

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWTON FARM NURSERY, FIRST AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Harrow, Middlesex

LEA area: Middlesex

Unique reference number: 102181

Headteacher: Mrs R Bhakoo

Lead inspector: Ms R Frith

Dates of inspection: 11 – 13 October 2004

Inspection number: 267391

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 12 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	275
School address:	Ravenswood Crescent South Harrow Harrow Middlesex
Postcode:	HA2 9JU
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Guest
Date of previous inspection:	21 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Newton Farm Nursery, First and Middle School is a larger than average size community school. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds but overall, the socio-economic status of families is broadly average with an above average percentage of pupils receiving free school meals. When children join the school, they bring with them a wide range of experiences and abilities but overall, their attainment is broadly similar to that usually seen for children of this age. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average and three pupils have a statement of special educational need because they need considerable help with their learning. Those receiving additional support mainly have social, emotional, behavioural or moderate learning difficulties. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and approximately 50 per cent have been identified as coming from homes where English is not the first language. This percentage is much higher than that seen in many schools. Currently, 24 pupils are receiving additional specialist support because they are at the early stages of learning English. Pupil mobility is slightly higher than that seen in similar schools nationally with approximately only two-thirds of the pupils in last year's Year 6 cohort having spent all their time in the school. Several pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 to attend independent schools in the borough. Over the last two years there have been significant changes in teaching staff. At the time of the inspection, six teachers had recently joined the school and three were newly qualified teachers. The school received Investors In People status in 2000, the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2001, Healthy Schools in 2002, the Schools Achievement Award in 2000, 2001 and 2002, and the Artsmark Gold and Sports Activemark Gold in 2004. As a Beacon School and Pathfinder School for Remodelling the Workforce, staff have had very close contacts with other schools and the local education authority.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Science Design and technology Geography History
9388	Anthony Mundy	Lay inspector	
23805	Margaret Lygoe	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Modern foreign languages Music
26292	Helen Mundy	Team inspector	Foundation stage Citizenship Religious education
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The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an outstanding school. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and, together with senior managers and governors, has created a school with a happy and stimulating ethos where children flourish. Staff work very well together as a strong team and teaching is frequently very good. Staff are particularly effective in developing the pupils' personal and social education, which provides a very good basis for learning across all subjects. This ensures that pupils achieve very well and in Year 6, most reach standards that are at least well above average. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils attain at least well above average standards in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for Year 6 pupils and sometimes standards are very high.
- Teaching is frequently very good, which results in pupils achieving very well.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are very good.
- Excellent provision is in place to develop pupils' personal qualities and this leads to excellent relationships and very good behaviour.
- Leadership and management of the school are excellent.
- The school's ethos is excellent. Pupils are presented with an exciting and innovative curriculum which stimulates their learning and meets their needs very well. The outside areas for children in the Foundation Stage are not yet fully developed and some resources for learning require replacing.
- Excellent systems are in place to ensure that pupils are well cared for and that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
- Staff have developed very good links with parents and the community.

Progress since the last inspection has been very good. Pupils' academic, personal and social standards are now higher because of the improvements in teaching and the development of the curriculum. Staff have successfully addressed the issues identified in the last report and demonstrate a strong commitment to continual development and improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A*	A*	A*
science	A*	A	A*	A*

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* very low.*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils achieve very well during their time in school. In the nursery and reception class, children make a good start because teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. Children quickly develop very good attitudes to learning and by the time they enter Year 1 nearly all are working at the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in all areas of learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to achieve well and, by the end of the academic year, pupils in Year 2 frequently attain standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science which are above those expected for children of this age nationally. In Years 3 to 6, teachers build very well on the work undertaken in the nursery

to Year 2 and pupils attain standards in English, mathematics and science which are at least well above average and sometimes very high. Standards are also above average in information and communication technology and religious education. Pupils in Year 7 continue to achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well due to the effective support provided. Pupils speaking English as an additional language and higher attaining pupils similarly achieve very well.

Provision to develop pupils' personal qualities is excellent. Pupils enjoy going to school and attendance is above average. They are encouraged to enjoy their learning and respect the views, feelings and values of others. This results in pupils behaving very well, developing very good attitudes and excellent relationships with other children and adults.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school and the quality of teaching are very good. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils' personal and social education which helps them settle well and become confident, happy learners. Staff promote equality of opportunity very well and are particularly effective at supporting those pupils who have English as an additional language or have specific learning needs. Pupils' learning is also enhanced by the very effective support staff who, together with teachers, form a strong team. Currently, six teachers are new to the school and three are new to teaching. Senior managers are supporting these staff well so that the very good quality of teaching is maintained and reflects that of previous years.

Staff have developed very good links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges. The curriculum is very good with particular strengths in the provision for pupils with special educational needs, extra-curricular activities and pupils' personal, social and health education. Staff ensure that pupils are all included, very well cared for and feel supported. This is a 'listening school' where pupils' views are taken into account and their ideas acted upon.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are excellent. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have a clear vision of how the school should develop and aspire to achieve excellent practice. They are fully committed to running a school where all pupils are included and helped to develop well, both academically and socially. The headteacher has been particularly effective in creating a 'learning school' where both staff and pupils have the confidence and desire to try new things in order to improve further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views about the school and are pleased with the quality of education provided. They believe that the school is well led and managed, teaching is good and their children make good progress. Nearly all pupils like school and think lessons are interesting. Teachers listen to their ideas and encourage them to work hard. The pupils feel well supported and are confident that any problems they might have will be taken seriously by staff and dealt with quickly.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The inspectors did not find any issues for action additional to those already identified by the school. The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Further develop resources and the outdoor learning areas for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Continue to support newly arrived staff so that they maintain the culture and ethos of learning which are unique features of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils achieve very well and by the time they leave school have attained standards which are at least well above average in English, mathematics and science and sometimes very high.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well throughout the school because of the very good teaching and their very good attitudes to learning.
- In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 6 reached well above average standards in English and very high standards in mathematics and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because their needs are identified early and very good quality additional support is provided.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve very well and reach good standards in line with their levels of English acquisition.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve well.

Commentary

1. On entry to school, children display a wide range of attainment and have had a variety of experiences but overall, their attainment is similar to other children of the same age nationally. However, each year a few pupils join the school speaking little or no English or have special educational needs and this affects the overall standards on entry. Due to the quality of teaching and provision of a broad and interesting curriculum, most children achieve well. Staff focus on developing their personal and social skills and on encouraging communication. Progress is good so that by the time they enter Year 1, nearly all children are working at the levels expected nationally for pupils of that age in all areas of learning.
2. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 2 was well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science when compared with pupils in all schools. These results reflect the previous year's standards. When compared with schools with a similar number of pupils receiving free school meals, they attained very high standards in reading and writing, which placed them in the top five per cent of similar schools and well above average standards in mathematics. Data from the 2004 national tests show all pupils gained at least a level appropriate for their age in English, mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.8 (16.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.5 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Attainment in the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6 was well above average in English and very high in mathematics and science. These results maintained the high standards attained over several years and continued the school's trend of improvement above that of the national trend. When compared with pupils who attained similarly in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils also attained well above average standards in English and very high standards in

