from books having clear comments to encourage progress to folders being unmarked in Key Stage 2. New assessment procedures have not yet been put into place. The lack of time currently available for the subject results in a gap between what is planned and what is actually completed. Nevertheless, the subject

leader has a very clear picture of what needs to be done. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Limited recording of history in Key Stage 2.
- Topics covered are celebrated with good quality display.
- Lack of appropriate challenge for some tasks adversely affects achievement.

Commentary

82. Standards in Year 2 are in line with those expected but standards in Year 6 are below average. Improvements since the last inspection have been unsatisfactory.
83. Achievement is satisfactory. Key Stage 1 pupils have a developing understanding of chronology and are aware that ways of life were different in the past. They have a factual knowledge of major events such as the Fire of London. However, recorded work is nearly all identical. Worksheets provide insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils in particular. Between Years 3 and 5, pupils' achievement continues to be at least in line with expectations. Pupils in wrote sensitively about the plight of evacuees. Older pupils learnt about features of Victorian life and were encouraged to imagine the thoughts and feelings of those living in past times. This enhances their understanding. Older pupils had no recorded work although during the lesson observed achievement was satisfactory.
84. Judgements based upon pupils' previous work and lessons indicate that teaching is satisfactory in quality at Year 2. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory with some good elements. In both the lessons observed the appropriate use of questioning and resources ensured that all pupils were fully involved in the lesson and that behaviour was good. In the Year 2 lesson old photographs were used effectively as a focal point for discussion. This led to a secure understanding of differences in the past. Pupils in Year 6 used their research skills successfully to find the climate and weather conditions of the countries to be encountered by Sir Francis Drake on his voyage around the world. Displays in corridors and classrooms give the subject a good profile and reflect links with other subjects.
85. Leadership is satisfactory. By the recent monitoring of books and planning the co-ordinator has developed a good understanding of how to develop the subject and raise standards. However, she has not yet developed an understanding of strengths in teaching and learning. Assessment is developing, with formal structures existing but not being consistently used by all teachers. Management is satisfactory overall but further curriculum development is needed to improve the quantity and levels of work being produced.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. In creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects, work was sampled. One lesson was observed in art and design, none in design and technology, one in music and two lessons in physical education. Displays, the scrutiny of pupils' work, evidence of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils support the judgements that follow.
87. One lesson was observed in **art and design**, in Key Stage 2. Documentation and a sample of work were analysed from other year groups and additional evidence was provided by displays around the school. The evidence indicates that by the end of Years 2 and 6 standards achieved are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an

additional language achieve appropriately. This matches the standards seen in the last inspection. Work on display reflects secure teaching and learning. Pupils in Key Stage 1 explore and paint symmetrical shapes, and manipulate digital photographs of self-portraits. Key Stage 2 pupils use ICT to research and select portraits after the style of Picasso, older pupils have visited The National Gallery and study Tudor paintings. Sketchbook studies indicate opportunities to use different media and develop appropriate observational and recording skills and techniques. As at the time of the last inspection there is limited evidence of experimenting and exploring three-dimensional form and media other than pencil, crayon and paint.

88. Teaching in the lesson seen was unsatisfactory. The focus to design a recruitment poster for seamen to join Sir Francis Drake on his voyages linked to history was somewhat contrived. The pupils demonstrated ideas of communication through a poster but the art content was very limited and few artistic skills were developed. Pupils were not focused and were easily distracted. Nor did the teacher intervene to help pupils understand how to improve their work.
89. Displays of pupils' work, including those integrating art, science and information and communication technology skills, enhance the school environment. The subject is appropriately led and managed. Requirements for the National Curriculum are met. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
90. **Design and technology** was sampled as no lessons were observed during the inspection. There is a very new co-ordinator who has purchased a new scheme of work to support teachers. She knows that several teachers lack confidence in this subject and thus it is a priority within the school plan. Finance has been allocated to improve the inadequate resources. This subject is included within the curriculum, often in blocks of time. For example, pupils with an additional language plan and prepare a fruit salad, in Year 5 pupils make bread and write a report about this and Year 4 pupils examine and design torches. However, too little emphasis is given to this subject as pupils talk about their work as being a 'long time ago' and being 'unfinished'.
91. There is insufficient evidence to form secure judgements about pupils' standards and achievements in **music**. Only one lesson in music was observed, in Key Stage 1. This was a satisfactory lesson in which pupils used their knowledge of instruments and the different sounds they make to perform and control short expressive compositions to accompany a poem. The teacher successfully encouraged them to listen to and to identify everyday pre-recorded sounds around them. A variety of recorded music is played as pupils enter and leave assemblies. They sing well in assembly and with enjoyment. The subject is temporarily led and managed by the headteacher. There is a popular school choir and there are opportunities for pupils to take part in local festivals and musical events.
92. There is insufficient evidence to form secure judgements about pupils' standards and achievements in **physical education**. The two lessons seen, talking to pupils and looking at other evidence, however, indicate that standards meet national expectations in Years 1 to 6, reflecting the findings of the last inspection. Pupils now experience the full range of physical activities, including swimming at Key Stage 2, representing an improvement. Statutory requirements are now fully met in this subject.
93. Lessons seen included appropriate warm-up and cool-down elements, and older pupils in particular showed an understanding of the value of physical exercise for their health. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language were fully included and joined in as enthusiastically as their peers. Pupils enjoyed being active and energetic. Teachers extend physical skills effectively, as in Year 5 when pupils practised different ways of throwing and catching and improved. Teachers demonstrate skills appropriately to reinforce learning, and encourage pupils to evaluate performance. Weaker aspects of teaching occur when pupils do not enjoy two timetabled lessons each week because of other work, as on occasion in Key Stage 2 or because, as in Key Stage 1, only one lesson is scheduled.

94. After-school clubs for netball, football and basketball enrich physical education provision in Years 4, 5 and 6, and pupils keenly participate. Provision is further enhanced by cultural activities such as African dance and by involvement in a local football league (semi-finals reached last year).
95. The subject is temporarily led and managed by the new headteacher who is fully aware of the need to develop the co-ordination role, including establishing monitoring and assessment systems, in line with other foundation subjects. Resources and accommodation for physical education are satisfactory overall. Good aspects are the two halls available and spacious outdoor pitches, two of which have an all-weather surface. The school lacks suitable grassed areas.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Personal, social and health and citizenship education (PSHCE)

96. This area of the school's work was sampled through teachers' planning, outcomes and discussions with pupils and staff. Insufficient evidence was gained to form a secure judgement about standards, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning. Provision is satisfactory and links well with the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school gives appropriate attention to sex and relationship education and drugs awareness. Pupils study issues appropriate to their ages and learn many useful skills during their circle time and PSHCE lessons. Teachers cover a wide range of subjects and include aspects particularly relevant to pupils. Personal and social education is implicit in all aspects of the school. Pupils usually conform to school rules, and are friendly and polite to their peers, teachers and visitors.
97. The school council is active and pupil's views are sought and acted upon. Their involvement in the decision making process could be developed further. The formal election process for membership on the school council gives pupils a good insight and understanding of citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5

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

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

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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