

INSPECTION REPORT

HITHER GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Lewisham

Unique reference number: 100687

Headteacher: Mrs Irene Cleaver (Acting)

Lead inspector: Roderick Passant

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 June 2005

Inspection number: 272099

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	487
School address:	Beacon Road London
Postcode:	SE13 6EH
Telephone number:	020 8852 7245
Fax number:	020 8852 2456
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Mary Foster
Date of previous inspection:	20/04/1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is much bigger than average with 487 pupils on roll. There are roughly equal numbers of boys and girls. The school has doubled in size since the last inspection. The school has a large nursery and reception unit in purpose built accommodation. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (40.6 per cent) is above the national average. There is a wide diversity of cultures at the school. Approximately a quarter of pupils is white UK British and just over a quarter of pupils is of Caribbean heritage. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is high. The main first languages spoken are Turkish, Tamil and Spanish. The school's Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant supports 136 pupils and a further 136 pupils are supported through the Local Authority (LA). Sixty-one pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The previous report noted that the school dealt with a wide range of social and emotional problems some of which stemmed from the fact that the school worked with families in temporary housing and children in foster care. This remains the case. There are five children in foster care. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (21.7 per cent) is above the national average but the percentage of pupils with statements detailing specific support is below average. The main groups of pupils with learning difficulties are: moderate learning, social emotional and behavioural, and speech and language difficulties. Mobility of pupils – that is the percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school – is very high. There is transience in the local population, which leads to mobility in the school – especially as it is not full. A large number of pupils join the school relatively late in their primary school careers, often from abroad and sometimes without experiencing formal education. Mobility is a key factor in any discussion on standards. The school has until recently operated on two sites whilst it underwent a major refurbishment and building programme and absorbed pupils and staff following the closure of a local primary school. The attainment on entry to the nursery is, overall, very low. There is currently an acting headteacher and acting deputy. A new headteacher joins the school in September.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2728	Roderick Passant	Lead inspector	Physical education Personal, social and health education
9499	Phiroze Daruwala	Lay inspector	
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Art and design Religious education Foundation stage English as an additional language
1782	Andrew Lyons	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Music
32387	Peter Wakeman	Team inspector	English Geography History
3328	Olson Davis	Team inspector	Mathematics Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hither Green Primary School has many good features and provides a sound education for its pupils. All members of staff are very committed to the pupils in their care and work hard to ensure that they achieve well against their starting points. The school is a calm place. There is a strong ethos and good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These elements create a supportive framework, reinforced by teachers' shared expectations, which allow it to operate as a very inclusive school, foster pupils' self-esteem and encourage achievement. Behaviour and pupils' attitudes are good. Although a large school, the way that it is structured in its organisation and day-to-day operation, it does not feel as such and individual pupils are known well by their teachers and support staff. Attendance is below average despite the good efforts of the school and poor attendance limits some pupils' achievement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The fact that the school has emerged from a particularly turbulent and difficult period associated with operation on two sites and a major building programme in a relatively strong position on which to build, reflects well on the acting leadership, middle management and the commitment of all staff.
- During this period, the school has managed to maintain a focus on improving standards.
- The school cares for all its pupils very well and has created an ethos in which they achieve well.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at various points in their school career is very high and this is a prime reason why overall standards are well below average. Pupils do better the longer they attend the school.
- Teaching is often good in English, mathematics and science and teaching is sound overall.
- The Nursery provides a good start for children but Reception activities need to be underpinned by tighter organisation. Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with good features.
- Over half the curriculum time is given to English, mathematics and science. Other subjects need to have more time given to them and used as contexts to develop key skills. The role of these subject co-ordinators needs to be enhanced.

Direct comparison of the current school to the previous report is not easy. The school has doubled in size, the numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school at various points have increased and there have been changes in the school's leadership. In some aspects there has been good improvement, overall improvement is satisfactory. The school has established effective middle management teams but the role of subject co-ordinator remains an aspect to be developed. Standards have risen. There has been significant investment in ICT. The school has maintained a good ethos. The school has had an extensive refurbishment and rebuilding programme, which is not yet completed fully.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

By the time they reach Year 1, children have made good overall progress in the Nursery and Reception classes in most areas compared to their low start, and achieved well overall. Standards dipped in 2004 in Year 6 National Curriculum tests mainly due to the overall make up of the cohort

of pupils and a significant number of late arrivals from abroad with additional needs. The trend for improvement is above the national trend. In the current work seen, standards in Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and close to average in science. Pupils achieve well from their starting point. **Overall, the achievement of pupils across all years in the school is good.** The value that the school adds to pupils' progress from their Year 2 to Year 6 National Curriculum tests is above average. The longer that pupils attend the school, the more likely they are to attain standards in line with national expectations. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their targets as do pupils with English as an additional language. Caribbean heritage pupils do well. There is little difference between boys' and girls' achievement. Higher attaining pupils are identified and there is a policy but extension work is not a common feature in classrooms. The progress of pupils in care is tracked carefully and reported regularly to the LEA. Pupils' behaviour is good overall as are their attitudes. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural and personal development is good. Attendance remains a weakness.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education. There are good features. **Teaching is satisfactory** and very often good. English, mathematics and science are generally taught well. Teachers are skilled in managing their class and promoting good behaviour. The quality of relationships that exist between adults and pupils supports learning effectively. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning in classrooms and in their support for individual pupils. The curriculum provided by the school is sound. In order to tackle low standards the school has emphasised English and mathematics, which along with science form over half of the timetable. The status of other subjects needs to be raised and the opportunities that they present to foster key learning skills such as literacy, ICT, investigation, creative and collaborative work and independent skills exploited to a greater extent. The quality of care and support is very good. Good tracking systems support achievement. There are strong links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management of the school are sound with good features. The school has had changes in the leadership since the last inspection and currently there is an acting headteacher and acting deputy. Overall, the senior leadership team is operating under strength, further compounded by the need for colleagues to cover other responsibilities because of illness.

The acting headteacher's leadership is good. Supported by the senior and acting members of the leadership team they have maintained the school's sense of purpose through very difficult times. Governance of the school is good. Year group middle management is good, ensuring rigour in planning and ensuring pupils achieve well. Subject co-ordinator leadership and management are satisfactory but are restricted by the time and opportunities that they have to formally support colleagues. Informal support is good. Management of the school is sound.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils are proud of their school and think that it is getting better. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire by parents were positive. The positive ethos and the school's care and support were stressed.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop the breadth and richness of the curriculum by giving more time and status to subjects such as history, geography, religious education, music, art, design and technology and make greater use of them as a context to teach key skills such as reading, writing, numeracy and ICT as well as developing pupils' learning skills.
- Enhance subject co-ordinators' role to develop these subjects and develop staff knowledge and expertise.
- Underpin Reception activities with tighter management and planning.
- Improve attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged in classroom activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve well across the school. They make good progress from their starting point. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average in English and mathematics and close to average in science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's ethos supports pupils' good achievement along with the cumulative effect of sound teaching.
- The longer that pupils are at the school the more likely they are to achieve the expected national standards.
- Standards at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with expectations.

Commentary

1. Most children's attainment on entry to the Nursery class is very low, particularly in the areas of language and communication, and personal, social and emotional development. Children achieve well overall and make good progress but by the end of the Reception year standards are generally well below average.
2. Standards by the end of Year 2 as measured by National Curriculum tests in 2004 were average in writing and below average in reading and mathematics. When averaged over the last three years, the performance of the pupils in reading was below the national median, well below in writing and very low in mathematics. Girls did slightly better in mathematics than boys in that they performed closer to the girls' national average than boys did to their respective average. Standards of work seen in English and science are close to average and in mathematics below. That said, in relation to their starting point pupils' achievement is good in all three subjects. Standards in other subjects are broadly average.

Key Stage 1¹

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.0 (12.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.7 (12.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (12.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Good achievement continues in Years 3 to 6 yet standards of work seen in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 are below average. Standards are close to average in science, particularly in the knowledge aspects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are, overall, broadly average; they are below average in religious education. By the end of Year 6, pupils develop relatively good writing skills; further improvement lies in developing the quality of their ideas. Reading is a relative weakness in that there is little evidence of work with sustained texts and literature. Overall, the library was under resourced and little used. Mathematical skills are below average. Many pupils throughout the school are

¹ Key Stage 1 describes the period from Year 1 to Year 2. Key Stage 2 describes the period of four years from Year 3 to Year 6. The Foundation Stage is a term used to describe the time children spend in the Nursery and Reception classes.