mathematics and science. Data from the national tests in 2004 show continued improvement with the school meeting its targets in English and mathematics. The science results were particularly impressive with all pupils gained at least a level appropriate for their age and 88 per cent gaining a higher level. Overall, these results reflect the very good teaching and provision that encourage pupils to achieve very well, and the confidence that pupils develop as they move through the school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.8 (28.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.9 (30.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	32.3 (30.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The work undertaken lower down the school creates a firm foundation on which very good learning takes place in Years 3 to 7. Pupils in Year 7 continue to achieve very well as they have fun with their learning and become more independent. The work presented maintains their interest very well and is appropriately targeted for their age and capabilities.
5. Evidence from this inspection indicates that overall, pupils have achieved very well by the time they reach Year 7. Pupils in Year 2 are currently working at levels above those expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education. In Years 6 and 7, pupils are working at well above average levels in English, mathematics and science and above average levels in information and communication technology and physical education. Standards are similar to those highlighted in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education in Year 2 and above for those pupils in Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils achieve well in art and design and design and technology and this supports their overall creative development.
6. No significant difference was noted in the achievement between boys and girls during the inspection although there have been some differences in the Year 6 national test results. For example, over the last three years, boys did better than girls in mathematics and science and girls did better than boys in English. However, with relatively small cohorts such as those found in this school, this sometimes changes from year to year. Staff recognise the differing styles of learning and use a wide variety of teaching styles to accommodate this. Consequently, there is no evidence of underachievement.
7. Pupils of higher attainment are very well challenged, as the results of the 2004 national Year 6 tests show. Teachers have high expectations and set work to match the capabilities of each pupil so that all work hard and progress very well. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection in its provision for those pupils who are gifted and talented and currently their needs are met very well. Appropriate work is set in lessons and additional challenge provided through the wide range of clubs and additional activities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because they are given very well focused support. Many attain at least the expected levels in the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 and some reach the higher levels.
8. From the information provided by the school and through observation and discussion with pupils, it is clear that there is no significant difference in the achievement of pupils from various minority ethnic groups. Because of the very good focus on inclusion, all pupils have access to a stimulating curriculum which meets their needs and helps them to achieve very well. The progress in English language development made by pupils who speak English as an additional language is also very good and they achieve very well. The school's excellent ethos is

effective in helping all pupils to succeed but particularly those at the earlier stages of learning English when they need to listen carefully, develop their confidence and practise their speaking skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal development is excellent because the school provides excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Standards in each of these aspects have been maintained or improved since the previous inspection. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very proud of their school. They enjoy all lessons, and a wide variety of informal activities and clubs.
- Relationships are excellent between pupils, and between pupils and staff.
- Pupils have excellent multicultural and multi-ethnic awareness.

Commentary

9. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school. In discussion with an inspector, representatives of Years 1 to 7 could not think of any way in which their school experience could be improved. In Years 6 and 7, many boys and girls are mature, independent and articulate, and they confidently anticipate transfer to high school. Pupils in all year groups are exceptionally polite and cheerful, and are relaxed and very adept with visitors. In lessons, their behaviour is often very good or excellent. Staff are very successful in supporting pupils with special educational needs who have behavioural difficulties. Pupils respond well because they are treated calmly and consistently and because they understand their targets and want to improve. No pupil has been excluded since the previous inspection.
10. In daily assemblies, the school's embracing culture reaches out to every pupil, celebrating individual qualities and achievements. In a *learning assembly* during the inspection, pupils in Years 1 to 7 confidently exhibited their work and, encouraged by deft interventions from the headteacher, explained in some detail how they achieved high standards. Their efforts were warmly applauded. Pupils in Year 7 have written incisive personal assessments, detailing their strengths and showing how they have worked to minimise weaknesses. Many have high aspirations for future careers. Pupils are generous of spirit, and are involved in numerous activities to improve the environments of the school and locality, including the upkeep of an allotment. They enthusiastically support local and national charities. They have excellent understanding of western and eastern cultures, and enjoy a wide variety of multicultural and multi-ethnic experiences.
11. In lessons, teachers sometimes lead pupils in successful discussions of moral values within themes of friendship and difference. These values are applied in the playgrounds, where pupil mediators help their peers in Years 1 to 7 to resolve disagreements, usually without reference to an adult. Staff are very good role models, and excellent relationships between staff and pupils promote strong moral values. Children in the Foundation Stage listen carefully to adults, and confidently respond to questions and instructions. They quickly learn to share, and to wait their turns. During the inspection, development of these qualities was a nursery target, prominently displayed.
12. Attendance is good, and has improved since the previous inspection. Regular attendance has a positive effect upon pupils' attainment and progress. Most pupils arrive punctually at school and settle quickly to work. Registration periods are efficient, and lessons begin promptly.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

There have been no temporary fixed period or permanent exclusions in the last school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good overall and pupils are supported well through experiencing a very good curriculum and excellent levels of care. Links with parents, the community, other schools and colleges are all very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are very good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good overall, especially in Years 3 to 7.
- Teaching assistants support the pupils very well and help them to make very good progress.
- Staff have high expectations and provide appropriately challenging work which ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve very well.
- Staff use their knowledge of the pupils, gained through thorough assessment, to plan work which ensures they are able to succeed.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and pupils respond well. This helps to create an excellent ethos for learning.

Commentary

13. Pupils make very good progress throughout their time in school and achieve very well. This is because of the very good overall quality of teaching and provision of a very good curriculum. The chart below gives an outline of the quality of lessons seen during the inspection. At this time, six teachers were new to the school and three new to teaching. Senior managers are working hard to support the new staff and teachers demonstrated a consistent approach to teaching based on a good knowledge and understanding of the school's policies, procedures and expectations. Teaching was frequently stronger in those classes where the teacher had been in the school for more than a year. A scrutiny of pupils' work from last year showed that teaching and learning over a long period of time were frequently very good.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	17 (35%)	19 (39%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. Teachers' planning is good and a significant feature of the best lessons. Teachers have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and share that with them at the start of the lesson. They provide appropriate support and challenge, which ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment maintain a good pace in their learning. A particular strength is the way they use the information gained from assessing pupils so that the activities provided build systematically on previous learning. Pupils' needs are very well assessed and this helps those with special educational needs to progress very well as they work towards their targets. Similarly, those pupils with English as an additional language receive very effective support which develops their confidence and helps them to achieve very well. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils well in lessons and encourage them to improve and work harder if they think they can. Most are also effective in indicating through their marking how pupils can improve their work. Provision of homework is very good, supports the work done in school and prepares pupils well for their secondary education.
15. There is a strong ethos of learning in the school which builds confidence among staff and pupils. This develops teachers' skills and experiences as they try new ways of teaching, which focus on different learning styles and also encourages pupils to 'have a go' when faced with new challenges. On a few occasions, both staff and pupils were seen discussing new issues, for example, in Year 6 when they were studying the Victorians, and decided to further their knowledge. In this way, pupils gain control over their learning and independence.
16. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is excellent. This has a significant influence on how staff manage successfully the pupils in their care. Staff are very encouraging and supportive, which results in pupils becoming confident in their abilities and aware of how they can help themselves and each other to improve. Staff have consistently high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to these as they know what they should do. Because they know that staff value their successes, pupils are keen to show what they can do, as witnessed in an assembly.
17. Teachers use the expertise of teaching assistants and specialist teachers very well in lessons and this enhances pupils' learning. They are effective in using a wide range of teaching methods that stimulate the pupils' interests and help to raise standards. Lessons are frequently built up of short sessions with input from the teacher, work from the board, interactive whiteboard or a book, individual reading or writing and discussions between pupils. The latter is used well as a way of encouraging pupils to develop their communication and thinking skills and use of language. It is a key aspect in developing pupils who leave the school confident in their abilities and able to communicate clearly and effectively with adults and each other. In the best lessons, the teachers' use of questioning is a key feature in developing pupils' learning through encouraging them to 'think things through' using previously gained knowledge and understanding and by getting pupils to explain their answers.
18. Teaching and assessment for pupils with special educational needs are very good, enabling them to make very good progress and to have full access to the curriculum. The support given by learning support staff is also very good, because they know individuals well and are well briefed about the learning intentions of each lesson. The individual education plans are working documents, and pupils' progress is monitored very closely. The school has improved its work with higher attaining pupils and those that are gifted and talented. More capable pupils were seen being well challenged, for example in Year 6 and Year 7 mathematics classes. Teachers have consistently high expectations and set work which interests the pupils and encourages their thinking. Teachers are also aware of differences that may occur in the responses and learning of girls and boys so use a wide range of methods to ensure that all are included and interested.
19. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress in line with their peers and currently have their needs met very well within mainstream classes and when working with specialist staff. Teachers and support staff are particularly effective in ensuring their very good participation in lessons by clarifying that they fully understand new vocabulary and are able to

ask and answer questions. Those at the early stages of learning English are encouraged and supported very well and make very good progress in terms of developing their confidence to speak in English and in acquiring a good range of vocabulary. Those pupils who are fluent in English are encouraged to develop the richness of their vocabulary, for example, when writing both in English lessons and in other subjects. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and people of different faiths and backgrounds are well supported, so that they are included in all class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their abilities. Staff are sensitive to the needs of such pupils and value the diversity within the school.

