

INSPECTION REPORT

PRINCESS FREDERICA CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101535

Headteacher: Mrs S Nettey

Lead inspector: Cheryl Thompson

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 November 2004

Inspection number: 267520

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 399

School address: College Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs C McNamara

Date of previous inspection: June, 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Princess Frederica Primary is a larger than average Church of England voluntary-aided school. It serves the immediate locality of predominantly owner-occupied houses and reflects the diverse ethnic population. The main ethnic groups represented in the school are White British pupils, Black or Black British Caribbean pupils and Asian or Asian British – Indian and Pakistani. There are 399 boys and girls on roll, including 30 full time in the nursery class. Attainment on entry is average overall, but language and literacy skills are less well developed. Around 34 per cent of pupils have English as an additional language. The great majority of these pupils speak and use English competently; only a small number of Portuguese pupils are at the early stages of learning the language. There is an average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and an average proportion identified as having special educational needs, including three pupils with a statement of specific need. The main area of difficulty is identified as moderate learning. An average number of pupils join and leave the school. There are great difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers in the school's area.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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18360	Cecelia Davies	Team inspector	Science Music Foundation Stage
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school which provides a very satisfactory education for its younger pupils but not yet for its older pupils. Until the appointment of the current headteacher the school had drifted for some time. Standards declined but are beginning to pick up again, especially in Year 2. Very good leadership by the present headteacher and good governance mean that the school is back on track to make further significant improvements to raise standards. Currently it is providing generally satisfactory value for money. Recruitment and retention of teachers is a problem in the area; there is usually a very high turnover of staff. Very nearly half the teaching is good but in the remainder there is rather too much that is unsatisfactory. The school has serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching in Years 4-6 which, in turn, leads to underachievement, especially for the older pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Too much unsatisfactory teaching, particularly in Years 4-6, results in inconsistent progress
- Low standards and unsatisfactory achievement at Year 6
- Good provision for nursery and Reception children gives them a good start to school
- Very good links with parents
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well especially by the very good range of out of lesson activities

Since the previous inspection in June 1999, the school has had great staffing difficulties and in consequence has made unsatisfactory improvement. In response to the last inspection, the school has ensured that all aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) are taught; standards have improved to an average level. Year 6 standards have dropped in national tests for English, mathematics and science.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

There is a mixed picture of pupils' achievement. In the Foundation Stage, achievement is good; it is predominantly good in Year 2 and one Year 1 class. However, because of unsatisfactory achievement in the other Year 1 class, achievement, overall, in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Achievement for Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory, therefore, the judgement has to be that **achievement, overall, is unsatisfactory**. For these Year groups, the very high turnover of staff in the past three years, is the main factor which has led to patchy learning and underachievement. The weaknesses in teaching for these Year groups are the main reasons for the current underachievement. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs generally achieve as well as their classmates; the exception is in Years 1 and 2 where very good specialist teaching helps the pupils in the school who are at the early stages of acquiring the language achieve well in learning and using English.

Across the school, standards and achievement in ICT are sound; in science, standards are below average and pupils underachieve.

Standards attained by Year 6 in the 2004 national tests were well below average and confirm that pupils had not done well compared to their Year 2 results. Inspection evidence shows that in English and science standards are below average and, in mathematics, well below.

Standards attained in Year 2 tests, have fluctuated between well above average to well below, with mathematics the weakest area. However, 2004 standards had improved significantly compared to the past four years; standards in reading and mathematics had never been so high. In reading, standards were well above average and in writing and mathematics, above average. Inspection evidence shows current standards are average in reading and mathematics but below in writing and science. Standards in the Reception classes are around those expected but above expectations in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and mathematical development.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their personal development is good; they have positive attitudes to learning and behave satisfactorily in lessons and very well at play. Attendance is good, pupils love coming to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Even though very nearly half the teaching is good or better, the relatively high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching means that, overall, the **quality of education has to be judged unsatisfactory and teaching as unsatisfactory**, particularly in Years 4 to 6. Teaching for nursery and Reception children is good; they make good gains in their learning. Teaching for Year 2 and one Year 1 class is predominantly good; in the other Year 1 class, teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching for Years 4 to 6 is generally unsatisfactory although there are examples of very good teaching. Over time, because of a very high turnover of teachers, pupils have not been able to build on skills cumulatively and, therefore, have gaps in their knowledge. It is the inconsistency in teaching that has caused, and continues to be the reason for, patchy learning. Currently, neither the assessment nor the teaching are good enough to pinpoint the gaps in pupils' learning, move them on at a good rate and make sure they attain higher standards. In Year 3, though teaching is satisfactory, given pupils' good Year 2 test results, teachers are not expecting enough of the more able. They are not managing the lively behaviour well enough to make sure pupils' work rate reflects their ability.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, **leadership and management are good.** Governance is good. The head and deputy provide very good leadership and have high aspirations for the school's future which governors share. The school's ethos is good with a very strong commitment towards pupils' personal development. There are good systems in place for monitoring the work of the school. School improvement planning is very good because it is based on astute evaluations of teaching, learning and data. However, the effectiveness of management is satisfactory rather than good. The effectiveness is constrained by difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers and, in particular, recruiting sufficient experienced staff with the expertise to take on management roles. Thus, most of the work towards improvement is taken on by the head and deputy. A new software system for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school is just in place. This system, together with the newly introduced assessment system, is beginning to have a good impact.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They feel valued for the part they play in their children's education and know that they are listened to. Pupils, too, feel they are listened to. They like school and their teachers and are very enthusiastic about the residential trips.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and achievement, especially in Years 3 to 6 and in science throughout the school
- Improve the quality of teaching especially in Years 4-6
- Check on teaching and learning even more rigorously and regularly

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Standards and achievement in Years 1-2 are satisfactory overall. They are generally unsatisfactory in Years 3-6. Standards are average and achievement is good in the Foundation Stage. Very good specialist support is helping pupils at the early stages of learning English achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not high enough and there is too much underachievement in Years 3 to 6
- Standards are improving well at Year 2 and achievement is satisfactory
- In Reception, standards are average overall but good in personal, social and emotional development, physical and mathematical development; children achieve well