still not secure with basic number facts. Too little is committed to memory so that it can be used in more advanced work. The school has identified this as an area for development. Overall, there is little difference between the standards attained by boys and girls. The school's tracking system and teachers' periodic assessment of pupils help to identify pupils who are not making the progress that they should.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.6 (26.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.2 (25.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.3 (27.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 72 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. There are two main reasons to explain the apparent anomaly whereby good achievement is, apparently, not building on the overall average standards in Key Stage 1. Firstly, the apparent lack of progress can be explained by the high levels of mobility of pupils – that is, the numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school. The proportion of pupils gaining Level 4² and above is significantly higher if they attend the school for three years or more compared to those who attend for less than that. Pupils achieve well against their starting point. This is reflected in the school's added value. Using matched pupil data it is possible to compare the relative progress made by pupils in the school from their test scores in Year 2 compared to their test scores in Year 6 and compare this to the progress seen nationally. The added value at Hither Green in 2004 was above average. That is to say, pupils at Hither Green made better progress than might be expected when compared to schools nationally. However, data is only available on three-quarters of the cohort. It is the performance of those pupils for whom, for one reason or another, it is not possible to trace their performance at Key Stage 1, which brings down the overall levels of attainment. The second reason, which applies particularly to ICT and science, is that changes that the school has made have not yet worked through the school. In other subjects standards, where it was possible to make an overall judgement, were broadly in line with expectations.
5. Overall achievement then is good across the school with pupils making good progress against their starting point. This too requires further explanation. Overall, the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory as was the learning in lessons. There was, however, a very significant proportion of good teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science. A key factor in explaining this apparent mismatch between good achievement and sound learning in lessons is that there is across the school a consistency of expectations, an ethos that supports achievement. The school works hard to raise pupils' sense of self-esteem and promote an ethos that encourages pupils to achieve. It is this factor, along with the cumulative effect of sound and often good teaching, which explains why pupils achieve well over time.
6. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well because they are well supported by teaching assistants (TAs) and well taught by teachers who plan carefully to take account of individual needs. Their achievement is similar to that of other pupils.
7. Both English as an additional language and EMA (Ethnic Minority Achievement) pupils make good progress and achieve well. Progress of most pupils who are new arrivals and on initial stages of English language acquisition is good where it is well targeted and effectively planned. Pupils' language needs are identified effectively and tackled consistently. The school is currently using 'Hilary Hester Stages' of identification. Currently a number of new

² Level 4 is the level which 11 year olds are expected to reach.

arrivals and others on early stages are being targeted for extra support. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) teacher and the assistants work in partnership with the class teachers to give in-class focused group support. Partnership teaching helps pupils who have moved to higher stages of English language acquisition to also receive continuous support and achieve appropriate levels in all aspects of English. This, however, is less effective in lessons and class teachers require more training to plan and provide for the developing language needs of these pupils. That said, teachers do provide an inclusive ethos in their classrooms and, as identified previously, work hard to promote these pupils' sense of self-esteem.

8. Caribbean pupils do well at the school. Variation in other ethnic groups' achievements occurs but these tend to be year-on-year variations and there is no significant trend to distinguish their achievement from that of their peers. The progress of pupils who are in public care is tracked carefully and reported regularly to the Local Education Authority.
9. The Primary Learning Support Unit (PLSU) is very effective in providing short-term support for pupils with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. Pupils achieve very well in the relatively short time they are in the Unit because of the very caring way in which their emotional needs are met and the very skilful manner in which their behaviour is managed by the staff. Improvements are made in pupils' speaking and listening skills, their ability to stay on task, and their ability to participate more fully in lessons. Pupils make good progress against the baseline measures used in the initial assessment of their emotional and behaviour development and against the targets in their Individual Action Plans (IAPs). Evidence indicates that intervention by the Unit lessens the likelihood of exclusion for most of its pupils.
10. The Unit is funded by the Excellence in Cities Initiative and offers support for ten Year 3 and Year 4 pupils over a period of ten weeks. It is based at the school but also supports pupils from two other primary schools. Pupils attend the Unit during the afternoon. It is staffed by a teacher (who manages the Unit), a learning mentor and a teaching assistant.
11. The Unit provides very well for pupils' academic development focusing on lessons in science, ICT, art and design, history and geography. The curriculum is enriched by trips to central London to visit places such as the Tate Modern and the London Transport Museum. Ten pupils are also involved in a residential long weekend. These experiences help pupils to practise behaviour needed for when they go on trips in their feeder schools. There is good focus on developing pupils' social skills and emotional maturity. The classrooms are effectively organised with computer workstations and areas for individual work and group work.
12. In addition, the school has an in-house inclusion unit that works effectively with pupils who have been, or are very likely to be, excluded. The use of this unit has lessened as behaviour in the school has improved.
13. The school has identified gifted and talented pupils but they are not always suitably challenged in lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour is good as are pupils' attitudes to each other. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are skilled at fostering good behaviour and reinforcing pupils' sense of self-esteem.
- Overall, pupils' attitudes are good. They respond well to enthusiastic good teaching and their attitudes to learning are never less than satisfactory.

- The overall provision for personal development including the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural is good.

Commentary

14. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. The school has established a clear framework of shared expectations and teachers are skilled at managing pupils' behaviour by consistently and constantly reinforcing, by appropriate praise, pupils' positive behaviour and reinforcing their sense of self-esteem. The school is a calm community. The accommodation is spacious, absorbing the large numbers and classes are grouped over three floors; playtime is carefully timetabled to avoid large groups of children of different ages playing at the same time. Members of staff are punctilious in taking and collecting pupils from the playground so that the opportunities to let off steam are confined to the playground and do not extend to the stairwells. Year groups are sited in adjacent classrooms and operate as mini-schools, with staff and TAs operating as strong teams. The result is that one is never conscious of the overall size of the school, and within the teams of staff, pupils are known and valued. The very good relationships, which exist between staff and the pupils, underpin the learning in the school.
15. Pupils have good attitudes overall. When teaching is enthusiastic, they respond particularly well and their attitudes to learning are never less than satisfactory. Expectations by staff of pupils' behaviour and attitudes are appropriately high and good relationships between pupils consistently encouraged and generally achieved. The provision for personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Self-esteem is consistently reinforced and pupils are taught to be kind to one another and to respect others' feelings. Whole-school and other assemblies are used effectively to reinforce the school community's basic values. There are occasional incidents of unkindness but the school is quick to pick up and solve the problems. The school takes the possibility of bullying in all its forms seriously. Young children of all diverse backgrounds with regard to ethnicity, culture and languages work and play together in harmony. Pupils of all ages are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong and guided to behave sensibly at all times. Pupils are helped to form good relationships with others and when given the opportunity take responsibilities seriously. The overall provision for social development across the school is good. The school is inclusive, it welcomes pupils from all backgrounds and works hard to ensure that they are supported and integrated into the life of the school. This inclusive ethos rubs off on the pupils. The school promotes a sound understanding of their own and others' cultural traditions.
16. Pupils with special educational needs develop good attitudes because teachers and teaching assistants manage pupils' behaviour well using a variety of strategies outlined in the school's behaviour policy and special educational needs policy. There is good improvement in pupils' attitudes following attendance at the Primary Learning Support Unit.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	3.8
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.

17. The rate of attendance is unsatisfactory. The school has established positive strategies for promoting and monitoring both the level of attendance and punctuality on a daily basis. It has succeeded in raising the pupils' overall level of attendance in the year, which ended in July 2004. Pupils appreciate the school's award system for high attendance and good punctuality. However, the school does not always receive the co-operation it should from parents over

this. Pupils from a significant minority of families are either late or fail to attend school, especially in the Foundation Stage, which affects considerably the standards and impedes potential achievement. A high rate of mobility coupled with a minority of parents taking children on extended holidays exacerbates the situation, thus affecting the overall level of attendance. Consideration should be given to increasing the rigour with which attendance and punctuality are monitored together with greater emphasis on raising the profile of attendance and punctuality across the school. The importance of regular and continuous attendance and punctuality is not emphasised in the current school prospectus.

Exclusions

The school uses fixed-term exclusion as a last resort as part of its positive behaviour policy and to this end, it makes use of its in-house inclusion unit effectively. Evidence indicates that intervention by the Inclusion Unit staff team lessens the likelihood of exclusion for most pupils.

The school encourages a highly inclusive climate for learning and succeeds in achieving it. The number of exclusions in the table below relate to four pupils, showing a marked improvement over the preceding two years. The school and the governors carefully follow the set guidelines, before excluding a pupil.

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	104	1	0
White – any other White background	43	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	11	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	16	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	105	2	0
Black or Black British – African	52	1	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	31	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	14	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. There are good features. Teaching is satisfactory. The school provides a sound curriculum with significant emphasis on English, mathematics and science. The relative status and time available for other subjects is consequently reduced. The quality of care and support is very good. Good tracking systems support achievement.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory. It is very often good, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National strategies in literacy and numeracy have been used well to support teaching.
- Teaching is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Reception.
- Behaviour and classroom management are usually skilled.
- The joint planning, and its rigour, effectively ensures that teachers know where they are going with their class. Planning for pupils' different needs is more variable on a day-to-day basis.
- Staff work hard on behalf of the pupils.
- There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress but weaknesses in the way the data is used so that higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Subject knowledge in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is more variable.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	6 (12%)	23 (48%)	18 (38%)	1 (2%)	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.

18. The key characteristics of the strengths in teaching at Hither Green are:
- The quality of relationships that exist between all staff and pupils and which effectively underpin learning.
 - Classroom organisation and behaviour management, with its emphasis on reinforcing the positive and fostering of pupils' self-esteem.
 - The use of national strategies in literacy and numeracy to provide a foundation for English and mathematics work.
 - The joint shared planning across the year group which is detailed and rigorous so that teachers are very clear what they are doing next.
 - The fact that teachers have coped very well with recent difficult circumstances and work hard on behalf of the pupils.
 - TAs provide good support.
19. Aspects requiring further development include:
- Developing subject knowledge in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Subject co-ordinators clearly have a key role in this. The informal support that they give teachers is good but currently they have limited opportunities to engage with and support colleagues formally.
 - Making effective use of assessment information to tailor the weekly plans on a day-by-day basis to ensure that work is suitably differentiated – that is that it appropriately meets the needs of individuals – particularly higher attaining pupils.
 - Given that teachers now manage effectively pupils' behaviour, they can afford to adopt a less rigid approach with its focus on teacher 'delivery' of the lesson to focus more on

creating effective learning. Creating, for example, more opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, investigative, collaborative, independent, research skills.