The curriculum

The school ensures that all pupils from nursery to Year 7 have a very broad and engaging range of learning opportunities. The curriculum for the nursery and reception covers the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage well, and in the rest of the school National Curriculum requirements and those of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are very well met. The school provides pupils with very good opportunities to widen their experiences through extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school. It is well resourced and makes the best use of its adequate accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is responsive to the progress of pupils in its review and development of the curriculum.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and also those with English as an additional language.
- There is very good provision for personal, social and health education.
- The school makes very good use of visits, visitors and events to help bring the curriculum alive.
- There are very good opportunities to participate in sport and the arts.

Commentary

20. The school has gained national recognition for its curriculum model. It keeps the effectiveness of its curricular provision continually under review so that high levels of achievement are maintained. This shows very good and consistent improvement since the last inspection. The school has recently focused on the pupils' use of writing skills in different subjects. This has further strengthened these skills and also raised pupils' ability to communicate, through writing, their knowledge and understanding in different subjects. Many other cross-curricular links have been developed to help provide real and purposeful learning experiences. For example, Year 7's work in citizenship, based on a classroom model, has drawn fully on numeracy and computer skills and enabled pupils to begin to understand the complexity of taxation. The Healing Garden Project, with Year 3 and Year 6 fostered community links and involved the use of poetry, music, science, art and design and design and technology. Effective use is now being made of information and communication technology across the whole curriculum. It has enabled, through use of the Internet and electronic mail, global links to be established with Gambia, India and Los Angeles so that pupils gain first hand experience of life and cultures in different parts of the world. Classrooms are now equipped with interactive whiteboards that provide both teachers and pupils with an effective tool for teaching and learning.
21. Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship, with an appropriate input for sex education and drugs awareness. Weekly lessons are timetabled and follow an appropriate scheme of work. Further very effective provision is also made through the wider and enriched curriculum, assemblies, the school's care for its pupils and the excellent relationships that are developed. For example, older and younger pupils have the opportunity to work together on projects, fostering care and providing positive role models for younger pupils. The school has introduced hot meals and a large number of pupils attend an early morning fitness class. Initiatives such as these have earned a healthy school's award.

22. The school knows and values all of its pupils extremely well, providing a very well planned curriculum that fully recognises each individual. Learning is very well matched to their needs, providing very effective and appropriate support and challenge that enables all to achieve very well and overall attain high standards. This prepares all pupils very well for subsequent stages in their education.
23. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they are fully included in all lessons. Individual education plans are well written with clear measurable targets which are reviewed each term. Support staff are well trained and very experienced. The curriculum is appropriately adapted to ensure that those pupils with English as an additional language gain confidence, become fully involved and achieve very well.
24. The school supports the curriculum very well through its full range of visitors and educational visits. Visiting artists, poets and musicians, for example, involve pupils in a wide range of practical learning activities that add excitement to their studies. Frequent visits to places such as museums, art galleries, places of worship and historical houses enrich the curriculum by providing first hand experiences. All, including a residential visit for Year 7, also provide further opportunities for personal and social development. The curriculum is further enhanced through its wide range of extra-curricular activities that the majority of pupils attend, especially on the weekly club night. Opportunities are provided to take part in competitive sport and local musical and dance events. The very good opportunities for pupils to participate in sport and the arts, within the whole curriculum, are recognised through the school's Active Gold and Artsmark Gold awards.
25. The school is well staffed. The use of class and support teachers, along with other support assistants, is very well planned. It often provides effective smaller group tuition and time for subject leaders to carry out their management roles. Some specialist teaching is also carried out, for example in French. Good resources are used well to enhance pupils' learning. The accommodation overall is adequate and well used. It is enhanced by very good displays that are both informative and celebrate pupils' achievements. The new Pathfinder building provides a useful area where staff can plan and prepare work. The school recognises the need to develop the outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage and replace some of their resources.

Care, guidance and support

Excellent procedures ensure high quality child protection, health and safety. The caring environment has a very positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. The school provides excellent support, advice and guidance for pupils, and informally monitors their personal development. The way pupils are involved in school developments is excellent. These aspects have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and other adults know the pupils very well, and respond quickly to their needs.
- The school greatly values pupils' views, and often acts upon their suggestions.
- The school maintains very high standards for food hygiene.

Commentary

26. Excellent procedures are established for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Care is excellent in the Foundation Stage, where staff are very attentive to children's needs. The school's health and safety policy is adapted from the local authority's recommended policy, including procedures for risk assessments and ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out-of-school visits. Fruit and vegetables distributed as daily snacks are meticulously washed, although most are commercially pre-washed by growers or packers. The school building,

playground and field are commendably litter-free, clean and well maintained, and present no apparent risk to health and safety.

27. A very good induction system quickly settles children into the Foundation Stage. Pupils joining other year groups quickly make friends in the relaxed and happy school community, and younger pupils look forward with some excitement to their future years at Newton Farm. Very good procedures prepare Year 7 pupils for transfer to high school.
28. All pupils receive excellent individual care from teachers, and from the headteacher, who is consistently accessible, friendly and reassuring. When necessary, pupils are offered discreet counselling to discuss personal or family difficulties. Teaching assistants develop excellent relationships with pupils, and their skilled curriculum and personal support contributes to teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of the personal development of individuals. School councillors are elected in Years 3 to 7, and the council is led decisively by a pupil chair and secretary. The council is very influential; decisions are promptly assessed by the school's senior staff, and are frequently implemented. Additional to the forum provided by the council, all pupils are encouraged to complete regular questionnaires about their experiences at school. In some lessons observed, pupils were also asked to evaluate the session and suggest ways in which it could have been improved. Pupils are confident that their opinions are valued, and they understand why desirable changes or improvements sometimes fail budgetary or practicability analysis!
29. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is very good. Information is saved in an accessible format, and is carefully analysed by teachers to help develop planning for individual pupils and groups. In lessons, class teachers guide the progress of individuals towards their agreed termly targets. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand their targets for attainment or behaviour and make accurate judgements about progress towards them. Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff have a detailed understanding of individual needs and progress is closely monitored. There are strong links with outside agencies.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents, and very good links with the local community, other schools and colleges. These aspects have improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are warmly welcomed, and they have excellent access to the school.
- Exceptional international links maintain contact with children in developed and developing nations.
- The parents, teachers and friends association [PTFA] has been adversely affected by the predictable resignations of activists whose children have now left the school.

Commentary

30. The inspection confirms the excellence of the school's relationship with parents in all racial and ethnic groups. Pupils benefit greatly from the quality of these relationships. The headteacher greets families each morning in the playground and responds immediately to questions and concerns. All parents are invited to complete an annual questionnaire relating to the school's success in communication, curriculum, behaviour and general progress. Responses are carefully analysed and emerging issues addressed. Some parents and friends provide consistent, valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals, and the school regularly enquires if parents have skills or interests to broaden the curriculum. The PTFA is currently in transition, but a modest programme of events is organised by teachers and an informal group of parent volunteers representing each class.