Commentary

1. In 2004 national tests, standards attained by Year 6 were well below average. Compared to their attainment at Year 2, standards were also well below average. Inspection evidence confirms standards are below average in English and science and well below in mathematics. Standards in ICT are average. Inspection evidence shows that it is unlikely that the current Year 6 will attain the targets set for their attainment in 2005 national tests.
2. At Year 2, 2004 standards improved commendably at a higher rate than the national trend for the past five years. Standards were well above the national and similar school average for reading, above average in writing and mathematics. Standards in science, as measured by teacher assessment, were among the top five per cent of schools in the country. Inspection evidence shows standards in ICT, reading and mathematics to be average and in writing and science, below average. Standards in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes) are around those expected but above usual expectations in personal, physical and mathematical development.
3. Since the last inspection, when it was judged that the school no longer had serious weaknesses, Year 6 standards have gone down in the core subjects. Between the last inspection and the present, the school has been through a period of 'drifting'. During this period several factors affected standards and achievement. Due to illness, there was a lack of firm leadership, management slipped and systems lapsed, especially assessment, and there was a very high turnover of staff, including many supply teachers to cover for long term illnesses. In the present Year 6 there has been a higher than average number of pupils joining the group in Year 5 and a few of these started with limited English. Since the appointment of the present headteacher and her very good leadership, standards are beginning to pick up, most noticeably in Year 2. However, the assessment system is only recently in place and is only beginning to make an impact on standards or teaching in Years 3 to 6. There continues to be a high turnover of staff, although at present, staffing is more stable than for the past four years.
4. There are two main reasons for underachievement in Years 3 to 6. The first is historic – pupils have not had the stability of teaching in order that they can build up their knowledge and understanding of basic literacy and numeracy skills. There are gaps in their knowledge

and understanding which are very noticeable in areas such as handwriting, spelling and punctuation, mental mathematics and problem solving. The second reason is the generally unsatisfactory quality of teaching. Currently, the quality of teaching and assessment is not good enough to help pupils make up for lost learning and move them on at a good rate. In Year 3, teaching is not demanding enough of the more able to capitalise on pupils' achievements at Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.6 (26.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.6 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.3 (28.4)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Achievement in one Year 1 class and both Year 2 classes is predominantly good; in the other Year 1 class, achievement is unsatisfactory because of unsatisfactory teaching. Data show that boys do better than girls but there was no evidence available during inspection to show that this is always the case. The headteacher has worked hard to persuade good teachers to stay and this has been very beneficial. Generally, skills are built on systematically and cumulatively although inspection evidence shows that pupils need to write more in order to use these skills more profitably.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (14.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (16.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Children achieve well in the nursery and Reception classes. Teachers and their support staff work effectively as a team, have a good understanding of the curriculum and teach it well, providing many first hand and exciting learning experiences.
- Nearly all pupils for whom English is an additional language are at a competent stage of learning and using the language. Those who are at the earliest stages are in the younger classes, mostly Year 1. These pupils make good progress in learning and using English; all staff take every opportunity to reinforce new vocabulary and they get very good specialist teaching in small groups.
- Achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of their classmates. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is sound overall and in the other Year groups, it is unsatisfactory. Pupils with behavioural difficulties make reasonable progress towards achieving the targets set for them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Behaviour is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to work and learn but teaching does not always maximise these positive attitudes to help pupils achieve as well as they could
- There is a caring and supportive ethos in the school which results in good relationships between adults and pupils.
- Pupils are highly confident and show high levels of respect for themselves and others
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good

Commentary

9. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming to school, a view supported by nearly all the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire and attended meetings with inspectors. In lessons, pupils show enjoyment in their work, are keen to answer questions and work well in collaboration with each other. Pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds, including those whose mother tongue is not English and those with special educational needs have very good attitudes to school and learning. This has a positive impact on their achievement and the progress they make.
10. Children in the nursery and Reception classes behave very well and are keen to participate in all the well-structured learning opportunities provided. They are polite and kind to one another. They concentrate for good lengths of time on a chosen activity and tidy up efficiently. By the end of their time in Reception, standards of personal development are likely to exceed those expected for their age.
11. In Years 1 to 6, pupils are helpful, and friendly. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory overall but influenced by the quality of teaching. Where teaching is good or very good and the work is well matched to pupils' abilities, behaviour is usually good. Where teaching lacks pace and pupils have to sit through over-long introductions, they become restless and low level disruptive behaviour occurs. The majority of pupils move around the large school and its many staircases in an orderly manner and conduct themselves sensibly during lunchtimes but a few find it hard to sit quietly during assemblies. Playtimes are lively and pupils play very well together. No instances of bullying, harassment or racism were observed and none have been recorded. Pupils know that any behaviour issues will be dealt with promptly and they are pleased about this.
12. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong because of the school's strong moral and social code. Pupils are very confident and have high self-esteem. They understand the consequences of their actions upon others and have an awareness of themselves and their responsibilities in their school community. Older pupils take on responsibilities for overseeing younger pupils in the nursery and Reception classes during playtimes and act as good role models. The school's house system enables pupils from across the school to meet together, share common goals and aspirations. Pupils take their class and school responsibilities and jobs seriously. They know that their suggestions and views are valued.
13. Relationships within the school are good. Staff and pupils treat each other with mutual respect and this emphasises the importance the school places on working together both in lessons and in sporting activities. This is reinforced through posters, class rules and golden rules displayed around the school. The school's residential trips and participation in team and sporting events have a very positive impact on pupils' social and personal skills.
14. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory although there is a lack of books and displays which celebrate the cultural diversity and multi-lingualism of the school population. Through every-day socialising, friendships and opportunities to learn about different faiths and the influence faith has on the way people choose to live their lives, pupils develop a good understanding of life in a multicultural society. Provision for spiritual development is good. The strong Christian ethos in the school promotes good spiritual development - a view supported by parents. The school has strong links with the two local parish churches and there are regular visits to the churches as well as weekly assemblies led by a member of the clergy. The imaginative and innovative development of the outdoor play areas such as the peace garden and the Embankment gives pupils first hand experiences of the wonders of nature.