- Teachers need more strategic guidance on developing the language needs of English as an additional language pupils.
- Reception activities need to be underpinned by tighter organisation.

20. There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. National assessments and other tests are used to identify the progress made by individual pupils and to check on their achievements. Class teachers' periodic assessment in literacy and numeracy is good and used well. Members of staff have a good knowledge of levels and sub-levels within the National Curriculum. Whole-class targets for raising pupils' achievement are carefully identified based on their prior attainment or used effectively to inform the grouping of pupils, and for tracking their progress. This model extends throughout the school with an assessment calendar to ensure teachers are not overburdened at particular times of the year. Individual targets are set for pupils and discussed with parents at two target-setting days.
21. However, the use of assessment is somewhat negated because the information gleaned from these assessments is not used effectively by teachers to plan work that will build on the pupils' strengths and address the weaknesses within the classroom. A consequence of this is that work is not always appropriate to pupils' different abilities.
22. Most teachers plan lessons which contain learning intentions and tasks that are matched to the pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs), enabling them to achieve well because the work is matched appropriately to their abilities and needs. Individual Education Plans place proper emphasis on improvements in literacy and numeracy, and where appropriate, improvements in behaviour. The English as an additional language support staff keep good records of pupils' progress and work mainly in partnership with the class teachers.
23. However, in some instances, lower attaining pupils (as distinct from pupils with special educational needs) struggle because the work is too difficult for them. More often, it means that teachers expect too little of more able pupils, who are not set challenging enough work and so achieve less than they are capable of in lessons. As co-ordinators do not see teachers' weekly planning, they do not have the relevant information to ensure that pupils of all abilities are being challenged in the work that is being set. Although pupils are involved in evaluating their own work, marking on a day-to-day basis tends to be congratulatory rather than informing the pupil what they need to do to improve further.
24. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well within English, mathematics and science. Teaching assistants provide good support in lessons allowing pupils with special educational needs to benefit from the general work of the class and to achieve as well as other pupils. The part-time special educational needs teacher works with small groups of pupils to improve their reading and writing skills. Her teaching is very good and, as a result, these pupils make very good progress. Pupils who have been given or at risk of fixed-term exclusion are taught by teaching assistants within the 'Inclusion Unit' during their period of exclusion. This ensures that that they do miss out on their schooling during this period.
25. The overall quality of support to English as additional language pupils on initial stages of English language acquisition is satisfactory with some good features. Pupils are suitably assessed for their English as an additional language needs, and specialised support to meet their needs is allocated in blocks of time to each class or year group. In-class support during literacy sessions is allocated to some classes and not the others. All EMAS staff work on individual achievement plans (IAPs) for the targeted pupils. While a few higher attaining pupils pick up sufficient English, for many average and below average pupils the current rate of progress could be accelerated further if all teachers were sufficiently guided in English as an additional language good practice, made more aware of the full range of language needs and planned specifically to support the EAL pupils with appropriate resources and tasks that match their needs. However, teachers do provide good general support and pupils' responses are suitably supported and extended. There are sufficient resources such as story

props and tapes in different languages. The amount of time by EAL staff in classes is used in giving more specific, quality and well-planned support to targeted individuals. The groups supported include both SEN and EAL/EMA pupils. The quality of teaching, as judged in lessons where more focused support was given, is mostly satisfactory.

26. Pupils' home languages within the whole school are generally well supported. However, there is insufficient evidence of promoting pupils' mother tongue in displays around the school.
27. Teaching in the PLSU is very good. In a science lesson, the teacher made very good use of the interactive whiteboard to introduce ideas about forces and energy. His explanation of the tasks was very clear so that pupils were secure about what they had to do and to learn. The teacher's expectations were high and pupils responded well, by trying hard and working well together. Pupils' behaviour is managed very well with timely reminders about appropriate ways of answering questions, making eye contact when speaking and listening to others, and sitting properly. The learning mentor and the teaching assistant provide very good support for individual pupils allowing them to participate fully in the lesson.
28. Pupils are referred to the Unit by the feeder schools using criteria contained in the PLSU handbook. The Unit employs very good systems to assess pupils' emotional and behavioural special educational needs and to track pupils' progress against the targets in their Individual Action Plans. Pupils have access to very good advice and support from the learning mentor and other members of staff. The Unit has sound links with parents, engaging them to support its work and to celebrate their child's improvement. There are good links with feeder schools including close liaison between class teachers and Unit staff.

The curriculum

The breadth, range and enrichment opportunities in the curriculum provided are sound. The accommodation is good. Resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and meets National Curriculum requirements.
- It currently lacks richness because the time available to teach subjects other than English, mathematics and science is limited.

Commentary

29. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is sound overall. It is based on the recommended areas of learning and children are provided with a suitable range of interesting activities indoors and outside. There is good teamwork in both the Nursery and Reception classes. In the Nursery, the activities are well planned. In the Reception classes, the activities are not always as well structured and organised.
30. The school has understandably addressed low standards in the past by making a significant investment in the time made available for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Over half the available curriculum time is taken up with these subjects. Literacy and numeracy largely dominate the morning sessions with other subjects being taught in the afternoon. This can sometimes strain the resources available for example, in science, when there are a number of classes teaching the same subject at the same time.
31. Whilst the curriculum is broad and meets requirements it currently lacks richness because the time available for other subjects is limited and these subjects' potential to provide contexts for the development of literacy, numeracy, ICT, independent research and creativity is not exploited enough. Currently, the school seeks to improve writing skills, for example, by providing a large amount of designated literacy time, rather than seeking opportunities for writing in an extended range of contexts that subjects such as history, geography and science provide. Pupils find writing difficult, not so much because of the lack of knowledge of the

technical features but because they lack ideas and a broad vocabulary of experience. The number of extra-curricular clubs and activities reduced because of the building programme and associated difficulties of being on two sites. Overall enrichment of the curriculum is satisfactory.

32. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs through a programme of increased intervention. Most work takes place within the classroom with the class teacher, sometimes supported by a teaching assistant. Pupils with more acute needs are sometimes withdrawn for effective work with specialist teaching staff, the learning mentor or teaching assistants. The 'Inclusion Unit' effectively supports pupils with behavioural difficulties who are at risk of exclusion or who have been given a fixed-term period of exclusion from normal schooling. The Primary Learning Support Unit works very effectively with the school to improve the behaviour of particular pupils within Year 3 and Year 4. Opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in all curriculum-related tasks. The planned activities, the quality of support and teacher interventions ensure equality of access to the curriculum.
33. The accommodation is good. The school is spacious. The acoustic in some classrooms make it very difficult for teachers to create an intimate atmosphere. Overall, there is a good match of teaching and support staff to the needs of the curriculum. Resources are, overall, satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The quality of provision for the pupils' care is very good. The school has established good and effective procedures for promoting and safeguarding the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Teachers provide good support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school involves pupils in a good way in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong sense of community involving staff, pupils and parents pervades through the school.
- Teachers have very good knowledge of their pupils' emerging strengths and weaknesses. The day-to-day care and concern, which the headteacher and staff show for all their pupils, are very good. The school is fully inclusive.
- Positive and trusting relationships exist between pupils and all staff.
- Support for pupils with behavioural problems is good.
- Individual pupils are well cared for and supported in their personal development.
- Induction arrangements for the Foundation Stage are good.

Commentary

34. The school provides a safe and supportive environment for all its pupils. It is a very caring, happy and harmonious community. Each pupil is valued as an individual and feels secure in the school and this has a positive impact on attainment and progress. All members of staff are well focused on pupils' care and support. They pay particular attention to protecting pupils from any harm and promoting their health, safety and well-being effectively. Teachers know their pupils well, have good understanding of their emerging strengths and weaknesses, and they readily respond to their needs.
35. Respect and consideration for others consolidate the positive support that the school provides for all its pupils, encouraging them to work hard and develop high self-esteem. The arrangements for child protection are good and procedures to ensure the health and safety and security of pupils are effective and well established. Pupils know that they can raise any concerns with any adults in the school. They are confident that the school will listen to them carefully and will take appropriate action. There is effective supervision at lunchtime in the playground. The headteacher is often visible at the start of the school day and at lunchtime, and this has a positive impact on pupils' demeanour and discipline at these times and helps her and pupils to get to know each other.

36. The school recognises pupils' good behaviour, constructive friendships and positive attendance by awarding much-appreciated certificates at the celebration assemblies. Pupils make a positive contribution to the work of the school and its development through the school council. The school diligently considers pupils' suggestions and, at times, implements them. This gives pupils the opportunity to work in co-operation with others as well as to extend their understanding of others' points of views. It raises their self-esteem and self-confidence.
37. Teaching and non-teaching staff are well aware of the needs of pupils' personal development. Sensitive and well-targeted support is provided for those pupils with particular pastoral or other needs. Effective strategies ensure that the school generates a harmonious and educationally inclusive environment. Pupils at risk of exclusion benefit from the in-house 'Inclusion Unit'.
38. The curriculum for personal, social and health education makes a strong and positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Teachers monitor and record it in each pupil's personal file and include comments in pupils' annual report to parents. The syllabus for personal, personal, social and health education incorporates the appropriate relationships, sex and drugs education.
39. Support for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is good. Sound systems are in place for the identification and tracking of those pupils with special educational needs. The school complies with the Code of Practice and forms sound links with the many outside agencies serving the varied needs of its pupils. The monitoring and recording for pupils with a statement of special educational needs are satisfactory and the review process meets requirements. The school's support for pupils with disruptive behaviour is rigorous and effective. The school works well with outside agencies and offers a high level of classroom support through teaching assistants, who make a positive contribution to their learning. Staff are well informed, monitor their learning and personal development. The school has satisfactory arrangements for identification of gifted and talented pupils.
40. The school manages younger pupils' entry to the Nursery and the Reception class and their subsequent transfer to Year 1 very well. The school takes good care of its pupils, to ensure that those who join the school at various times of the year are quickly settled in and become valued members of the school community.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school is successful in fostering strong links with parents. It has established strong and purposeful links with the local community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is held in high regard by parents. It works hard and effectively to involve parents in their children's learning.
- Most parents indicate strong support for the school and their children's education.
- Good links with the community enrich the quality of pupils' education.
- Effective partnership with other schools ensures that pupils are well prepared for transfer to secondary school.
- Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good.