31. The school is very effective in consulting parents when their children are identified as having special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support when they transfer to secondary school. Each pupil's needs are carefully assessed, and the school works hard to ensure a smooth transition.
32. At autumn and spring consultation evenings, parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Further consultation evenings are offered in June, following teachers' annual written reports to parents. The reports are of very good quality, showing in some detail what children know and can do in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and suggesting how attainment may be improved. The current report format provides inadequate space for teachers to comment on attainment and progress in other subjects. Teachers provide details of the curriculum to help parents monitor and support learning, and they are always pleased to give specific advice to parents working at home with their children. Newsletters are very informative about events and important dates. The prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents, 2004, conform with legal requirements and include much additional information.
33. Staff have worked hard to establish very good links with the community. Occasional visitors to the school include theatre groups and local historians. Regular visitors include a professional artist and representatives of the police and fire services. Local sponsors meet the cost of sports equipment for school teams. Supplies of paper and cardboard are regularly obtained from a recycling project. Pupils visit many local places of interest, and the national museums and galleries in central London. In Year 7, they enjoy a residential visit. The school fulfils its role well in a local primary consortium, and maintains very good links with high schools to ensure that pupils transfer without stress at the end of Year 7. Student teachers and secondary school students benefit from effective mentoring at Newton Farm, and make valuable contributions to school life.
34. The school maintains an excellent range of international contacts. Pupils in Year 5 have Internet links with Los Angeles and pupils in Year 4 have recently established similar links with pupils in New York. Pupils in Years 1 and 6 write letters to pupils at a school in Gambia, and Year 1 and reception children use electronic mail to contact a school in Malawi. Additionally, five Newton Farm teachers stimulate a variety of contacts with their homes in New Zealand. In autumn 2004 the school received a prestigious award from the British Council, acknowledging the quality of its international links.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and a key factor in the school's success. She is very well supported by the deputy head who clearly shares her vision for the school. The leadership of other senior managers is very good. The management and governance of the school are excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher and support from other senior managers ensure that the school is striving to do better.
- The excellent ethos of the school reflects the staff's very good commitment to inclusion.
- The excellent management has ensured that the school continues to improve.
- The excellent role that governors play ensures that they help to shape the vision and direction of the school and are supportive and appropriately challenging.
- Support for staff is excellent and helps them to continually improve their practice.

Commentary

35. The leadership and management of the school are excellent. One of the key factors in the school's success is the quality of the headteacher's leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure excellent standards. This vision can easily be identified through the school's aims, which are clear and specific, and through her guiding principles which are based on respect for, and value of, children. The headteacher is determined to create a school which provides pupils with a stimulating and exciting first formal experience of education. Her clear goals include the need for pupils to experience a keen interest in learning and to develop enquiring minds and specific skills.
36. The school's aims of maintaining high standards and improving the quality of education are increasingly reflected in its work. A key feature of the headteacher's leadership is the very high importance placed on the professional development of staff and the support they are given to achieve as well as they can. A well-structured programme of professional support and training results in staff remaining aware of new developments and keen to improve their own practice. As they develop in confidence and expertise, they become more willing to try out new methods or introduce new activities. This leads to a cycle of constant improvement. Staff challenge themselves to take on board new experiences and also pass on their knowledge and skills to others.
37. A supportive atmosphere exists in the school where staff are willing to share their ideas and expertise, for example when planning their lessons or through observing others' work. Excellent systems monitor pupils' progress, evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, and highlight the effectiveness of the school's work. The school's tracking system, which reveals the gains that pupils have made in their learning, shows that pupils make very good progress, usually meeting the targets set and sometimes surpassing them. Since the last inspection, a significant development is the successful programme of target setting where both staff and pupils are clear about what each pupil has achieved and what they can do next to improve.
38. Overall, the headteacher has very good communication skills which she uses to good effect when consulting with parents, staff, governors and children. She is very approachable and staff are keen to share their ideas or concerns with her. In particular, the headteacher is very effective in thinking ahead, for example, aiming to become a Training School in the future. As indicated by the questionnaire returns from parents and from their comments at the pre-inspection meeting, the vast majority of parents think the school is well led and managed and the headteacher's leadership is a major strength.
39. Another key feature of the school's success relates to the excellent management. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together sharing their expertise and experiences in order to improve the quality of education. The deputy headteacher is particularly effective in supporting pupils with a variety of needs and sets a good example through her own teaching. Members of the senior management team are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and have complementary skills and experiences, which together ensure a very good level of knowledge and understanding about all areas of the school. Teachers new to the school work hard to embrace the school's ethos and rise to the high expectations set by the headteacher. In turn, she and other senior managers work hard to ensure they are supported well.
40. The school has a very strong commitment to inclusion. All pupils are afforded full and equal access to the curriculum and boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds are fully included in all aspects of school life. This reflects the school's aims and guiding principles where all pupils are encouraged to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement and are given a range of activities and tasks which build systematically on their prior learning. The management of special educational needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator ensures that she has daily direct contact with staff and all pupils. Individual

progress is very closely monitored, and many pupils make significant progress. The quality of support and teaching for pupils speaking English as an additional language also ensures that they, too, are fully included and progress very well. Management of their provision is also very good.

41. There is a clear management structure in place and teachers are encouraged to take a full part in improving the school and their own performance. Staff who have been in the school for a while have an understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development and ably assist the headteacher. The delegation of roles and responsibilities is very good. Through their involvement on the project to remodel the workforce, staff have worked hard to develop their roles and responsibilities to ensure the best use of time to support pupils' learning and achievement. The use of the administrative assistants has been clearly and appropriately developed and their very good work has enabled teachers to focus on key priorities and developments.
42. Overall, the headteacher and governors have developed a culture of continuous improvement in which both staff and pupils try to do their best. They have successfully addressed the minor issues arising from the last inspection and very good improvement has been made. Governors are very supportive of the school and its staff but challenge appropriately when required. They have very good levels of knowledge and are well informed, which helps them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They undertake their duties diligently and fulfil their roles excellently. Governors, headteacher and staff continue to show a clear commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement. The school improvement plan sets a clear agenda and is the result of a good consultation process.
43. The school's excellent approaches to financial management and control help senior managers and governors to achieve their educational priorities. Finances are managed efficiently and effectively, with best value principles excellently applied when considering financial expenditure. The governing body ensures that financial resources, including specific grants and additional funding, are used very well. Overall, the school provides very good value for money because standards are high, the ethos for learning excellent and the quality of provision and teaching very good.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	938562	Balance from previous year	5,659
Total expenditure	900,331	Balance carried forward to the next	43,890
Expenditure per pupil	3,322		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good, and has improved since the previous inspection. Children's achievement is good, and most are likely to achieve or exceed the early learning goals at the end of their reception year. Provision for special educational needs is very good. Very good support is provided for the significant number of children with English as an additional language, with the result that their achievement is very good.

Children enter nursery at the start of the school term following their fourth birthday, and stay for a maximum of three terms before starting in the reception class in the term of their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, 52 children were on the nursery roll, 26 each in the morning and afternoon sessions. After the nursery year, some children leave for other schools, and a number arrive from other nurseries to join the reception class. At the time of the inspection, eighteen children were in the reception class. When children enter the nursery, their attainment is close to the national average. When they leave the reception class, it is frequently good.