Attendance

15. Most pupils have a good record of attendance, are willing to come to school and are punctual. However, there is a small minority of pupils whose attendance is not as good as it should be. Consequently the school's attendance rate is below the national median. The school has recently tightened up its procedures for investigating and recording absences. The rate of unauthorised absence is falling but it is still above the national median. The lower level of unauthorised absence now recorded accurately reflects the fact that most parents do not take their children out of school for reasons that could be avoided.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.8	School data :	1.0
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

Exclusions are used only in extreme circumstances. All correct procedures are followed.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	93	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	47	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	18	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	13	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	33	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	98	3	0
Black or Black British – African	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	21	0	0
Any other ethnic group	18	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the quality of education is judged to be unsatisfactory because teaching is unsatisfactory overall in Years 4 to 6. Pupils work from a sound curriculum enriched by a very good variety of educational visits, visitors to the school and extra curricular activities. Pastoral care for individuals is good. Very good links with parents mean that they are keen to support their children's learning at home.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching, learning and assessment are unsatisfactory in Years 4 to 6 but are generally satisfactory or good in the rest of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in nursery and Reception classes gives children a good start to school
- Even though nearly half of the teaching is good or better, there is rather too much unsatisfactory teaching which leads to underachievement

Commentary

16. Seven out of the 16 lessons observed where teaching and learning were good were in the nursery and Reception classes; one very good lesson was also seen. In these classes, relatively inexperienced teachers plan and work very well together under the good leadership of the co-ordinator. Support staff are valued and valuable members of the team. The team are all very clear about what they expect children to learn and make good use of assessment to plan activities to extend children's learning. Learning opportunities are lively and relevant; no time is wasted. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught thoroughly and good assessment makes sure that children of all abilities are challenged or, in some cases, not moved on until they are ready for the next step. Very good relationships with parents help them to know how their children are getting on and how they can help at home. In meetings with inspectors, parents were very keen to say how much they appreciate the staff's approachability and the information they are given.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	6 (13%)	16 (34%)	17 (36%)	7 (15%)	0 (0%)	1 (2%)

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.

17. The table above shows that almost half of the teaching observed during the inspection was good or better. A good proportion of this good teaching was seen in the nursery and Reception classes. The remainder of this better quality teaching was predominantly in one Year 1 class and in Year 2 classes where there has been more staffing stability in recent years. In these classes, teachers have high expectations and teach at a brisk pace. They manage pupils' behaviour well so that learning is productive. Teachers are clear about what they expect their pupils to learn and learning support assistants are well-briefed about how they are to help pupils, especially those with special educational needs. One very good

session was observed for Portuguese pupils at the early stages of learning English; they achieved very well as a result of knowledgeable, well planned teaching. Where teaching is unsatisfactory in one Year 1 class, the main reasons are a serious lack of subject knowledge and lack of clear planning.

18. Three very good and four good lessons, which included one taken by a music specialist, were observed across Year 3 to 6. In the remainder of lessons observed, teaching was either satisfactory or, in five cases, unsatisfactory. Where teaching is very good the key features are brisk pace and clear planning with work planned for pupils of different abilities. Where teaching and learning are unsatisfactory the main reasons are lack of pace, lack of work to suit pupils' abilities and lack of ability to manage pupils' behaviour well enough to make sure they complete a good amount of work. Pupils' behaviour is heavily dependent on the pace and challenge in lessons. Where pupils have to sit for too long listening to introductions, they become restless and do not pay attention. In ICT, the practice of pairing a more able pupil with a less able one leads to unsatisfactory learning for the less able pupils. They do not get the 'hands on' opportunities they need. In Year 3, though teaching is satisfactory, given their good Year 2 test results, teachers are not expecting enough of more able pupils. They are not managing the lively behaviour well enough to make sure pupils' work rate reflects their ability.
19. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall, although it is good in nursery and Reception and it is used satisfactorily in one Year 1 class and both Year 2 classes. The very good assessment systems and procedures are only just beginning to be useful part of the school's culture again. There is also a problem that some of the overseas trained teachers are, understandably, unfamiliar with National Curriculum criteria. Therefore they are not 'spot on' with their assessment of the stage a pupil is at and what he or she needs to learn next in order to move them on. As a result, in several lessons observed, there was not enough challenge particularly for more able pupils. Another difficulty, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6 is that pupils have a considerable amount of catching up to do to bring them up to the levels they are expected to be attaining. The current quality of teaching and use of assessment are not good enough to pinpoint the gaps in pupils' knowledge, address these and also follow the requirements of the literacy and numeracy strategies.

THE CURRICULUM

The school's curriculum ensures that all pupils have access to a satisfactory quality and range of learning opportunities. It is enriched by a very good variety of educational visits, visitors to the school and extra curricular activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The enrichment of the curriculum is very good
- Good provision is made for children in the nursery and Reception classes
- Not all staff have sufficient expertise to teach all subjects effectively
- There is good provision for personal, social and health education
- The accommodation is spacious with a very good outdoor learning environment

Commentary

20. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. In addition, French is taught to younger pupils and plans are in place to continue this provision as pupils move through the school. The school ensures that every pupil has equal access to all aspects of school life.

21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory as is the provision for those for whom English is an additional language and those the school has identified as being gifted and/or talented.
22. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities including chess, choir, art, drama and gardening. The wide range of visits includes annual residential visits for pupils in Years 3 to 6 so that they learn about different parts of the country and undertake outdoor and adventurous activities. Local visits are planned and linked to topics being taught, so enriching pupils' learning experiences. Productions at Christmas and at the end of the school year are another way in which pupils' skills in music and drama are developed.
23. Curriculum provision for the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well because of consistently good teaching, many first-hand experiences and well-planned opportunities to work and play together. The nursery and Reception accommodation has been refurbished, providing a stimulating environment enhanced by attractive displays.
24. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education with pupils having regular lessons each week and 'circle time' activities.
25. The school has an adequate number of teachers but in common with many schools in the area has difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers. This has adversely affected stability and continuity in pupils' learning and has contributed to low standards and underachievement. There has also been a high turnover of learning support assistants. The headteacher has worked very hard to secure the current more stable staffing situation but some teachers are not familiar with all the requirements of the National Curriculum.
26. Considerable building refurbishment has taken place recently and more is planned. The school has spacious accommodation and the newly decorated classrooms provide an attractive learning environment. The headteacher's pursuit of the best for the school is reflected in the newly re-furnished library. The carefully thought out furnishings and colour schemes make the library a very attractive room. Parents are cataloguing the library stock so that pupils can log their choice of book by computer. Pupils using the 'new' library for the first time during the inspection week were thrilled to choose their books and find a comfortable place to read. Outside, there is a very stimulating environmental area known as 'The Embankment'. Here there is a pond, woodland habitat and a garden area. Pupils' work shows that this provides a very good resource for learning. Playtimes are harmonious because pupils have good play equipment to use. Resources are satisfactory overall and generally used effectively, but book provision is acknowledged as unsatisfactory and an area noted for improvement. Since the last inspection, provision for ICT has improved but class computers were not used to optimum advantage during the inspection.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The systems in place to ensure the welfare of pupils are good. Pupils receive good personal support for their individual needs. Procedures for child protection and for health and safety are satisfactory. Good account is taken of pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The facilities and procedures for welfare and first aid are good
- Pupils have clear targets to help them improve their conduct but not their work
- Risk assessment procedures are very good in lessons but do not extend to all procedures and practices in school
- Child protection procedures are not always fully understood by all staff

- There are very good procedures for dealing with pupils with specific medical needs

Commentary

27. Teachers take time to talk to pupils about their personal achievements and in doing so inspire their confidence and gain their co-operation. Most of the verbal feedback given by teachers to pupils during lessons is good. Often it is focused on making sure their attitudes meet the expectations laid down for their conduct. The house system makes a good contribution to the pastoral support systems as it encourages pupils to relate to the adult members of their house group. Pupils turn readily to the staff for support on personal matters and are confident about asking for help when they are stuck on a particular piece of work. The school council acts as a useful forum for seeking pupils' views. The school also carries out an annual questionnaire to gain pupils' views and discusses the issues raised in assemblies.