Commentary

41. The school recognises the importance of strong and purposeful partnership with all parents. Parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire show that they have a very favourable view of the school. Parents show a high level of support for the school. They are pleased that their children enjoy coming to school, make good progress and teaching is good, overall. Parents value the fact that the school is approachable if they have any concerns or suggestions and that

the school's expectations are high. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents.

42. The school maintains a regular and purposeful contact with parents. Parents are invited to attend consultation meetings with teachers to discuss their children's progress in the first two terms of the academic year. Pupils' annual reports for parents cover appropriately the National Curriculum subjects and give some indication of their attainment, and provide comments about attitudes and personal development. However, these reports do not always indicate how pupils' performance and progress relate to their capabilities and prior attainment. They do not clearly identify strengths and weaknesses in each area of the curriculum.
43. Parents appreciate that they can approach the individual teachers or the headteacher and the issues and concerns are resolved promptly and amicably. The school office staff contributes to this accessibility. Most parents provide practical support for their children's homework. A small number of parents help in classrooms as volunteer readers and in the library. Parents provide practical support and help to raise funds through the Friends and Relatives of Hither Green School.
44. The quality and range of information for parents, covering administrative and pastoral arrangements, are good. Parents receive regular newsletters. The school organises family learning workshops in literacy and numeracy for the benefits of parents and their children in the Foundation Stage and Reception Year.
45. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their progress and personal development. They attend the annual reviews and play a full part in setting targets for improvements and reviews of Individual Education Plans with teachers and the acting special educational needs co-ordinator.
46. Very good benefits are derived from the school's links with the community. Educational visits and visitors to the school enrich the curriculum as well as providing good first-hand experiences for pupils. Pupils have participated in competitions organised by the local radio. Pupils also give generous support to a number of local and national charities. This helps to raise their awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves, both at home and abroad.
47. There are positive links with the local community and businesses and these contribute to pupils' learning. The school has effective induction arrangements for Year 6 pupils with sound and purposeful liaison with the local secondary schools, to which most pupils go. Work experience places are offered to pupils from local secondary schools and placements are provided for student teachers. The Local Volunteer Reading Support organisation uses the school premises as its base.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management of the school are sound with good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- That the school has emerged from a difficult period in a relatively strong position on which to base future improvement is testimony to the acting leadership, senior management team and the commitment of all staff.
- Governance is good.
- Management is sound.

Commentary

48. The school has had changes in the leadership since the last inspection and currently there is an acting headteacher and acting deputy. Overall, the senior leadership team is operating under

strength, which is further compounded by the need for colleagues to cover other responsibilities because of illness. A new headteacher joins the school in September.

49. The acting headteacher's leadership is good. Supported by the acting deputy and members of leadership team they have maintained the school's sense of purpose through very difficult times. There has not been a smooth progression since the last inspection and the school has had to address a significant problem with declining pupils' behaviour and improving the quality of learning and teaching, which at one point was seen to be a potential weakness, as well as seeing through a strategic plan associated with a building programme and absorption of staff and pupils from a neighbouring closing school. Standards have improved since the last inspection and overall improvement is satisfactory. The school has maintained a strong inclusive ethos. The acting headteacher and senior leadership monitor the school's effectiveness carefully through performance data.
50. Governance of the school is good. The school meets statutory requirements. Members of the governing body are very committed to and supportive of the school. The governing body is well organised, has undergone training and monitors effectively the work of the school providing both challenge and support. It has a good grasp of the school's strengths and understands what needs development. It is prepared to take difficult decisions on behalf of the school, such as those associated with the budget and is maintaining a strategic overview of the development of the school and its potential role in the community. It has appointed a bursar with the role of developing the community use of facilities and is clearly aware of the budgetary implications of the school not being full.
51. Year group middle management is good, ensuring rigour in planning and ensuring pupils achieve well. The structure effectively ensures a curriculum entitlement for each year and the year group co-ordinators have played a key role in supporting staff and fostering pupils' achievements. This 'horizontal' structure across the year group is strong. Lacking, as yet, is an equally strong 'vertical' role of the subject co-ordinator who assumes responsibility for the standards that pupils achieve in that particular subject and the progress that they make. Currently co-ordinators are restricted by the time and opportunities that they have to support formally colleagues. Informal support is good.
52. The acting special educational needs co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management. Previous difficulties in identifying and meeting the needs of some pupils with SEN are being addressed. The co-ordinator is clear about what needs to be done to bring about improvements and is working hard to do so within the available resources. The EMAS co-ordinator is very experienced and supportive in equipping teachers to provide specific English as an additional language support in the lessons and to raise further the profile of English as an additional language support within school. The co-ordinator's role to monitor teaching and learning is less well developed.
53. The Primary Learning Support Unit is led and managed very well by the co-ordinating teacher. He shows good knowledge of the emotional needs of pupils and an enthusiasm for meeting them. Members of staff share a strong commitment to helping their pupils succeed. The work of the Unit is very effectively monitored and evaluated and steps taken to improve its provision to pupils and their schools.
54. Overall management of the school is sound. Performance management linked to improved standards is sound as are the opportunities for staff development. Financial planning is satisfactory although spending decisions are not closely linked to the priorities for improvement. The school's needs are met in terms of resources for the classrooms and basic equipment. The monitoring and management of financial matters are of a high quality. There is sound forward planning for future expenditure due to falling rolls and other priorities. There is currently a generous allocation to employ a higher than usual number of classroom assistants to assist pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. This spending is good value for money as the pupils are given effective support. The governing body is guided by the headteacher and the bursar in the decisions made to draw up the annual budget.

55. The school has a carry forward of approximately 1.5 per cent from the previous year. The norm for most schools is around three to five per cent; the school is aware that its current level of staffing is not sustainable and has drawn up budget plans for future staffing levels.
56. Governors meet regularly to monitor financial issues although they have yet to evaluate the effectiveness of decisions made to improve standards within the school. Not all recommendations related to the last audit of the school's finances have been addressed. ICT facilities are used very effectively to support school management and administration.
57. The school office is well run and provides a positive welcome for visitors. The school has good systems to ensure the cost effectiveness and best value principles for the goods and services that it purchases and appropriately seeks several quotations for major items of expenditure before making a choice. Although the school is currently overstaffed and there is empty accommodation, given the achievement of pupils and the quality of support to all pupils with additional needs, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	£2,443,578. 68
Total expenditure	£2,405,188. 68
Expenditure per pupil	£4,938.79

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	£0
Balance carried forward to the next	£38,330

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 satisfactory with some good features.

The overall provision is varied in quality between the Nursery and Reception classes. Good practice is evident in the Nursery, but the learning environment for Reception classes is less well ordered. The quality of formal planning and the organisation of activities in Reception classes do not sufficiently always enable children to work and learn effectively.

There are currently 100 children in the Nursery, 50 of whom attend part-time. There are good arrangements for children starting school and very positive links with parents. Children are skilfully eased into full-time school life in September and January. They are well prepared for their start in the Reception classes, with frequent visits beforehand. Most children's attainment on entry to the Nursery class is very low for this age group, particularly in the areas of language and communication, and personal, social and emotional development.

By the time they reach Year 1, children have made good progress in most areas compared to their low start, and achieved well overall. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Children with English as an additional language are effectively supported and make good progress. Individual needs are identified early and the children with special educational needs receive good care and support.

The curriculum is based on the recommended areas of learning and children are provided with a suitable range of interesting activities indoors and outside. There is good teamwork in both the Nursery and Reception classes and the staff provides good support for one another. In the Nursery, the activities are well planned and there are examples of very effective teaching; for instance the Nursery children learned about growth and change from when they were babies, used photos brought from home and made good gains in learning.

There are regular and frequent opportunities for learning in all six areas in the Reception classes, but the three classes are not suitably organised to complement each other to benefit teaching and learning. The overall planning and organisation between the classes lacks well-planned integrated activities that are supported by clear expectations and well judged adult interventions. Too often, the activities are not well structured and fail to provide children with sufficient challenge and quality learning.

There is a good approach to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis in the Nursery. In the Reception classes, children are set clear learning targets for literacy and numeracy skills. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides sound leadership with a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the provision further.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve satisfactorily overall, in relation to their very low start on entry to school.
- Good relationships at all levels are to the fore, and children feel secure and happy.
- Children of all diverse backgrounds work and play together in harmony.
- Sharing and caring of resources is less well developed for some children in the Reception classes.