Leadership and management are good in the Foundation Stage. Nursery and reception staff work closely together to support the relatively small number of children moving each year between the classes. The co-ordinator is very experienced, and she maintains a good induction system to settle children and parents quickly into nursery routines. She actively supports all staff, while rigorously monitoring Foundation Stage teaching.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. All adults have very good subject knowledge and understand the importance of learning through play. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. Consequently, children quickly develop very good attitudes to learning. Although teachers' planning is generally good, and is attuned to what children need to learn, written planning does not always provide adequate detail for teaching assistants and other adults. Although assessment is good, and is used to set individual and group targets, it is not always analytical.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attitudes and behaviour are always very good.
- All relationships are excellent.

Commentary

44. The school's good induction programme warmly welcomes parents and encourages them to become involved in their children's learning. Children quickly settle into the nursery and reception classes, and are very keen to attend each day. They have very good attitudes to learning. Relationships are excellent between children, and between adults and children. Support staff contribute significantly to the quality of children's learning. Behaviour overall is very good, and often exemplary. Children are friendly and polite, and they have high self-esteem. In the nursery, their concentration is good when they clearly understand what adults expect of them. When adults' leadership of activities is uncertain, they sometimes lose interest and are easily distracted. In the reception class, children's concentration is good. All children in the Foundation Stage know their individual and group targets for achievement, and they work diligently towards them. Foundation Stage children have good understanding of right and wrong because rules and routines are consistently applied by adults, and minor

infringements quickly corrected. Children have good understanding of a variety of faiths and cultures. For example, the nursery celebrates Eid and Diwali. Although learning resources are satisfactory overall, some basic equipment requires replacement.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of reading is good in nursery and reception.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are good.

Commentary

45. All children listen very attentively to adults, and to each other. Because all adults speak clearly, and take care to explain new and advanced vocabulary, most children quickly develop their knowledge of standard English. For example, children in the reception class confidently use words such as *illustrator* and *author*. Staff greatly value children's home languages, frequently speaking and writing home language equivalents of English words. All children enjoy listening to stories, and they recall many characters and incidents. In the nursery, they understand that print conveys meaning. They recognise their own names, and the names of their friends. In the reception class, children recognise a few familiar words in books, and they understand that words are used widely to convey instructions. For example, they respond to simple choices on a computer screen. Although children of average attainment know the sounds of some letters, their word building skills are limited because their pre-learning causes them often to confuse the sounds and names of letters. The reception class teacher is helping them to overcome this weakness. Some children in the reception class use their knowledge of letter sounds and shapes to write simple sentences. However, throughout the Foundation Stage, they are rarely corrected when writing in a random mix of capital and lower case letters, or holding their pencils carelessly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematics is frequently integrated with other areas of learning.
- In the reception class, children do not fully understand some of the work set for them.

Commentary

46. Children of average attainment in the nursery count objects accurately to ten, and have some knowledge of larger numbers. During the inspection, they knew that 23 were present at registration time. When playing a skittle game, a mixed attainment group kept accurate tallies of their own scores: on a whiteboard, higher attaining children wrote numerals, and children new to the nursery made simple marks. Children of average attainment in the reception class count objects accurately to 15, and place numerals in order, from 1 to 10. They total two groups of objects, but do not fully understand the mathematical symbols + and = used in their written work. Children in the nursery know that money is exchanged for goods, and recognise the value of 1p and 2p coins when shopping in their make believe greengrocer's shop. However, in a session seen, too few coins were available to sustain the buying and selling purpose of the activity. All reception class children have some understanding of weight. For example, they know that luggage must be weighed and checked-in before a passenger can board an aircraft. They have good understanding of time. During the inspection, they knew

that the current month was October. Each day, they accurately dated their work. Children of average attainment in the reception class recognise a few simple shapes, and can discuss the properties of a square and a triangle. They understand the question *What would be one more than...?* but do not yet understand *What would be one less than...?* They have good understanding of *the same as*, *shorter than* and *longer than*. In a good lesson seen, children accurately compared the lengths of spaghetti strands and ribbons. All children successfully learned new vocabulary, and early concepts of fair testing.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults have very good subject knowledge.
- Children quickly learn a wide range of computer skills.

Commentary

47. Nursery children know the names of some fruits, including avocado, pineapple and pear. During the inspection, a child new to the nursery correctly identified leaves in a collection he had made on his journey to school. He was delighted when the nursery nurse spontaneously located a reference book to validate his knowledge. Children have some experience of the seaside, and can distinguish between rough and smooth shells. However, when questioned, some children of average attainment were unclear about the name and function of the lighthouse in their classroom display. Children in the reception class have good geographical language. They understand how *across*, *around* and *under*, describe the movements of a character in a favourite storybook. Using the format of the book, they have drawn simple maps of their exploratory walk around the local area. They have good knowledge of road signs, and can identify the symbols for *No entry* and *60 mph limit*. They have some understanding of the wider world. In a satisfactory lesson seen, they located the British Isles on an atlas, and followed routes across the world showing how food is transported over long distances. However, learning objectives were too modest; although the teacher pinpointed the country of origin on each label, she did not explain to the children which products originated in which countries. All adults are adept at teaching information and communication technology skills to young children. Most children in the Foundation Stage have good computer skills. In the nursery, they are learning how the interactive whiteboard responds to the touch of a stylus. On classroom computers, children of average attainment complete challenging programs without adult intervention. In the school computer suite, reception class children log on and locate programs. They understand how a hard drive differs from a CD drive. During the inspection, a child with special educational needs, encouraged by a teaching assistant, made very good progress in attempting to copy a picture of a car using computer software.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative play is good in the reception class.

Commentary

48. Nursery children can name many colours. They select correct colours when printing with fruit pieces, including pineapple, pear and passion fruit. In a session seen, guided by the nursery nurse, children carefully applied several colours to highlight features of the fruit. Although they

enjoy collaging, the scope of their work is sometimes restricted by limited resources. During the inspection, a nursery child turning the pages of a teacher's book, differentiated between printed words and musical notes, and said that the musical notes could be played on a piano. In a very good family learning session in the reception class, parents and children made gingerbread-man puppets. The parents increased their understanding of how children learn and develop their creative imagination through play, and the session concluded with parents and children together retelling the story of the gingerbread man. Stimulated by the class teacher's interventions, children browse holiday brochures, and confidently make flight reservations through the class travel agency. They know that the next stage is to pack their suitcases in preparation for flying by jumbo jet from their playground airport!

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical skills are good.
- Outdoor play areas are underdeveloped.

Commentary

49. Nursery children enjoy play in the outdoor area. In games of skittles, they know the difference between rolling and throwing a ball. In the reception class, children know that warming up before physical exercise helps prevent muscle strain. In a good lesson seen, children showed good co-ordination and spatial awareness when pretending to be wheeled vehicles. A child with special educational needs made good progress, helped by a skilled and attentive teaching assistant. Throughout the Foundation Stage children have good manipulative skills. In a good lesson seen, nursery children capably used rolling pins and pastry cutters to shape their gingerbread men. A volunteer helper alerted the children to the dangers of the pastry cutters and the hot oven. Reception class children cut safely and accurately with scissors. All Foundation Stage children have some understanding of the elements of a healthy lifestyle. Nursery children know that fruit is better for their health than confectionery, but they do not know why. Foundation Stage outdoor areas are underdeveloped. The school is aware of the deficiencies, and proposed improvements are listed in the development plan.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2 AND 3

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very high in all aspects of English by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is very good and all pupils achieve very well.
- Speaking and listening skills are encouraged very effectively and pupils become confident and articulate.
- Pupils do not always check their work carefully and spelling is sometimes careless.
- The school is committed to continuing to raise standards in English.
- Literacy is used very well across the curriculum.