28. Because the systems for assessing and recording pupils' achievement and attainment are relatively recent and not well embedded, these are of less value when it comes to setting targets for pupils' academic achievement. This means that although teachers mark pupils' work carefully, they do not have all the information they need to help the individual see exactly what it is they need to do to improve their work. The school is beginning to make very effective use of a new software program for tracking pupils' progress as they move through

the school. The thorough analysis of the data provided by this program informs the targeting of support for groups of pupils, such as some Black Afro-Caribbean boys and those who with a little extra help, could make better progress and attain higher standards.

29. First aid procedures work well. Pupils are reassured by the presence of well-trained staff who deal calmly and professionally with their minor accidents and injuries and know exactly what to do in the event of a more serious injury. Although the school deals satisfactorily with child protection issues, not all the staff have been trained in the exact reporting procedures that guide the otherwise good practice of the school. With the frequent turnover of staff, this is a comparative weakness. However, the senior staff and the welfare officer are very aware of the possible indicators of a child at risk and all staff are careful to report any worries they may have about pupils to the headteacher or to the deputy headteacher.

30. Liaison with outside agencies such as the education welfare and school nursing service are purposeful and supportive. The school makes very good efforts through accurate record keeping to ensure that pupils with specific medical needs receive as high a level of care as possible. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs receive their entitlement and due consideration has been given to making the school accessible to people with disabilities.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

Parents are very supportive of the school. The very good partnership between the school, parents, other schools and the community has a good impact on pupils' learning and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents' association gives very good support to the school
- Parents' suggestions on school improvements are valued and promptly taken up
- The school promotes itself very well as a welcoming and supportive community

Commentary

31. Parents from all communities have very positive views of the school. The school works very closely with them and with the community, motivating a great deal of interest and enthusiasm for its work. In return, parents and others give generously to the school. Parents are highly skilled at fundraising and totally committed to helping the school improve. Their aim is for all pupils to have the facilities they need to enjoy their learning. The result of their support is evident throughout the school, but nowhere more so than in the playground where the railway embankment has been transformed to a delightful woodland walk and pond area. Another wise move on the part of parents was to fence off a section of the playground for pupils' ball games. This has helped prevent injuries as well as arguments about football taking over at break-times.
32. Parents agree that the good admission process helps pupils settle into school quickly. It also helps establish a supportive, ongoing dialogue with the parents. The school can rely on the parents' co-operation in the education of their children. Parents are keen to support homework; they make sure their children attend school regularly; they help in lessons and with the after-school activities. Many came forward to offer their views on the school to inspectors and the positive comments they made far outweighed the negative. Currently, there is much concern about the school meals service but the school is doing all it can to resolve the problems and to keep parents updated on any developments.
33. Parents have very good opportunities to make their views known to the school. One simple method that has proven to be worthwhile is the use of the Friday coffee morning minute book. Parents write comments in this about anything they want to. *"Why is homework piling up at the weekend?"* asked one *"It should not happen; the issue has now been addressed"* replied the headteacher. The school is very open to suggestions and makes very good use of them. One parent put forward the idea that pupils should bring in books rather than money on a non-uniform 'mufti' day. Eight hundred and fifty books were added to the library stock as a result.
34. Pupils' reports are satisfactory. Parents' views have been sought on improving the format and usefulness of the reports for next year. School productions, assemblies, church services, class and corridor displays are all open to parents and these give good indications about the expectations and standards pupils attain. Parents are satisfied with the information given in newsletters and pleased that the school updates them about the curriculum every term. However, certain information that parents should have is missing from the current governors' report to parents. Steps have been taken to include all the required information in the next edition of their report.
35. The school contributes much to the life of the local and wider community. As well as taking part in many of the events on the church calendar, pupils support local and national charities. International evenings are just one example of the many and varied events organised by parents that help unite and promote the school as a friendly and supportive community. A strong partnership with staff from other local schools and colleges has helped pupils become more confident about moving to the next stage of their education. A group of older pupils have benefited from visiting a nearby secondary school to extend their ICT skills. The school welcomes good college students for the support they give in lessons and school clubs. In addition, beneficial links have been forged with major high street stores and businesses bringing in additional resources to the school that extend the breadth of pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy provide very good leadership. Governance is good. Management is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and, with the deputy, has a very clear understanding of what needs to be done to secure continued improvement
- Recruitment, retention and deployment of high calibre staff are managed very well but remain a continuing problem which slows the rate of improvement
- There is a very strong commitment to pupils' personal development and to enabling all pupils to be included in the life and work of the school

Commentary

36. The last inspection found leadership and management to be *'a very good feature of the school'*. Since that time, there has been significant staffing difficulties and an almost complete change of staff and many new governors. Between the time of the last inspection and the appointment of the present headteacher, the school drifted and standards started to decline. The impact of this period is still evident in pupils' level of achievement, particularly in the current Year 6.
37. The findings of this inspection are that the headteacher provides very good leadership. She has very high aspirations and a tenacious determination to move the school forward. These high aspirations are shared by the deputy and governors. She has the trust of parents who see her as totally approachable and committed to the wellbeing of their children. The deputy is relatively new to the role but is already making a considerable difference by putting in place thorough assessment systems which include the use of a specific software program. She is also the special educational needs co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. In these roles she is providing good leadership and has a very clear idea of what needs to be done to improve on current provision. Management of these areas is satisfactory rather than good because it is constrained by the amount of time she has to devote to all her tasks. She also provides very good leadership as the mathematics co-ordinator and has already overseen a rise in standards at Year 2. Governors have a good overview of what goes on in the school and are keenly aware of what has been achieved and what needs to be done to make further improvements. A good proportion of governors are new but roles and responsibilities are well defined. They are very supportive of the headteacher but are not afraid to question and challenge.
38. The headteacher and deputy work very effectively as a team. Between them, they have a very clear understanding of pupils' standards and achievement and the quality of education the school offers. They analyse performance data in detail; they check on pupils' progress by looking at their work. The headteacher knows where the weaknesses in teaching and learning are and has already brought about improvements in teachers' planning and their use of assessment to plan for subsequent lessons. Performance management is used effectively to help teachers develop their expertise. The headteacher and deputy have provided extra training for overseas trained teachers about National Curriculum requirements and know that more is needed. The school improvement plan is very good because it is based on astute and honest evaluations. The measures they have put in place are noticeable in bringing about improvement, especially in Years 2 and 5. However, there remains much to improve and there are very few staff to share the workload. The time available to the headteacher and deputy for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is restricted by the time needed to fulfil all their other responsibilities which also includes overseeing the building and refurbishment work. Consequently, there is a longer than ideal time span between setting teachers targets for improvement and checking to see if these have been met. The shortage of staff who are knowledgeable and willing to take on responsibility slows the rate of improvement.