Commentary

58. Children enter school with immature personal and social skills yet they settle quickly and feel both happy and secure. This includes those children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. This judgement marks sound achievement of all children as well as skilful teaching by the staff. Due to the very low start, most children do not reach the expected goals in this area of learning, but they make satisfactory progress over their time in Foundation Stage.
59. Children of all diverse backgrounds with regard to ethnicity, culture and languages, work and play together in harmony. They are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong and guided to behave sensibly at all times. Children are helped to form good relationships with others, through many opportunities to work in pairs or as part of a group.
60. Teaching is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Reception classes. All members of staff create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special. All available space in the Nursery is effectively used to organise a stimulating range of activities in well-defined areas to encourage independence. All resources are carefully labelled to show children where every thing goes. Children in both Nursery and Reception classes are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve in a variety of learning situations, such as sharing refreshments daily. They have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy being in school. Most children are eager to learn, and show a developing confidence in trying new activities.
61. The rules and expectations are well established. In the Nursery, adults explain clearly what is expected of the children working in different areas. Children are purposefully engaged and most find it easy to conform to the standards set by teachers. In the Reception classes, while most children show consideration and respect for property and for each other, a significant number have a less well-developed understanding of sharing, caring and taking turns sensibly. As a result, they get into little scuffles or show lack of care for equipment. Children, especially those engaged in free play are unaware of teachers' expectations of work and behaviour, and get extremely noisy, flit from one activity to another in a short span of time, while a few just roam aimlessly. This was noted in a lesson, where the learning was affected by excessive noise disrupting a group reading activity led by the teacher. In another lesson, a whole-class activity was not well organised for quality learning to take place. The children were kept on the carpet for too long and this resulted in loss of concentration and good motivation for learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good language focus in most activities.
- Good emphasis is placed on developing children's speaking skills.
- School/home reading scheme is well established.
- Achievements are satisfactory, compared to the limited language skills of most children on entry.
- Children's listening skills are not well focused in activities.

Commentary

62. The large proportion of children at an early stage in language development means that only a small minority of higher attaining children are expected to reach the early learning goals by the end of Reception year. All children achieve satisfactorily in relation to their low start on entry.
63. There is appropriate emphasis in the Nursery to develop children's speaking and listening skills. Instructions for activities are very practical. Demonstration and use of visual information enables all children, including those new to English, to understand what they have

to do. The adults develop children's communication by providing good role models in the way they talk to each other and to children. They question children in small groups and individually and listen carefully to what they have to say. In the Nursery, children learn new vocabulary and the appropriate way to say something. As a result, they are not inhibited to talk to each other or adults as they work. Some good strategies, such as the use of favourite stories, for example *'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'* effectively support children in their early literacy development. Children regularly practise writing their names and most are at the early stage of making marks on paper.

64. Effective support for speaking and listening continues in the Reception classes. Adults develop children's talk and extend their vocabulary. There are appropriate opportunities for children to listen and respond to stories, songs and rhymes. For example, the story of *'The Gruffalo'* is effectively used to provide a range of language experiences. Good quality resources are used to support children's understanding of the story. Most children enjoy listening to stories but only a few are able to explain their favourite parts or predict the end of the story. Some children's ability to listen attentively is much lower than expected. Members of staff show that they value children's efforts at communicating, but not enough is done about developing their listening skills.
65. Most children in the Reception classes are gaining satisfactory control in developing early writing skills. They draw and paint with increasing control. A few children write their own name unaided, while others produce strings of letters, forming some of these correctly. Teachers consolidate children's knowledge of phonics and enable them to form letters correctly through direct teaching. Most children start to link sounds with letters and name some letters of the alphabet, but few instances were seen of children choosing writing activities and deciding what to write for themselves.
66. Parents in the Reception class are encouraged to share books with children daily and record their comments. The system of regular exchange and sharing of books effectively enhances children's love for books and ability to recognise words. By the end of the Reception year, a few begin to read simple labels and everyday words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of available resources for mathematical learning.
- Children are well motivated and eager to learn.
- The activities are not planned with clear outcomes for learning or matched effectively to the level of children's understanding.
- There is insufficient challenge for the more able children.

Commentary

67. Children achieve satisfactorily in relation to their very low skills on entry, although most are unlikely to attain the expected goals by the end of the Reception year. Children's good attitudes to learning contribute well to their achievements in this area of learning.
68. Teaching is mainly good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Reception classes. Teachers in the Nursery plan interesting practical activities to promote mathematical understanding. Good use is made of resources. In the Reception classes, the use of number rhymes and songs, for example, *'Ten in the Bed'*, with finger puppets effectively supports learning. Another group naming and counting Gruffalo's body parts made suitable links between the development of language skills and mathematics. In a lesson, children learnt to identify taller and shorter by using animals of different sizes from their favourite story. The well-equipped imaginative play

areas, such as the *'Hither Green House'*, effectively support counting different items in the kitchen when playing families, or preparing a 'shopping list'.

69. Reception children are beginning to count to ten and beyond but the more capable of these are not challenged well enough in counting activities. Often the planned activities in both Nursery and Reception classes do not outline clear learning outcomes or match children's level of understanding. Children are exposed to worthwhile opportunities, but a lack of well-planned teaching affects their learning.
70. Adults enable children to sustain interest in activities, but generally do not extend the more able through challenging tasks or probing questions in ways aimed at developing their mathematical abilities. Children gain understanding of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. A few children describe objects by shape, size, colour or quantity when working with construction equipment. The older children are gaining confidence in the use of vocabulary such as, 'add one more' or 'take one away', 'how many altogether?' and 'how many left?'

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keen and eager to find out about the world around them.
- An appropriate range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- Children are not sufficiently encouraged to ask questions, about how and why things happen.

Commentary

71. Children's achievements are satisfactory overall. While the children are given worthwhile experiences for development in this area, the low level of knowledge on entry for many children remains a factor why most children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning.
72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Well-planned directed activities in the Nursery effectively promote learning in this area. Adults support children's understanding through opportunities for them to explore with everyday objects of interest in the home corner and play-kitchen. They use appropriate questioning and encourage 'talk' when children are engaged in role play and learning about families and relationships. They provide a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. Children in the Nursery collect their baby photos to learn about how they have grown and changed. They carefully observe the caterpillars using magnifying glasses and learn how to care for the minibeasts. Children explore the malleable materials of a range. For example, they enjoy free play with cornflour mixed with water or making models out of playdough in both Nursery and Reception classes.
73. Opportunities provided are particularly good for exploring and investigating in the outdoor facility. Children enjoy learning and remain totally absorbed in the range of activities inside and outside. The topic 'growing' is well developed, in both Nursery and Reception classes, to enhance children's understanding of plants and what they need in order to grow.
74. Nearly all children thoroughly enjoy the experiences of free play with sand and water. Adults use effective questioning to encourage children to explore new ideas. Children use paint and mix different colours, and a few can name basic colours correctly. They use different materials, such as paper, card and textiles to develop cutting, joining, folding and building skills and are encouraged to talk about their experiences. However, many children, especially those on early stages of English acquisition, have not yet developed sufficient skills in asking focused questions about how things work.

75. Most children demonstrate developing computer skills in the use of the mouse to move items on the screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a suitable range of indoor and outdoor activities.
- The planning for sessions outside is not rigorous enough to ensure a focus on progress in specific skills.
- Resources are good and effectively used to enhance learning.

Commentary

76. Most children achieve satisfactorily, but do not yet meet all the early learning goals. All children have free access to an outside enclosed play area. Teachers make the most of the outdoor provision; however, the new decking for Reception children is not yet made safe for use. Resources such as wheeled toys are good in range. Children enjoy free play on the mobile climbing range and make good use of what is available. Support staff working outside show good understanding of how young children learn.
77. There is often a lack of clear focus in teachers' planning, for the specific skills to be taught in both indoor and outdoor activities. When observed playing out of doors, their play generally lacked a clear focus for learning or developing skills. Children run and play confidently and enjoy scooting around, showing a degree of co-ordination and control expected for the age group. They share equipment with others and learn how to use space efficiently. The Reception classes have access to a hall for structured lessons. In one hall session observed the majority moved with appropriate co-ordination and control. Indications are that some, but not all, children are on course to meet the expected goals by the end of the Reception year.
78. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers in both Nursery and Reception classes ensure safe use of tools. In the Nursery, children show developing control of fingers in handling tools. They manipulate small construction equipment with dexterity. Most children in the Reception classes hold a pencil correctly, paint carefully with brushes and use tools, such as rolling pins and shape cutters, effectively. They are developing confidence in the use of scissors and joining materials with glue and masking tape.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and most are on course to attain the early learning goals.
- Children are provided with good quality resources and make good gains in learning.
- Teaching is good in providing plenty of opportunities for children to develop their creative skills.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning and feel confident in expressing themselves creatively.

Commentary

79. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children achieve the expected standards in this area of learning. They use a range of good quality materials such as card, crayons and paint or pastels to produce attractive and interesting creative work. Children make pictures, collages and models with various media, including constructional toys. The Nursery children were observed working freely on collage work and mixing watercolours to paint caterpillars.
80. Teaching and learning are good. There is a range of interesting and stimulating learning settings. Children particularly enjoy their role play in the well set-up imaginative areas; for example, doctors and nurses play in the Nursery. Staff actively monitor children's involvement, and engage in their role play to encourage participation. Children in the Reception classes are given good opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form, through working with a range of media such as playdough and plasticine.
81. Children enjoy singing and making music. The use of number rhymes, games and songs enhances their learning in most areas. Nursery children were seen exploring freely the use of percussion in their imaginative performance corner equipped with a stage and a microphone. Children sing enthusiastically and work with total involvement. Children in the Reception classes have a good repertoire of songs they sing from memory. Most children show obvious enjoyment, take pride in their work and when encouraged, talk interestingly about what they are doing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** with good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- There are opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Literacy skills are well planned for and used in other subjects.
- The monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough.
- The quality and quantity of non-fiction and reference books is not as good as it should be.