Commentary

50. Standards are well above average in all aspects of English by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils attained well above average standards in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6. Current standards in Years 6 and 7 reflect these results. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average, with a greater number of pupils needing additional help compared with the current Year 3 class. All pupils achieve very well. Results for the 2004 national tests show that nearly all pupils attained standards at least appropriate for their age and over 50 per cent achieved a level higher than this.
51. Teaching is very good overall, and is strongest in the classes where teachers have been in the school for more than a year. This reflects the very high expectations and ethos which characterise teaching and learning at Newton Farm. Teachers emphasise that all pupils are capable of achieving at the highest levels. Pupils of all abilities, and from all backgrounds achieve very well as a result. In the best lessons the teachers focus very firmly on establishing learning intentions, lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils become engrossed in activities. All lessons are very carefully planned and tasks are usually stimulating yet challenging. In Years 6 and 7 the content of some lessons is quite complex and promotes pupils' personal development as well as their language skills. In both the lessons seen, the teachers' presentation had a very strong impact on pupils, developing their understanding of language very effectively. Year 6 pupils were absorbed as they wrote their versions of a page from Anne Frank's diary, empathising with her horrific situation. In Year 7, pupils prepared to write ballads linked with the serious moral issues surrounding high profile news stories. The teacher's sensitive handling of an emotive issue was accompanied by a skilful development of vocabulary. Probing questioning ensured that pupils thought about their answers, and quieter pupils were drawn into the discussion. Other strong features of teaching include accurate target setting so that pupils know how to improve their work, support for pupils with special educational needs and regular homework tasks. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In the two lessons which were satisfactory, the teachers missed the opportunity to model aspects of writing. These lessons lacked the level of challenge seen in other classes.
52. Teachers are particularly effective in promoting speaking and listening skills, and most pupils speak confidently and clearly. These skills underpin pupils' ability to write logically and to use correct grammatical constructions. All staff provide very good role models for spoken English and also listen attentively to children's responses. Many lessons include opportunities for discussions and pupils are encouraged to present their ideas to the class. All pupils benefit, including many whose first language is not English. Discussion is purposeful and well managed. In a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils discussed the content of the assembly during their snack time, and group leaders 'fed back' the results of their deliberations. By Years 6 and 7, most pupils speak with assurance and play a mature part in discussions. After school activities, such as drama club offer further opportunities for developing speaking skills.
53. Reading skills are well developed throughout the school, and pupils are taught to write for a range of purposes. Written work is generally well presented and punctuated with increasing accuracy. Spelling is a relatively weaker area, and sometimes mars work of otherwise high quality. Pupils do not always check their written or word processed work and basic errors occur, for example related to whether or not to use double consonants. The school has already identified this as an area for development.
54. Subject leadership and management are good. The new co-ordinator has a good understanding of the role, and the school offers strong support to new staff. Issues identified for further improvement are securely based on monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching. The school continually strives for improvement and progress since the last inspection is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. This is a strong feature of pupils' work in all relevant subjects. Teachers are able to plan challenging and interesting activities because standards in English are high. Pupils use a good range of materials for research, including reference books, newspapers and the Internet. Information and communication technology is used increasingly as teachers and pupils work with the interactive whiteboards and in the computer suite during lessons.
56. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision since only one lesson was observed in **French** involving half of the Year 6 class. Discussions with pupils, together with a scrutiny of written work from past and present Year 7 pupils, indicate that standards are broadly in line with those expected by the time pupils leave the school. French is taught from Year 5, which enables pupils to become familiar with basic vocabulary before they move into Year 7. Pupils are taught in half-class groups, which allows the teacher more time for individuals. There is an emphasis on developing oral skills and, by Year 7, most pupils take part in short dialogues and answer some simple questions. Written work indicates that more able pupils can link a series of grammatically correct sentences describing their families. Teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory. Classroom organisation meant that the teacher could not readily see or hear all pupils and this slowed the pace of the lesson. Pupils enjoyed taking part in a simple game to consolidate their knowledge of colours. Weekly homework is completed by all pupils and reinforces learning effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 6 and 7 achieve very well and attain well above average standards.
- Teaching and learning overall are very good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Very good assessment procedures ensure that pupils' progress is carefully monitored.

Commentary

57. Test results have shown that pupils by Year 2 have consistently attained well above average standards. Standards in Year 2 are currently above average and pupils are achieving well. Some teachers new to the school, although providing effective teaching and learning, have yet to provide the very high quality of teaching and learning, promoted by the school, to enable pupils, for example currently in Year 2, to achieve better in order to attain higher standards. The co-ordinator has quickly identified where new teachers require some support in order to restore the expected level of achievement. Pupils in Year 6 and Year 7 are achieving very well and are generally attaining well above average standards. These standards result from the overall very high quality of teaching and learning, particularly in these year groups, which, linked to the school's very good assessment procedures, provide lessons that challenge and support all pupils appropriately. This challenge is apparent from the rigorous questioning and discussion that takes place in lessons, developing pupils' understanding and application of mathematics.
58. Effective classroom management is built on the very positive relationships between staff and pupils that result in the pupils having a very strong desire to learn, so contributing to their success. The very good support given to pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language enables them all to achieve very well. Very effective subject leadership and management help to ensure that the overall very high quality of learning is maintained throughout the school, which enables pupils to make very good progress. Similar

standards and achievement were reported at the last inspection. The school has continually worked hard to maintain them along with the quality of teaching and learning, showing good improvement since that time.

59. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. An excellent lesson was seen in Year 7. Throughout this lesson pupils were fully active and continually challenged. Reasoned responses were expected that helped to develop pupils' understanding further. The conclusion to the lesson showed pupils to be very evaluative about their learning, recognising for themselves what they had learnt and how effective the lesson had been. Very good links were made to their studies in citizenship, making the lesson relevant and purposeful for them. As in some other lessons, the planning showed very clear learning objectives that were displayed and shared with pupils so that they fully understood the purpose of the lesson and its associated vocabulary. Teachers reminded them of the purpose throughout the lesson so that a strong focus to learning was maintained. Interactive whiteboards were used effectively for introductions, providing well planned pages to emphasise the different teaching points. Pupils were also starting to use these boards themselves to demonstrate and model answers to the rest of the class. This feature was strongly evident in a very good Year 6 lesson where pupils were working on probability. The use of the board added variety, challenge and pace to the lesson, leading to very effective learning. Where teaching was not as strong, identified higher attaining pupils could have been set more challenging activities sooner in the lesson, rather than completing whole-class tasks prior to tackling any extension work. Homework is well used to support classroom learning. Workshops have been held for parents, to help them understand how mathematics is now taught. This enables them to give further support to their children's work.
60. Subject co-ordination is very strong. Regular monitoring of lessons helps to ensure the consistent very high quality of teaching and learning. It has helped to introduce and maintain the evident focus on mental mathematics. This, with rigorous questioning, has encouraged pupils to think for themselves and to extend and apply their reasoning skills to problem solving. Individual improvement targets are now set that pupils understand and are very keen to reach. Greater emphasis is now being given to gifted and talented pupils. They sometimes now attend classes further up the school where increased challenge can be set by working alongside pupils with more advanced skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Good use is made of mathematics in other curriculum areas. In design and technology, pupils make careful measurements when planning and constructing; in science the results of investigations are measured and compared. Some use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons, particularly where pupils are expected to use the interactive whiteboards. Work in ICT shows that data handling and the use of equations in spreadsheet work draw well on pupils' mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and reach high standards in Year 6 and Year 7.
- Teaching is consistently very good and this ensures that pupils make very good gains in their learning.
- There have been significant improvements since the last inspection.
- Higher attaining pupils are particularly well challenged.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

- Although some use of ICT is very effective, planning for its systematic use across the school was not seen.