39. There are 15 classes in the school and in less than two years there has been a change of 13 teachers and many learning support assistants. Half the teaching staff are overseas trained teachers. The headteacher is adept at spotting talented teachers and encouraging them to stay at the school. She makes sure they have opportunities to develop their expertise. There is clear evidence of this strategy in the nursery and Reception classes where relatively inexperienced teachers have been persuaded to stay, have been nurtured and are working very well together. The provision in these classes has improved since the last inspection; children are doing well. Good overseas trained teachers are encouraged and supported to undertake qualified teacher status which means they stay in the school for at least two years, thus giving more staffing stability. Another teacher persuaded to stay is providing stable and good leadership for Years 1 and 2; standards have risen considerably this year.
40. Parents appreciate the Christian ethos of the school. The previous inspection commented on *'... the very good racial harmony within the school'* and this continues to be a strength. Soon after her appointment, the headteacher introduced residential trips for Years 3 to 6. These are very popular with pupils; parents appreciate the staff's involvement and say that they *'Help their children grow up'*. The headteacher also saw the need to provide a framework of rules and sanctions so that pupils could learn to manage their behaviour through consideration and thought for others. This framework is reasonably successful in lessons but its impact is highly dependent on the quality of teaching. However, in the playground, which is often crowded, pupils play very well together and their behaviour is very good.

Financial information

41. On her appointment in September 2002, the headteacher inherited a £30,000 budget deficit and an inadequate financial system. For some while she was not able to gain a clear understanding of how much money was available. These problems have been resolved and the deficit cleared. The school uses the funding available wisely; areas where refurbishment are complete show an attention to detail and good forward planning in the choice of resources and use of space. The current budget surplus is earmarked for providing more teaching assistants and resources, such as books.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,263,250	Balance from previous year	12,814
Total expenditure	1,197,041	Balance carried forward to the next	79,023
Expenditure per pupil	3,166		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and Reception classes) is **good** and one of the strengths of the school. Provision has improved since the last inspection. Children are happy and enjoy coming to school. Children start in the nursery after their third birthday and attend full time. They move into the Reception classes in the following September.

Children start nursery with attainment that is around average but it is less well-developed in the area of communication, language and literacy. They make good progress and firmly develop and consolidate their skills. Children achieve well due to the good teaching and good assessment procedures that are used to plan activities suited to their needs.

A key factor in the success of the Foundation Stage is the teamwork of the staff, their high expectations and the good care and concern shown to the children and their parents. Parents are valued as key partners in their children's education.

The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is relatively inexperienced but she has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and demonstrates good leadership skills. The co-ordinator has identified that induction procedures and children's knowledge and understanding of the world are areas for further development. Since the last inspection there have been improvements to the outdoor environment and this now provides good opportunities for learning. Overall, resources are satisfactory. There is a good variety of construction equipment but many of the books are old and in poor condition.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very consistent approach to personal, social and emotional development by all members of staff
- The very good relationships and team work provide a safe and secure environment
- Children exceed the standards expected for their age because of the good teaching and good emphasis placed on the development of these skills

Commentary

42. Teaching is good. All members of staff are kind and caring, ensuring that children settle quickly into school. Children are very well behaved and sociable because teachers and support staff have high expectations. All children are encouraged to be independent, for example taking their own clothes off when changing for physical activities. Children work well in small groups and they co-operate with each other. For example nursery children worked well together when involved in activities using a parachute. Adults help children to understand the 'right' way to behave and children are likely to exceed the expected standard by the end of the Reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to develop speaking and listening skills so that children achieve well
- Teaching is good
- Thorough assessment ensures that children are provided with opportunities at the right level to develop their listening skills

Commentary

43. Good teaching in this area of learning means that children achieve well for their capability. By the end of the Reception year nearly all children are likely to achieve the standards expected for their age. Children enjoy taking part in whole group session in the Reception class, sharing a big book together. The role play areas, for example, the police station, are well resourced and a range of mark making tools encourages the development of writing. A good range of strategies is used to teach letter sounds and there is a strong emphasis on learning being fun. Some of the books are old and in poor condition and are not a stimulating resource. All staff make detailed records of children's progress which are used to plan their next steps in learning. Children for whom English is an additional language and are at the early stages of learning the language, make good progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know the subject well and understand the needs of the children
- A good range of practical activities are planned and these support learning well

Commentary

44. Overall, teaching is good with some very good teaching in Reception. In the nursery, mathematical concepts are often taught in a practical way that involves children and promotes learning. For example, children throw a dice and collect up toy animals to match that number. In Reception, the majority of children confidently say numbers in order to ten. A significant number of more able children recognise higher numbers.
45. Members of staff assess learning very carefully. These detailed assessments are a strength of the provision because it means that the next lesson is planned on the basis of what children need to learn next. By the end of their Reception year, children's attainment in mathematical knowledge and understanding is likely to be above that expected for their age.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are not enough planned opportunities for children to explore and investigate and develop a sense of time and place
- Good opportunities are made for children to design and make

Commentary

46. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. Good opportunities are made for children to build with bricks and other construction material. Children stick boxes together confidently to make models. The use of ICT is well integrated into activities and skills are developing appropriately. Children use the mouse confidently. Good opportunities are made for sand, water and 'small world' play where children use small models of people and such things as dinosaurs and farm animals to enact situations.
47. Within the classrooms there are not enough opportunities for children to explore and investigate. At present there are not enough activities and displays to foster a sense of time and place. Attainment is likely to be below average in this area of learning. However, plans are in hand to address improvement in this area through in-service training for staff.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to develop skills in well-planned physical education lessons
- Children have good opportunities to work outside and to use large play equipment such as climbing and balance apparatus or sit and ride toys