Commentary

82. By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading and writing is broadly in line with national expectations. However, by the end of Year 6 attainment has fallen to below the national average. This has been caused partly by the higher than average mobility factors and partly by the disruption caused through operating on two sites whilst a neighbouring school was incorporated into Hither Green Primary. These results also reflect the very limited number of pupils working at higher levels. No difference between the performance of girls and boys was noted. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and pupils are now achieving well.
83. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 read their reading books with confidence. They understand the strategies needed to decode unfamiliar words using letter sounds and phonemes. Teachers and support staff provide good role models. However, pupils are not enthusiastic about reading. They were unable to recall a favourite story and were not aware of the components required to make a story. They could not name authors whose books they enjoy. Although parents support their children at home with reading, pupils viewed reading largely as a school based activity.

84. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent at reading although their attainment is below national expectations. Favourite authors tend to be limited to those known from classwork although their understanding of character and plot development was sound. Many pupils belong to the local library and are aware of the systems needed to locate non-fiction books. However, very little reading for pleasure at home is undertaken and consequently the higher reading skills of prediction and inference are not reinforced. Pupils are not required to research topics other than by using the internet and this is limiting their practice in skimming and referencing as well as constraining their experiences of a wider range of printed material.
85. Pupils' writing is helped by a clear system of target setting. Each classroom has charts displaying the relevant National Curriculum levels in child-friendly language. Teachers regularly level a piece of pupil writing and base pupils' individual targets on this. Pupils are beginning to undertake independent learning as they self-evaluate each piece of work against the learning intention. They write on a range of subjects, usually with shared planning. Presentation is good with letters carefully shaped. Displays of well-presented written work help share and celebrate good writing. However, marking on a daily basis is variable. Often it consists of congratulatory comments rather than an explanation of what the pupil needs to do to improve further.
86. Pupils with special educational needs in English achieve well when they are working towards targets in their Individual Education Plans. The targets are detailed and relevant to their needs. They are given good support in lessons by experienced teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well when supported by the specialist teacher or when given individual support in class.
87. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 was good. The best teaching is having a positive impact on standards and achievement. Teachers use careful questioning to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and precise vocabulary to broaden pupils' understanding. In a very good Year 2 lesson about describing the sea, pupils used their previous planning to construct a lively introduction to their stories avoiding 'boring' words.
88. Teaching at Key Stage 2 was satisfactory with some good features. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and constantly encourage them to do their best. They use effective positive management techniques that ensure pupils remain on task. The wide use of interactive whiteboards is helping pupils, for example in the understanding of strategies for redrafting work. Teachers work hard to engender enthusiasm for writing and all lessons have a good pace. However, because work is only differentiated by outcome, it is not appropriate for all groups of pupils and higher attaining pupils in particular are often insufficiently challenged. Although teachers provide opportunities to develop speaking skills, many pupils do not express themselves with confidence. There is not yet a sufficiently structured approach to ensure that these skills are appropriately developed.
89. The library has been established from the combined resources of both schools and although adequate, it is seriously short of non-fiction books for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Information and communication technology is not yet sufficiently used to develop further pupils' literacy skills. This is limiting pupils' independent learning.
90. The English co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be improved and appropriate plans for developing the leadership and monitoring in the subject. For example, speaking and listening will continue to form an essential area for development to improve pupils' vocabulary and writing skills. Assessment recording is effective but has not been in place long enough to identify trends. Analysis does not provide sufficient information about the effectiveness of teaching and learning to identify precisely what needs to be done to make them consistently good throughout the school. Because her curriculum release time has been extremely limited, she has observed very little teaching and has yet to work alongside weaker teachers to give them support.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

91. When given the opportunity, the use of literacy skills in subjects such as history, geography and science is developed appropriately. However, the use of these subjects as a context in which literacy and other skills are practised is restricted by the relative status given to these subjects and the time available to teach them.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at Year 2 and Year 6 are below average but pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work, try hard and work well together.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning is underdeveloped.
- The use of mathematical skills within other subjects is not planned formally enough.

Commentary

92. Standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. This can partly be explained by the relatively high numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school. This limits the impact the school has upon them. Children also start school with well below average mathematical skills. Evidence suggests that the longer pupils are in this school, the better they do, and the higher the standards. Plans to train staff in meeting the mathematics learning needs of newly arrived pupils should help to raise standards.
93. Achievement throughout the school is good when compared to pupils' very low starting point. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils because of the good support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils are well catered for by extension work providing increased challenge. Whilst an analysis of pupils' work at Year 2 and Year 6 shows that pupils are making good progress in acquiring skills and knowledge in the different areas of mathematics, many pupils throughout the school are still not secure with basic number facts. Too little is committed to memory so that it can be used in more advanced work. The school has identified this as an area for development.
94. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers plan well together using the National Primary Strategy. This ensures consistency in the mathematics curriculum for pupils within the year group and is an improvement since the previous inspection. The good planning also ensures that activities meet the different needs of all pupils. There are a number of strengths in the teaching helping pupils to make good progress. Teachers manage their pupils well and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to this. They try hard and work well on their own and in groups. The good use of praise and encouragement by teachers and teaching assistants contributes to the good relationships in class and has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and progress. Practical equipment and resources are used effectively to support pupils' thinking in problem-solving activities. Teachers place good emphasis on pupils acquiring appropriate mathematical vocabulary and, as a result, pupils develop confidence in using mathematical terms.
95. Sometimes, the teacher's explanation of the tasks given to pupils is not clear. Consequently, some pupils are not sure what they are expected to do and to learn. Teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards to illustrate teaching points but the more general use of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics is underdeveloped.

96. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader was absent during the inspection. Nevertheless, from her documentation and from discussions with other members of staff it is clear that she has a good understanding of strengths and areas for development. She has sought expert advice and is taking action to address deficiencies. There is an increasing focus on the raising of standards. Plans are in place to analyse scripts from the end of year tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. Test results are now being used to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. Some observation of teaching and learning has taken place but this needs to be done more systematically to ensure consistency of teaching and to enable good practice to be shared in school. Procedures to provide targets for groups of pupils and individual pupils were deemed to be ineffective by the school and abandoned. This means that pupils are not sure what they need to do next to improve their work
97. There has been satisfactory improvement in provision since the last inspection. Planning is more consistent, teaching is good and pupils are achieving well. The raising of standards in mathematics remains a priority.

Mathematics across the curriculum

98. Opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum and to reinforce experiences gained in maths lessons are missed because such opportunities are not planned formally enough and the time given to other subjects is relatively limited.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** at both key stages.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of teaching which is well planned by the year teams.
- There are improving standards of attainment in both key stages, most effectively in Key Stage 1, with matters starting to improve the further up the school the pupils move.
- The way the timetable is organised means that there are not enough quality resources to go round.
- The skills of the co-ordinator are not used effectively enough to make full impact.
- Older children concentrate too much on worksheets and not enough on designing and carrying out experiments so that they learn like scientists.
- The use of ICT in lessons is underdeveloped.

Commentary

99. The results from the 2004 teacher assessments in science for seven-year-olds show that the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 is in line with that of similar schools. The number attaining the higher Level 3 is low. When considering the low level of attainment in the key stage, achievement is good.
100. At the end of Year 6, in 2004, the results in the science tests were well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, performance is below average. This has to be put in the context of a very large number of pupils who join the school late, often from other countries with many having English as an additional language. Pupils who have an extended experience in the school until the end of Year 6 achieve well, often starting from a very low baseline.
101. The scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and the observation of lessons during the inspection suggest that standards are now getting nearer to national levels. The situation is clearer in Key Stage 1 as there are only two years and the impact then is easier to identify. Currently, things have improved because pupils in Year 2 are working broadly at national

expectation. This is because the lesson planning is better, the co-ordinator has moved into Key Stage 1 and her influence is improving standards because teachers understand better what they have to do. Year 2 pupils have developed sound strategies for investigating problems and observing the simple experiments designed for them. They understand how to complete experiments systematically and can record the outcomes using simple language that is supported by writing frames.