Commentary

62. Inspection findings and recent national test results for pupils in Year 6 indicate that pupils make very good progress in science and achieve very well. By the time they leave school, they reach very high standards. These results show significant improvement since the last inspection. The subject has been very well managed with a strong focus on improving standards and providing a broad and interesting curriculum with an emphasis on investigative science. The latter has been a key feature in raising attainment, particularly that of more able pupils, and stimulating pupils' enquiry skills and thinking.
63. Most pupils in the school respond very well to the way science is taught and enjoy the practical nature of the tasks. Staff have focused well on developing the pupils' skills of scientific enquiry so that by the time pupils leave school they can select a suitable way of finding things out when trying to answer a scientific question. This was seen in an excellent Year 7 lesson when pupils were asked to find out which common household liquids are acids, alkalis or neutral. The teacher's very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, together with her excellent questioning encouraged pupils' good scientific thinking and resulted in their very good achievement. Pupils based their predictions on previously gained scientific knowledge and understanding and identified key factors to be considered when a fair test is part of the investigation. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 indicated that their knowledge and understanding in all the areas of science were very good. In a very good lesson, they thoroughly enjoyed learning about the workings of the eye and a camera through making a pin-hole camera. Using her very good subject knowledge to explain the work, the teacher supported the pupils' learning well and they gained knowledge of basic facts about the eye, lenses, refraction and the speed of light. This work showed the very significant development of learning from that seen in a very good Year 1 lesson on light. A particular strength of the teaching seen is the way in which teachers pose questions which encourage the pupils to think scientifically and explain their ideas.
64. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to impart knowledge and maintain the pupils' interests. Although some teachers very effectively encourage activities where pupils develop their own ICT skills, these are not planned systematically at a whole-school level so it is difficult to see how pupils progress over time.
65. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has an enthusiastic approach and has ensured that the curriculum fully meets national expectations and the pupils' needs. Through effective monitoring, she has a clear view of how to maintain high standards and extend provision further. This reflects the school's drive for continual improvement. Pupils are well challenged and additional activities such as the Science Club have helped to raise the profile of the subject and widened the pupils' learning experiences. Here, pupils explained how they learnt to use the school's digital microscope whilst looking at bees' wings and grass. Also, homework is set with open-ended tasks which help to challenge all pupils but particularly the most capable. Pupils are very well prepared for their work in the high schools.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 2, 6 and 7 are above average.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Teaching and learning are good and help pupils to achieve well.
- Very good use is made of ICT in different curriculum areas.

- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

66. In Years 2, 6 and 7 standards in those aspects of the subject where there is evidence are above average. All pupils achieve well due to effective teaching and learning. Since the last inspection very good subject co-ordination has helped to raise standards, improve the quality of teaching and learning and forge very good cross-curricular links. This shows very good improvement.
67. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Some lessons were judged to be very good. Where teaching is stronger, teachers build on previously taught and assessed skills, enabling pupils to make very good progress in their learning. For example, Year 1 pupils recalled well how to use a paint program when asked to draw a self-portrait and then to add a line of text. In Year 7, pupils' uncertainty about using formulae linked to spreadsheets restricted the progress that some made in the calculation of taxes. All lessons were very well managed. As a result, pupils responded very well, listening to instructions and carefully following them so that little time was wasted. Lessons have clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils so that they know the purpose of the lesson. They are frequently referred to throughout lessons so that a clear focus is maintained. At the end of lessons, pupils discuss the progress they have made, and are expected to record in a class reflection book what they have learnt each week. They also assess their own progress in 'I can do' books. This shows the importance the school places on pupils assessing their own learning with a view to understanding what they need to do next and how they can improve. Mixed ability pairing when using the ICT suite demonstrated how well pupils can share and work together, but did not always provide the fullest challenge for higher attaining pupils or sufficient support for those who were unsure.
68. Leadership and management in the subject are very good. The curriculum has been checked to ensure that all aspects of the subject are now being taught. Teachers have received full and regular training, particularly in the use of the ICT suite. Interactive whiteboards have been successfully introduced to support classroom learning. The co-ordinator uses her class release time very productively. For example, she makes further provision for those pupils without home computers so that skills can be practised and developed; identified gaps in pupils' learning are remedied; extra support is given to new teachers; links with parents are strengthened through classes for them in ICT. Assessment is improving and is starting to be used to provide clearer starting points for future learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. Pupils have very good opportunities to use their ICT skills in different curriculum areas. For example, data handling programs are used to record and compare the results of scientific investigations. Wide use is made of word processing skills to present written work, including many examples of PowerPoint presentations on topics such as peer mediation, different world religions, sports and healthy eating. Pupils research topics through the Internet and are developing strong global links through e-mail contacts with places such as Gambia, India and Los Angeles.

HUMANITIES

70. Inspectors observed three lessons in religious education and two in history. No geography lessons were being taught during the inspection period. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and teachers' planning and spoke with staff and pupils. It was not possible to make overall judgements on provision in history or geography.
71. The previous inspection judged pupils' progress in **geography** to be good and evidence from this inspection would indicate that this has been maintained. Samples of work completed by pupils in Year 3 show a good understanding of canals and rivers whilst those in Year 4 show developing mapping skills. In discussion, pupils recalled work they had done in previous years

and showed by their comments that they had good understanding of environmental issues. Regular visits to places of local interest and further afield are particularly popular with the pupils and help them to maintain their enthusiasm for the subject. A major strength of the geography curriculum is the way pupils are encouraged to study countries from around the world and make comparisons with their own experiences. This helps them to develop a good understanding of a range of different cultures and encourages them to respect values and ways of life different from the familiar. Interesting displays show how in Year 1, pupils are encouraged to read books about another country and in Year 4, pupils form links with pupils in Los Angeles through the effective use of information and communication technology. The school's international links are a particular strength and have been recognised and applauded nationally.

72. Pupils' good progress in **history** is similar to that noted in the previous inspection. An analysis of work and teachers' planning indicate that pupils are taught a broad curriculum in line with that recommended nationally and good cross-curricular links are made, for example, with geography and English. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 spoke vividly about why they liked history, '*...because I like to know what people got up to!*' and '*I like finding out about dates...inventions and where they came from.*' In one very good lesson, when studying the Victorians, their teacher's enthusiasm for the subject acted as a motivating force for learning as she encouraged pupils to find out about the past. Pupils were very well supported as they developed their library skills in order to find relevant historical facts and they used an extraordinary range and amount of resources to follow their interests and ideas. The teacher's focus on turning the room into an historical library and Victorian museum captured the imagination of all pupils and helped them to achieve very well.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good** overall, and maintains the standard noted in the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' spiritual development contributes greatly to their religious education.
- Pupils value and respect all faiths.

Commentary

73. In addition to the observation of lessons, three assemblies were seen during the inspection, and pupils in Years 3, 6 and 7 talked about religious education with inspectors. Standards of work are satisfactory in Years 1 to 3, and are good in Years 4 to 7. The locally agreed syllabus is fully implemented.
74. In a good lesson seen in Year 5, pupils enjoyed an imaginative archaeology exercise, where they 'discovered' tablets of 'stone' engraved with the Ten Commandments. Pupils of average attainment had good prior knowledge of the commandments' influence on everyday life. In a very good lesson in Year 4, all pupils were aware of similarities in the Jewish, Hindu and Muslim religions. The teacher's very good questions required pupils to think carefully about their answers. Some Muslim pupils were invited to share their specialist knowledge to develop class understanding of Islam. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 2, the teacher effectively used the interactive whiteboard to illustrate the story of Rama and Sita in celebration of Diwali. Although she explained the complex vocabulary of the story, pupils did not clearly understand that Diwali is a Hindu festival. No resources were used to enliven the story. In discussion with an inspector, pupils in Year 2 recalled a few details of Jewish and Christian festivals. At the time of the inspection, little written work had been attempted in the Year 2 class.
75. In conversation with an inspector, pupils in Year 6 clearly recalled their previous learning, including many details of Christian festivals. They had broad understanding of the lifestyles of

practising Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and Jews, but were confused about some specifics. Pupils formulate questions about their own and others' experiences, and realise that some questions are not easily answered. They have good understanding of advanced vocabulary, and speak articulately of *empathy* and *reconciliation*. For example, their autobiographical writings show that they were sincerely touched by the injustices apparent in the story of Anne Frank.