Commentary

48. Children's attainment is good with nearly all children on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Reception year. Skills are taught through a mixture of physical education (PE) lessons and times when children work or play outside. Together these ensure that the needs are met and achievement is good. Good opportunities are made for using construction toys and for children to choose to work outside and practise a range of physical skills.
49. Children develop their manipulative skills well by handling scissors, brushes and a variety of mark making materials and manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity. Teaching is good with children responding well to teachers' high expectations. Nursery children really enjoyed using the parachute and showed good co-ordination as they followed instruction to lift and lower the parachute and go underneath it.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy their music
- The environment provides good opportunities for creativity

Commentary

50. Children enjoy singing. They are enthusiastic and sing a variety of songs often joining in with actions. Children in the nursery were very excited when they went to the music room and

played African drums. They kept in time when playing a steady beat and followed instructions well.

51. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to try out different activities. Children draw and paint confidently with increasing control of a range of tools. They mix colours and are proud of their work. By the end of Reception, most children will reach the standards expected for their age.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving in Year 2 national tests, especially in reading
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent through the school and does not always address pupils' needs and abilities
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and standards are well below national expectations,
- Pupils have positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning
- Standards of writing throughout the school are unsatisfactory
- Standards of presentation and handwriting across the school are poor

Commentary

52. The high turnover of teachers and inability to recruit an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator for the subject have had a negative impact on standards and achievement in English. Overall there has been unsatisfactory improvement in English since the last inspection
53. In 2004 national tests for Year 2, standards rose significantly to well above both the national average and the average for similar¹ schools in reading and above average in writing. More stability and better teaching has had a positive impact. In Year 6 national tests, standards were well below average in English.
54. Inspection evidence shows the current standards in Year 6 are not high enough and it is unlikely that these pupils will meet national expectations or the school's target in the 2005 national tests. This particular year group has suffered the most from teacher turbulence, having had 11 teachers over the past few years as well as periods of prolonged staff illness when classes had supply teachers.
55. There is a high proportion of pupils whose home language is not English. However, the great majority of these pupils are competent in their understanding and use of English. The small number who are at the early stages of learning English are in the younger classes where they are making good progress with their initial acquisition of early speaking and listening skills.
56. In Year 2, inspection evidence shows standards are average in reading, below average in writing and average for speaking and listening.

¹ 'Similar' schools are those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

57. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening, and in reading, building on their achievements from nursery and Reception classes. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. The high turnover of staff has meant that pupils have not had systematic teaching to help them build up their knowledge, for example in spelling strategies and writing skills. Where the teaching is good or better, teachers are noticing the 'gaps' in pupils learning and taking account of these before they move pupils on to the next steps. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent across the school and some teachers are not secure in their knowledge of what and how to teach in order to stretch more able pupils.
58. Standards in speaking and listening are average in Years 1-6. Pupils make satisfactory progress. There are many opportunities in lessons for listening but not enough opportunities for pupils to speak, repeat key vocabulary or to rehearse and repeat a variety of responses. They speak with increasing levels of confidence as they get older and are able to hold in-depth discussions with ease.
59. Pupils' achievements in reading are unsatisfactory overall. The structured teaching of phonics and regular opportunities to read enable pupils up to Year 2 to make satisfactory progress. The high levels of parental support in hearing pupils read at home from an early age enhance the depth and breadth of pupils' understanding and reading progress. Pupils' ability to use phonics and context cues to work out a new word or make sense of a sentence is more consistent amongst younger pupils who have had a history of more stable teaching than pupils in other year groups.
60. Pupils have a good knowledge of books and reading experiences are satisfactory but limited. The books available for pupils to read in classrooms and for guided reading sessions are limited in quantity, quality and range. The new library, opened in September 2004, has some high quality reading material but the school recognises there is still much to be done. Most pupils can name a favourite author, know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and clearly enjoy reading. Even pupils with limited reading skills and English as an additional language are still keen to share their understanding of a story. Pupils' progress is restricted by the limited opportunities for them to become immersed in literary environments in classrooms. Only two classrooms in Years 2 and 6 provide satisfactory stimulating literary environments with aids such as word banks and literary prompts which help the progression of pupils' reading skills and enable them to increase their vocabulary and word recognition.
61. Writing standards are below average across the school. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress over time. Handwriting is also unsatisfactory because joined up writing is not taught and modelled systematically from pupils' earliest writing lessons in nursery and Reception classes. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to write regularly from an early age and there are few opportunities for extended writing tasks in Year 3-6.
62. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. In lessons, teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory in Years 4 to 6. Teaching in Year 3, though satisfactory, is not demanding enough for the more able pupils. The setting of pupils from Years 3 to 6 into ability sets is not effective in the match of work to the varying abilities of the pupils and they do not make satisfactory progress. There are inconsistencies in teaching in every year group from Years 1 to 6. Where the teaching is good, pupils' progress is better. Where teaching is very good, as in one Year 6 lesson observed, good teacher knowledge and planning ensure that there is a good balance between teacher and pupil talk. The teacher's high expectations and frequently high level of questioning ensure that all pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn and what they have to do to learn it. There is constant repetition of previous teaching so that pupils can extend and reinforce their previous learning. There are clear parameters and guidance on quantity and quality of work expected within set time limits. This challenges pupils and ensures that all have a chance to succeed and do their best. Pupils

make good progress throughout these lessons including those with special educational needs due to the good support from learning support assistants. In unsatisfactory lessons teachers do not match work to pupils' abilities and provide undemanding tasks. Pupils listen well but the opportunities for them to speak, learn new words and extend their vocabulary are limited. Very few visual and auditory prompts are used to extend pupils' vocabulary, knowledge and understanding. Pace and momentum in lessons are not always sufficient so that pupils lose

interest and stray off task. The management of pupil behaviour is good in lessons where the teaching is good. In these lessons, the pupils are motivated and interested and stay on task. Where introductions are too long, pupils become restless and do not give their full attention.

63. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. The marking of books includes correction of mistakes and advice for helping pupils to improve. The use of individual reading and writing targets which are reviewed regularly, are not used consistently in all year groups. Teacher assessments of pupils' work have not always been consistently accurate and there seems to be some discrepancy of pupils' achievement levels which have not taken into account the range of complex learning needs in each class. The school has identified this as an area of development in the school improvement plan.
64. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Experienced co-ordinators are very hard to recruit so the headteacher has created a leadership 'team' who have an overview of the subject across the school, but the majority of evaluation of teaching, data and learning is undertaken by the head and deputy. Appropriate priorities for future development of the subject have been identified in the current school development plan and include a whole school focus on improving writing standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. There are some examples of the use of literacy in history and science but the pupils' use of language and literacy skills in other subjects is limited. Opportunities to teach key vocabulary and promote key writing skills in other subjects are unsatisfactory and this limits the application of enquiry and investigative skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are well below the national average
- Achievement of pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 is unsatisfactory
- The high turnover of teachers in recent years has resulted in inconsistent teaching and unsatisfactory pupil progress
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good

Commentary

66. Standards by Year 2 are satisfactory and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Achievement by Year 2 is satisfactory. Standards by Year 6 are well below the national average and have declined since the previous inspection when they were judged to be in line with the national average. Achievement of pupils in Year 6, and also in Year 3, is unsatisfactory. However, achievement in Years 4 and 5 is, currently, sound. The decline in standards and achievement by Year 6 can be attributed to three significant factors. There is a

high annual turnover of teachers, which results in an inconsistent approach to teaching and hampers the progress of pupils. The second reason is that a third of the pupils who were in Year 2 have since left the school and have been replaced by a higher percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Whilst these pupils are competent in using English, some are insecure on specific mathematical vocabulary which hinders their achievement in areas such as problem solving. The third main cause is that almost half of the teachers are from overseas. Although they are committed, many are inexperienced and are having to learn the requirements of the mathematics curriculum as they teach.

67. Teaching is satisfactory overall but has declined in quality since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be good throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, although teaching was satisfactory overall, it ranged from very good to very poor. In Years 3 to 6, teaching observed was never less than satisfactory and a quarter of the teaching seen was good. The good and very good teaching has yet to make a significant impact on raising standards and achievement because pupils have much learning to make up, but there is evidence in Years 4 and 5 that standards are rising.
68. Older pupils also have a weak recall of basic facts and an unsatisfactory use of key mathematical vocabulary. Where teaching is good or better, the teacher plans for, displays and discusses the important vocabulary for the lesson but this is not done consistently throughout the school. Good and very good lessons begin with a well paced mental starter to develop number recall, which pupils are eager to take part in and offer answers. Good use is made of pupils' errors and misconceptions as teaching and learning points and to develop personal strategies. As a result, pupils achieve well. In the satisfactory or very poor lessons the mental starter is often missing or the learning objectives are not clear and so pupils are not consolidating or developing personal strategies and an understanding of number.
69. The attitudes' of pupils towards mathematics is good. They enjoy lessons and are generally eager to take part, even when the task set is mundane or confusing.
70. Assessment data is not used rigorously enough by teachers to plan for the different groupings within a class or within the Year 3 to Year 6 set groups, which results in only satisfactory progress overall. Lower attaining pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language are often planned for as one group. It is the support given by teaching assistants that ensures that these groups of pupils make at least sound progress, rather than specifically planned for activities. The use of teaching assistants is satisfactory overall. Where teaching assistants give good support it is because they have a clear understanding of what pupils are to learn because of good liaison with the class teacher. Marking of pupils' work, against the lesson objectives, varies between classes and teachers' comments are not always legible for pupils. In the satisfactory or very poor lessons teachers do not begin by sharing the lesson objectives so that pupils know what is to be learnt and why. The objectives are not recapped at the end of the lesson for pupils to know if they have been achieved.
71. Leadership and management by the co-ordinator are very good. She uses national, local and school assessment data very well to identify strengths and areas for development and trends over time and amongst different groups of pupils. She monitors teaching and planning and gives good support and training for teachers, especially those who are overseas trained. She has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and the initiatives required to raise standards and achievement of pupils. Overall, displays in classes and shared areas do not celebrate mathematics and few classrooms have number lines, number squares and the key vocabulary on display for pupils to refer to and to support their learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. The use of mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory but it is not always planned for and so opportunities are missed to consolidate and develop pupils' mathematical skills further. Evidence in books showed some use of mathematics in science, information and communication technology and history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils do not do as well as they should because of unsatisfactory teaching and learning
- There is scope for more opportunities to use ICT to support learning
- There is strong emphasis on practical and investigative activities
- Assessment systems are not sufficiently well developed to identify gaps in pupils' learning and establish where improvement are needed
- The co-ordinator needs to be more effective in contributing to raising standards

Commentary

73. Since the last inspection standards have declined. Pupils' results in National Curriculum tests at age 11 were well below average in 2003 and 2004 in comparison to similar¹ schools. In 2004, teacher assessments of Year 2 showed that a very high proportion of pupils attained the expected Level 2. This result was a tremendous improvement on 2003. Indeed the results were among the top five per cent nationally, but at the higher Level 3, the proportion was below average. These results reflected the stability and mostly good quality of teaching in Year 2 and also show that, currently, there is not enough challenge for the more able pupils to move them on to Level 3 work.
74. The very high turnover of teachers in Years 3 to 6 especially, has had a negative impact on pupils' build up of skills and knowledge. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are beginning to rise across the school, although they are currently below average. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could in most lessons because they are not always challenged enough through the questions asked of them and the activities provided.
75. In the work scrutiny and in lessons, there is strong emphasis on practical and investigative work. Pupils enjoy this and they are beginning to use scientific vocabulary when describing their work. Pupils in Year 6 begin to understand the link between gravitational attraction, air resistance and surface area, as they investigate the speed at which a piece of paper falls. Pupils in Year 4 easily match animals and plants to their habitats. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are not extended by challenging them to identify ways in which animals and plants have adapted to their environment.
76. Teachers generally have at least satisfactory knowledge of their subject. They plan in year groups so that pupils in both classes are given similar experiences. However, the planned work does not challenge higher attaining pupils because all pupils are given a similar task to do. There are important weaknesses in much of the teaching that pupils experience. When teaching is unsatisfactory, this is usually because the teacher has to put too much time and effort in trying to manage behaviour and this slows down learning for the whole class. In these lessons, teachers do not expect enough of pupils, activities are unchallenging and the pace is slow. Nevertheless, there is some good, lively and demanding teaching. In the best lessons, teachers provide pupils with strong visual reinforcement of vital information and hold their interest and concentration well. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to investigate. For example, pupils in a Year 5 class enjoyed investigating how sounds are produced when objects vibrate and how the loudness of some vibrating objects can be changed. Throughout the school, insufficient use is made of ICT to support and extend learning.
77. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not consistent so that all pupils know their next steps in learning and how to improve their work. Good systems have recently been put in place for

tracking pupils' progress but as yet, this information is not being used effectively to match work to pupils' learning needs. Some pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning at the end of a topic but this practice is not consistent.

78. Leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. Teachers are not well supported with planning, guidance and resources that lead to a consistency of approach. The co-ordinator is experienced but the plans for improving standards do not concentrate on addressing the important weaknesses in teaching and learning. There is not enough systematic, formal monitoring of teachers' work, or enough action taken to improve the quality of teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is not consistent
- Technical faults impact on teaching and learning and impede pupils' progress
- The management of the subject is good

Commentary

79. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Achievement by Year 2 and Year 6 is satisfactory overall.
80. ICT was a key issue from the previous inspection because the control aspects of the curriculum were not being taught and pupils had insufficient access to computers. These weaknesses have now been addressed. Year 5 and Year 6 use the ICT facilities of the nearby secondary school for control technology where, for example, they program traffic lights and small robots. All classes are now allocated a minimum of one hour a week in the computer suite and also have access to a computer in each of the classrooms.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall though two of the lessons observed were unsatisfactory. Teachers generally set tasks that interest pupils. However, they do not always share the objectives of the lesson so that pupils know what is to be learnt and why, or recap the objectives at the end of the lesson so that pupils can assess their own learning. In the majority of lessons teachers pair higher attaining pupils with lower attainers. The intention is that higher attaining pupils can support their partner. However, too often higher attaining pupils tend to dominate the use of the computer keyboard and mouse and exclude their lower attaining partner. Year 4 and Year 6 pupils spoken to confirm that they find pairing in this way at times frustrating. In the unsatisfactory lessons observed inappropriate pairing led to unsatisfactory behaviour by pupils who were being excluded by their partner. In the satisfactory lessons pupils generally co-operate well but higher attainers are unable to make better than satisfactory progress because they are unable to work at their own pace
82. The management of the subject by the co-ordinator is good and leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, now supported by an ICT 'team', has ensured that the key issues of the previous inspection have been addressed. The new computer suite allows for whole class lessons but this has been at the expense of the use of classroom computers, which are rarely used by pupils to complement and consolidate work in lessons.
83. New computers are leased to ensure that they can be upgraded as required. This also means that faults can be resolved by the company from which the computers are leased. However,

there were a number of faults with computers in the suite, with the interactive 'smart boards'² and with class computers which frustrated teachers and pupils. Teachers and the co-ordinator confirmed that this was an on-going problem often relating to teething-troubles with the new suite. An additional issue is that the smart boards in the classrooms are free-standing. When a train passes the school, the vibration through the wooden floorboards often decalibrates the board and its projector and so they fail to work.

84. Access to the Internet is monitored and filtered to ensure that only appropriate sites are accessed. Pupils and responsible adults are made aware of the rules for Internet use and no pupil is allowed to use the Internet until a responsible adult has signed a consent form. The co-ordinator runs a weekly ICT club for pupils to develop their skills and interest. A computer course for parents was very well received and will be repeated for a new set of parents from January 2005.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. The ICT suite is used satisfactorily overall to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum. However, programs for class computers are not always of an appropriate level of challenge for the age and attainment of pupils or make suitable links to other areas of the curriculum. Although pupils have ICT ring-binders, many contain few hard copy examples of printed work. Many pupils have lost work saved on the computer because of the faults. Few displays around the school celebrate ICT's links to other areas of the curriculum. However, there are examples where ICT is used to support other subjects include pupils' use of the Internet to research the Ancient Greeks and the Tudors for history, electronic designs for book covers, slide presentations linked to literacy, and graphs and charts used to support mathematics.

HUMANITIES

86. **History** and **geography** were not the focus of the inspection and so no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching or provision. The focus for this term's work throughout the school was **history** where only one lesson was seen. No lessons were seen in geography. Pupils' work in history reveals that there is now a scheme of work in place although it is not followed consistently in all classes. There is a satisfactory use of Year 2 pupils' literacy skills to write about famous people and Year 6 write accounts of Victorian children. The development of map skills and historical enquiry skills was not evident in work and indicates that this is an unsatisfactory aspect of the humanities curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

87. These areas of the school's work were not the focus for the inspection. **Music** was sampled – one lesson was observed and two singing sessions as well as an African drumming session taken by a visiting specialist. The evidence collected from these observations shows that pupils enjoy singing and that standards in singing are good. In the drumming session, pupils were totally engrossed and focussed on keeping rhythms .
88. No lessons were observed in **art and design** or **design and technology**. Displays of pupils' work and discussions with them show that they enjoy these subjects and that they have opportunities to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum. In Year 2, good links are made with mathematics when pupils follow the style of Kandinsky. The Embankment outdoor

² A whiteboard onto which computer images are projected and which responds to touch with hand or special "pen" in a way that is similar to using a mouse with an ordinary computer screen.

resource area is used to very good effect to provide first hand experiences and stimuli for both subjects.

89. Discussion with the subject co-ordinator, planning and photographic evidence on walls, shows that, in **physical education**, pupils are involved in a full range of gymnastics, dance and games activities. Teachers use a published scheme to support planning and teaching.
90. Swimming has been taught to Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils at a local public swimming pool. The pool has recently closed for a two year refurbishment. At the time of the inspection the school was negotiating temporary use of the pool of a local hospital from January 2005. By Year 6, seventy-five per cent of pupils are able to swim the minimum expectation of 25 metres.
91. Good links have been made with a local secondary school, which has sports college status, to support the teaching of gymnastics and dance. Residential visits to Kent and the Isle of Wight include outdoor and adventurous activities. The co-ordinator is raising the profile of the subject well by introducing a wider range of after school activities, developing lunchtime playground games and improving the quality and quantity of resources available.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

92. No teaching was observed in this area of the school's work, therefore no judgement can be made as to the quality of overall provision. On the evidence available and through discussions with pupils, it is clear that the school places great emphasis on helping pupils develop their personal and social skills and their awareness of living in a community. The headteacher has made this a focus in the school and as a result, all pupils from Year 3 onwards have the option of taking part in an annual residential visit. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle, and the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise are promoted well. 'Circle time', a session where pupils sit quietly to discuss a theme or an issue that is of concern, is used productively. Assemblies often reinforce pupils' understanding of being responsible and kind to others. Pupils have opportunities to be a member of the school council which gives them a good understanding of the need to take note of others' opinions. Pupils participate in a good range of sporting activities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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

poor (6); very poor (7).