102. In Year 6, pupils' attainments are getting nearer the national expectation but this is concentrated in the knowledge area of the course and practical skills have not been improved to the same extent. Pupils, then, do not have enough experience of behaving like scientists: hypothesising ideas, planning and carrying out experiments and then drawing conclusions from them. Too much of their work is teacher-led. This is not helped by science generally taking place in the afternoon with resources spread too thinly among classes for learning to be fully extended. For example, two classes were seen in the same time slot both doing electricity. One had batteries with crocodile clips so that the experiment was conducted effectively and with enthusiasm, the other simply with pieces of wire. Here, learning was slowed and pupils' interest waned.
103. No significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic groups were observed at either key stage. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.
104. Since the last inspection, there is now a new scheme of work that is helping to raise standards. The effectiveness of the planning is being diminished because the co-ordinator has no non-teaching time to go round staff to support them and insufficient time to train staff effectively. The particular area which is not sufficiently well addressed, is getting pupils to behave like scientists, and this is because some members of staff themselves are weaker in this area of experience and need more suitable training. Management, then, is barely satisfactory but leadership is good.
105. Good links across subjects are well formed in all years. For example, in Year 1, pupils were encouraged to make links with what they had and were learning in music and the principles of sound transmission. They felt each other's throats as they spoke and found the differences between speaking quietly and loudly. This experimental evidence was well developed using skilful questions and answer sessions managed very well by their teacher. Speaking and listening skills, then, are being well developed. Pupils are also developing their skills of numeracy well. In Key Stage 1, pupils record their results in a range of ways that they then interpret. In Key Stage 2, pupils use graphs, length measurement and volume and produce diagrams and tables to record their experiments. This enables them to draw conclusions and test their ideas with accuracy. ICT is too little used and is an underdeveloped resource.
106. Pupils have good attitudes to science. However, in Year 6 too much of the work is done by completing worksheets which are stuck into their books. Pupils find this work less satisfying and challenging and it does not allow them to develop all their skills sufficiently. They enjoy practical work. Most pupils work in a mature manner, with good behaviour. Teaching assistants are valued members of the team, being respected and liked by the pupils and supporting the teaching very effectively by preparing materials before lessons and supporting learning within.
107. Teaching is at least satisfactory and most often it is good, and very good when taught by specialists. Teachers are well prepared. They are working in their year teams to develop an effective scheme of work and in this they are being supported by the co-ordinator who is managing to improve the range and quality of resources that can be used. This is helping to improve standards. Even more needs to be done to ensure the most able and older pupils are fully extended and the best use is made of the assessment system. Although gifted and talented pupils are identified, as yet there is no consistent strategy to meet their needs.

108. Learning is good in lessons and there is particularly good support for lower attaining pupils and those who require additional help; here the teaching assistants are invaluable. Almost all pupils contribute well to their learning and try to complete tasks successfully. Those pupils who have behavioural difficulties are well and skilfully supported so that they too make sound, if not good, progress.
109. There is an adequate amount of time allocated to science but it is ineffectively managed across the school and across the school day. Many classes teach science simultaneously in the afternoon, and opportunities are not taken to spread the load so that resources are better utilised and managed.
110. Management of science is sound and teachers are starting work together in their year teams. However, the skilful and knowledgeable leadership of the co-ordinator is restricted because she has no non-contact time to work with them and support them in lessons. She has made an impact on reviewing and developing resources, sorting out the stock from the other school and seeking new funding for equipment. Equipment is still underdeveloped with a shortage of more specialist equipment.
111. Because the staff are working together and are committed to the pupils, standards are generally maintained. The improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, but it could be better if the staff and resources were utilised more efficiently and effectively.
112. There is still much to do. Pupils need more experience of acting like scientists and exploring experimentally; and the effective use of ICT will significantly support this progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are now broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The new computer suite enables the teaching of skills to whole classes and has up-to-date computers and peripherals, an improvement since the last inspection.
- Classrooms are networked, each with at least one computer, but they are not being used to support learning effectively in the other subjects as they should.
- Teachers have benefited from good training that has equipped them to teach ICT effectively and to utilise the new electronic whiteboards but there are weaknesses where this has not fully impacted.
- Although the co-ordinator has had time to work with colleagues at the beginning of the year, there is now insufficient opportunity in lessons to help them further improve teaching and learning of ICT.

Commentary

113. There has been a good all-round improvement in the school's provision since the last inspection, when provision was unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard to raise the effectiveness of ICT by increasing the number of computers throughout the school and creating a good computer suite with up-to-date machines. There are computers in every classroom, but this needs increasing. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily and at the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national averages. As pupils move through Years 3 to 6 they get a consistent experience of ICT lessons so that at the end of Year 6 standards are broadly in line with national expectations.
114. Pupils are getting relevant experience of using computers in a range of ways that aid their understanding of their potential. They make sound progress and achieve satisfactorily in the lessons. Pupils with special educational needs present their work to a high standard and this

encourages them to make the same progress as other pupils and achieve well. Both boys and girls are equally confident in using computers and make the same good progress. In the later years, the improvements in ICT have not worked through fully so that pupils do not automatically think to use the computers when they think it aids their work. Additionally, pupils do not select and then use the appropriate software, which is a higher-level skill.

115. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. This is because the training that teachers had has been well received and used. Most teachers now have a greater confidence and subject knowledge to teach the subject effectively. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to their learning. In every year, they use the equipment carefully and show respect to each other and to learning, and their behaviour is satisfactory. There is a wide range of interesting programs for them to use in their lessons that are constantly being updated and extended.
116. The co-ordinator has led the subject well since the last inspection, and manages the resources effectively on a day-to-day basis. There is no technical support in the school but there is a contract to provide on-site support although this is not available instantly. The strategic management of ICT is weaker because there is insufficient time for the co-ordinator to monitor teachers' planning and there is no opportunity to work alongside teachers to share expertise and monitor their teaching and learning. Assessment is adequate with some exemplar work indicating National Curriculum levels to show other teachers the targets they are aiming at. Some parts of the ICT programmes of study are insufficiently taught, like communicating electronically by e-mail.
117. Computers are of a high quality, with about 50 available for use, with a good range of additional equipment. The purchase and use of interactive whiteboards are adding a new dimension to teaching. Some teachers have gained effective skills in their use but they are not being fully employed. This is because pupils are not using them sufficiently, for example to present their work to their class, to enhance further learning and teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

118. Pupils make inconsistent use of ICT in the subjects of the curriculum to support their learning. They do not practise and reinforce the skills they have learnt in their ICT lessons in other lessons or use ICT to support their learning in that subject.

HUMANITIES

119. Two lessons were observed in **history** during the inspection and examples of pupils' work were limited. Judgements are based on interviews with pupils, discussion with the subject leader and on scrutiny of pupils' work. No judgements could be formed about the quality of teaching.
120. The school uses a topic approach based on the nationally available schemes of work. It alternates with other foundation subjects and useful links are made with art, literacy and geography. Pupils in Year 6, for example, had included silhouettes, letter writing as if from a soldier and relevant maps in their studies of Ancient Greece. During a Year 6 lesson, pupils were helped by the teacher to take notes so that they could write about their feelings and emotions as if they were a Beatles' fan in the 1960s.
121. Attainment in history is in line with that expected for the pupils' ages. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection although the increased focus on literacy and numeracy has meant a reduction in the time available for the subject. This has meant that pupils do not have the opportunity to research topics and so develop their opportunities for historical enquiry.

122. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory because policies and a sound scheme of work are in place. However, the curriculum leader has not yet been given time to monitor the subject or to work alongside colleagues and so is unaware of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. There has been no scrutiny of the quality of pupils' work and consequently insufficient emphasis has been placed on pupils developing key skills and work habits. However, the subject leader has developed an action plan to address some of these shortcomings. Assessment is sound and is helping to raise the profile of the subject to make teachers give greater attention to pupil achievement. The use of ICT to support the subject is underdeveloped.
123. Only two **geography** lessons were observed during the inspection so no judgement is made on teaching. Scrutiny of pupils' work, photographic evidence, classroom and common area displays together with discussions with pupils show that standards are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. Progress is satisfactory. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection when standards were below those expected for their age. This is because of more structured medium-term planning that has improved teachers' subject knowledge.
124. Lessons are planned well with clear learning objectives and these are shared with the pupils so that they know what they are going to learn. Good questioning allows pupils to put forward their own ideas. Work samples show pupils include maps, annotated diagrams, data collection and internet research in their recording. Local area studies are linked to wider geographical knowledge. In Year 6, pupils related their field work investigations on a local river to the Nile and Thames. Although presentation is satisfactory, pupils' use of ICT is limited. Progress by pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is sound because of the additional support provided by learning assistants.
125. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. An action plan is in place which aims to produce a school portfolio to assist teachers identify relevant National Curriculum levels and so raise standards. Assessment at the end of each unit is to be accessed via the school's central server. The subject leader does not have release time to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms. There is a need to develop resources to ensure all pupils have access to independent learning.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The respect for different faiths and beliefs underpins teaching and learning activities.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning about different religions.
- Religious education is planned in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus, but the topics are not studied in appropriate depth.
- The volume of recorded work is insubstantial, and suggests insufficient use made of pupils' writing skills in the subject.

Commentary

126. Pupils in Year 2 achieve well considering their limited language skills on entry to school. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with the expectations set out in the local authority's agreed syllabus. Standards in Year 6 are below the expectations. The satisfactory standards reported at the last inspection have not been maintained for pupils in Year 6. This is mainly due to the very high pupil mobility and the many new pupils joining this school last year. In relation to this background, pupils' achievements in the subject are good overall. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

127. Religious education is planned and taught in accordance with the recently revised locally agreed syllabus. Teachers make good use of story telling and discussion, and because of this pupils begin to develop their own ideas about appropriate personal responses to right and wrong and basic knowledge of their own and others' religions. Through the study of Sikhism, Year 4 pupils learn about belonging, sharing and caring. Respect for other faiths underpins teaching and learning activities. Most pupils show a positive willingness to talk about their own experiences. In a lesson, Year 5 pupils worked on the topic, 'Faith in Action', and developed knowledge and awareness of how 'Francis of Assisi' and 'Corrie Ten Boom' put their faith into action. Through discussion, pupils were effectively supported to understand the main idea and relate to their knowledge of the actions of some famous people that they knew, for example, Bob Geldof.
128. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The teacher effectively used resources and appropriate methods to support pupils' learning. In the Year 2 lesson, while telling children the story of the Jewish harvest festival of 'Shavout', the teacher used real items of fruit and effectively involved pupils in a role play. In another lesson, Year 1 pupils explored the value of 'forgiveness' and were told a story from Qur'an. Pupils were also shown the holy book and told about how special it is to the Muslims. The opportunity to link with pupils' experiences of their own and others' religions is effectively exploited in some lessons.
129. Across the school, there are too few opportunities to reinforce and consolidate pupils' thoughts and understanding through pictorial and written work. A limited amount of written work was seen in most classes. Pupils are not encouraged enough to apply the skills learnt in literacy sessions to write their own accounts of what they have learned or researched independently. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager has worked on reorganising the curriculum in line with the newly agreed syllabus. Appropriate action is planned to agree arrangements for assessing pupils' performance at the end of a topic. The main weakness in the subject leadership currently is the lack of monitoring and the rigour and focus required to raise standards in the teaching and learning of religious education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