76. In Year 7, pupils have very accurate knowledge of the rules governing a variety of faiths. For example, they know that Jewish law originates in the Torah. They value the religious and cultural diversity in their school, and understand that religious beliefs, although differing in conventions, have similar objectives.
77. An annual programme of cultural events and visits is closely linked to the religious education curriculum. In a Diwali 'workshop', pupils learned something of Indian dances, costume and art. They visit a temple, a church, a synagogue and a mosque. Spiritual values guide the school's excellent ethos. For example, pupils in Year 6 volunteered to adopt a small, neglected, external storage area adjacent to their classroom. They have created a secluded mini-garden by planting flowers and shrubs, and cultivating oak and willow saplings from seeds. Their garden is a calm and inviting place for quiet work and discussion, and they hope that the facility will be used and developed by future Year 6 classes.
78. Assemblies meet statutory requirements and contribute each day to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All assemblies celebrate music, song, community spirit and individual achievement. Hymns are sung in a variety of languages, including Swahili and Hebrew. Pupils' behaviour is usually exemplary, and the mood is often, in quick succession, humorous, caring and reflective. During the inspection, pupils responded enthusiastically when visitors from Kenya and Jamaica led a discussion for Black History Month and explained the significance of a Kenyan winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace.
79. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher are joint co-ordinators. Their leadership and management are good. In conjunction with class teachers, the deputy leads the subject in all year groups. She has good knowledge of individual pupils, and of overall attainment and progress in the first school and in the middle school. The headteacher monitors the lessons of class teachers, and gives written feedback on strengths and weaknesses. Resources are good. In all classes, teachers enliven lessons with computer programs especially suited to interactive whiteboards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. Two lessons were seen in art and design, two in design and technology and three each in music and physical education. Inspectors also spoke to staff, analysed the school's curriculum provision and evaluated pupils' work from the previous year and displays around the school. It was only possible to make an overall judgement on physical education.
81. The quality of finished work on the walls indicates that the standards are often good. Pupils in some classes benefit from specialist teaching. In a very good **art and design** lesson in Year 7, pupils showed a mature ability to discuss artists' intentions when they studied self-portraits by Pablo Picasso and Bacon among others. The teacher valued the pupils' views and extended their thinking through skilful questioning, and use of specific subject vocabulary. Support for a pupil with a statement of special educational needs was of a very high quality and ensured full inclusion in the learning. In a lesson in Year 2, a very high level of additional support enabled all pupils to achieve well as they drew. Pupils enjoy art. The very high quality of displays in most classrooms and around the school provides pupils with a visually exciting and stimulating environment. Cross-curricular links are strong, and pupils encounter art from many cultures. Skills are systematically taught. Information and communication

technology is beginning to be used effectively to create pictures and to enable pupils to conduct research. Leadership of the subject is good.

82. The school has responded well to the minor issue raised in the last inspection about **design and technology** and pupils' designing skills now match their making skills. This shows good leadership and management since the last inspection and good improvement. Developments include staff training which has led to increased knowledge, understanding and confidence in teaching and a greater focus on pupils planning and evaluating their work and the work of others. The skills of the co-ordinator are used well when she teaches classes as a specialist teacher. For example, in Year 2, pupils achieved very well when starting to design a chassis for a vehicle. Her good questioning resulted in articulate responses as pupils talked about the function of a chassis and that larger vehicles need a larger, stronger and more stable chassis. Pupils' attitudes to learning were excellent because they were interested in what they were doing and were able to succeed. Similarly, pupils in Year 3 enjoyed their work on designing and making picture frames and evaluated their work well in relation to its stability and purpose.
83. **Music** continues to play an important part in the life of the school, and pupils are introduced to a rich variety of musical traditions. Pupils have many opportunities to perform and talented individuals performed during assemblies with poise and confidence. Teaching in the lessons observed was good overall, although the pace at the start of one lesson was slow and pupils began to lose concentration. Most pupils in Year 5 responded well to a lesson taught by an advisory teacher. They were introduced to some African instruments and with guidance combined three rhythms with reasonable success. Year 2 pupils learned a new song in Spanish and sang well in unison. They listened carefully and could identify various instruments correctly.
84. Music makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. During an assembly the school sang a Swahili song, and on other days one pupil sang a Tamil prayer, and another performed an Indian violin tune. Pupils have good opportunities to have instrumental tuition.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 2, 6 and 7 are above average.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

85. Standards across the school in those aspects of the subject seen are above average. No lessons were seen in Year 2, but the lesson seen in Year 3 showed clearly the high standards recently achieved by these pupils whilst in Year 2. All pupils achieve well, showing above average control and co-ordination in the skills taught. These high standards and levels of achievement are due to very good teaching and learning and very good subject co-ordination. The response of pupils in lessons demonstrated their very positive attitudes, which also contributed to their success. These standards have been well maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning and of leadership and management has also risen. This shows very good improvement.
86. The lessons seen showed overall, a very high quality of teaching and learning. They were very well planned and organised so that little time was wasted. Clear learning objectives were

shared with pupils so that they knew the purpose of lessons. These were referred to throughout lessons so that a clear focus to learning was maintained. Teachers had very high expectations. Skills were very well taught, demonstrating very full and confident subject knowledge, so that these expectations could be met. Plenty of opportunities were provided for pupils to observe each other in order to improve their own performance. Assessment records are kept that are passed on with pupils and enable teachers to plan appropriately.

87. The co-ordinator provides very effective leadership and management for the subject. Her skills are not only used effectively in school but also within the local cluster of schools as a primary link teacher. A careful examination of all aspects of the subject has enabled the school to achieve the Activemark Gold award. The scheme of work covers all areas of the subject with the school having a particular high profile on dance. Staff training has been given by the co-ordinator to further improve the quality of teaching and learning; full support is given to new teachers so that a high quality of teaching and learning is maintained. Specialist teachers on the staff provide further strong support for the subject. The subject is well resourced using National Lottery funding and equipment from initiatives such as Top Sport. Further provision is made through extra-curricular activities such as dance, football, netball, cricket, rounders and an early morning fitness club. Pupils have opportunities to take part in competitive sport and to enter events such as the local dance festival, where their interpretation of the Olympics through dance demonstrated considerable talent.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

88. This area of the school's work was sampled through one lesson seen in Year 4, the observation of daily practice and outcomes, and discussions with pupils and staff. Provision is excellent overall, and is seamlessly combined with provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's policy is clear and inclusive, and is fully implemented in all lessons and activities.
89. All pupils have very good understanding of the concepts of right and wrong. They conform cheerfully to school and classroom rules, and are very friendly and respectful to their peers and teachers. All pupils accept a variety of responsibilities in their classrooms, throughout the school, and as elected members of the greatly influential and respected school council. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 help Foundation Stage children with their reading, and show them how to tidy their classrooms when lessons finish. In all year groups, mutual respect between boys and girls, and their interest in sport and other activities, enable them to work amicably together, without tension or embarrassment. Pupils in Year 7 have very good understanding of personal, group and national responsibilities. For example, they know how to evaluate peer pressure, how social order is based upon conformity to laws, and how the behaviour of national governments contributes to global warming and ozone depletion.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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