130. It was possible to observe only one lesson in **art and design**, so no judgement has been made about the overall provision and standards in the subject. However, the discussions were held with the subject manager, and samples of pupils' work on displays around the school were examined.
131. Work in art and design often supports pupils' recording of topics in other subjects, such as literacy, history and geography; for example, Year 5 pupils' collage work on myths, fables and legends. Year 2's textile weaving, with collage of flowers is very attractive and well finished. Pupils have also made use of their IT skills to create pictures in the style of *Mondrian* by using the 'fill' tool of the ICT program very effectively. Most work on display by different classes is of a satisfactory quality. Pupils thoroughly enjoy art activities as was noted in the one lesson observed. In this lesson, pupils were skilfully supported in collecting visual information to help develop ideas, when sketching lines seen in their viewfinders.
132. A limited range of **music** lessons was seen.
133. Pupils aged six are attaining in line with the national expectation. However, pupils higher in the school are not, because although they do work satisfactorily using untuned percussion instruments and can clap and follow rhythms, they do not gain sufficient experience from composing and performing, particularly through singing.
134. Pupils listen well and most are eager to follow the instruction of their teacher and join in appropriately. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers teach their own class music and in consequence, few are specialists. The school is fortunate in having some good musicians on the staff, but at the time of the inspection, one was away absent through illness.

Music lessons are planned using the guidance from the co-ordinator and finalised in the year teams. Teachers are encouraged to produce lessons of quality but the co-ordinator has insufficient time to help them practically because she is teaching all the time. Music is generally taught enthusiastically although teachers are not always confident of their musical ability. Good resource materials from published schemes support them.

135. Pupils are taught to develop listening skills by listening to work of other pupils and the demonstration materials for the lesson. Pupils' learning, then, is like the teaching, always satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils follow their teachers' instructions quickly and quietly. Occasionally an additional word is needed by the teaching assistant or the teacher to bring a child quickly into line.
136. ICT is not used sufficiently in music. Pupils learn to use and play a good range of percussive instruments from around the world but they are only given limited understanding of how they fit into the culture of the home country. The new music room helps to support the subject effectively. It is a very pleasant room, which is well equipped with a sound system, and there is a good range of percussion instruments to perform on. Pupils do sing together in some assemblies but there were insufficient opportunities at the time of the inspection to see music, and in particular singing, as a key feature of the life of the school. Music, then, does not support as effectively as it might pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leadership and management are barely satisfactory because of the time constraints. Improvement since the last inspection has been limited.
137. Although a number of **physical education** lessons were seen it is not possible to make an overall judgement about provision or standards because the range of activities seen was narrow – mainly the development of fielding skills.
138. Standards of the work seen in Year 6 were broadly average and pupils responded to the teacher's enthusiasm by working at a good rate. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. In the fielding games, they displayed control and understanding of tactics. They know about the effects of exercise on their bodies and its value to health and fitness. In a gymnastics lesson, pupils were working on the theme of balance. Pupils were able to refine their work and make suggestions on how to improve. A number of pupils showed good co-ordination and control and élan in the way that they performed. Standards of the work seen in Year 2, again on developing throwing and catching skills, were broadly average. A pupil gave a very good explanation of why they were panting after their activity. The school reports that standards in swimming are below average because, although the school teaches swimming, few pupils attend the swimming pool to practise their skills.
139. Overall, in the lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers appeared confident and knowledgeable with the material and knew what it was that they were trying to get out of the activities. Class and behaviour management were skilled and pupils responded to their energy and enthusiasm very well. That said, teachers establish clear parameters of what is expected and insist on the class maintaining that standard. Teachers made the lessons outside fun and pupils revelled in the opportunities to run, chase and, indeed, laugh.
140. The subject co-ordinator is currently carrying multiple responsibilities but clearly has good capacity for leadership and management of the subject. Currently there is little opportunity for her to work alongside colleagues to help develop their skills although she clearly has this expertise. Accommodation for physical education is good because of the new hall. Resources for the subject are good.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in design and technology are rising and overall pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are good in lessons and satisfactory over time.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory; it is limited by lack of time to monitor standards in classes.

Commentary

141. Although there are matters still requiring attention, there has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection when standards in design and technology were unsatisfactory. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are at the national expectation. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 are slightly below national expectation. Standards are rising in design and technology but this has not yet worked its way through Key Stage 2. Boys and girls attain similarly. Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
142. In both key stages, pupils experience a good range of activities but, in the later years, there is too little focus on developing technological knowledge of mechanisms and control. Opportunities are also more restricted in the later years where there is a concentration of time on preparing for National Curriculum tests. Pupils' design work throughout is limited by the ability to draw their ideas with fluency. Although pupils are encouraged to draw what they see, there is insufficient structure and frameworks to make this fully effective.
143. In both key stages, pupils have good ideas. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing skills that enable them to make judgements about the properties of materials and then select from them to design a new product. For example, in Year 1 classes, pupils were engaged in trying the different flavours and textures of well known and less well known fruits so that they could be combined in a new product. They made judgements about the fruits' properties, recording their thoughts systematically by using frameworks that their teacher had devised with them. In Key Stage 2, in Year 6, design tasks focus on real life problems, for example, providing suitable large play structures for the youngest children. Pupils try to record their ideas through the use of detailed sketches, annotated with words, to record their three dimensional thinking. They tried to plan how the different parts fitted together and how the children could play in their designs and what happened when it rained. Pupils were restricted in their response because their drawing and communicating skills were limited.
144. Teaching and learning are good in lessons, but their impact over time, with the restriction that most design and technology teaching takes place in the afternoon, as well as the concentration on the core subjects, is only satisfactory. There is now an effective scheme of work which supports teachers but the systematic building up year by year is less well addressed because the co-ordinator is not sufficiently involved in whole school planning and monitoring. There is an improving set of resources that are well used by teachers and pupils alike but too often a number of lessons take place at the same time and resources are spread too thinly.
145. Learning too is good in lessons but its impact is restricted by the time and lack of effective structure year on year. Pupils listen to their teachers well but are always waiting eagerly to get on with their work. They have good attitudes to learning and teachers manage the more challenging pupils effectively. ICT facilities are very limited in classrooms and the ICT room is not used systematically enough as part of design and technology. Lower attaining pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them because support is always given

by the class teacher and from the teaching assistants. Gifted pupils are able only in part to fully extend their learning and in some classrooms, the task is not made more complex to match their higher-level skills.

146. Teachers are starting to share information with each other to ensure the effective development of ideas and planning between modules. In all years there is a sound strategy for identifying pupils' progress in lessons but it is not yet used to plan work that matches pupils' individual needs. The arrangements for recording pupils' design and technology capability are developing.
147. Design and technology is taught in the normal classrooms and the accommodation is broadly satisfactory to allow this in Key Stage 1 and in the earlier years in Key Stage 2, but higher up the school the cramped accommodation for practical work limits the full range of materials being offered and experienced. Resources are of a sound quality but need to be moved from floor to floor to use them in the classroom.
148. The leadership of design and technology is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is willing to discuss and plan their work with teachers but she has no time to work with them in class, and monitor the teaching and learning. Although she tries by monitoring the finished tasks and the folios this is not fully effective in pushing up standards. Structures enable teachers to plan well together in their year teams and a framework is provided to enable the National Curriculum to be taught more effectively. More staff development is still required if standards are to rise further. What is needed now are more resources, ensuring that these are fully accessible, and sufficient management time to raise staff expertise to allow the subject to fully develop effectively.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

149. Although inspection evidence was limited, it would seem that overall provision in **personal, social and health education** is good. Standards are in line with expectations and pupils achieved well in the Year 6 lesson seen. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. There is a detailed scheme of work that gives an overview for each half term on a year-by-year basis. It includes work on healthy eating, hygiene, outdoor safety, nutrition, recognising danger, puberty and menstruation as well as relationships, sex and drugs education. There is a strong recurring theme of anti-bullying in various guises. The subject would seem to be an important element in the school's overall good provision for personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is piloting national 'Social, Emotional, Emotional Skills' material. The theme throughout the school during the inspection and for the rest of the term was 'Change'.
150. Two lessons were seen. Teaching in both was at least satisfactory. Teaching was good in one lesson where the teacher knew the pupils very well and there were very good relationships. She set the class to tackle the particular aspect of change – the transition to secondary school – in groups and present the outcome of their discussions to the rest of the class. In both lessons, the teachers worked hard to create an ethos where pupils felt valued. Their self-esteem was fostered well. Year 6 pupils demonstrated maturity and confidence as they outlined what strengths and skills they brought to their new school. Year 2 pupils participated in circle time, speaking in turns about specific changes that they could control. Although the teacher was not the regular class teacher, she worked hard to create a trusting supportive ethos.
151. Leadership of the subject is good. There has been staff development introducing the new material and there are good links with the local network of pilot schools. Management is satisfactory. There has been little formal opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the work in classrooms or work alongside colleagues.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

