

INSPECTION REPORT

WIMBLEDON CHASE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wimbledon

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102662

Headteacher: Mrs S Tomes

Lead inspector: Kevin Hodge

Dates of inspection: 6-8 June 2005

Inspection number: 272654

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	449
School address:	Merton Hall Road Wimbledon
Postcode:	SW19 3QB
Telephone number:	020 85421413
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Urquhart
Date of previous inspection:	March 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is located near to the centre of Wimbledon. The school started the change from a middle school to an all through primary school with Nursery from September 2000, and was completed in September 2003. There are 449 pupils on roll and there are slightly more girls than boys. There is also a special needs unit within the school catering for pupils with moderate learning difficulties; the number of pupils with special educational needs, at 12 per cent, is below average, although there are eight pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school takes in pupils mainly, but not exclusively, from the catchment area. The numbers of pupils who start or leave other than at the normal times varies, but is around average levels. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, around 8 per cent, is below the national average. There are 35 per cent of pupils for whom English is an additional language and there is a variety of ethnic minorities represented. Approximately five per cent of pupils come from families seeking asylum or who have refugee status. The socio-economic background of the pupils varies, but is above average overall. Housing in the area is largely owner-occupied. The pupils come to the school with a range of abilities, which is average overall.

The school had 'Beacon status' from 1999 until 2004 when the initiative ended, received a DfES achievement award in 2002, and gained the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in 2003. In 2004 it received both the 'healthy schools' and the 'activemark gold' awards. It was reaccredited with 'Investors in People' status and achieved an Effective Early Learning award, leading to 'investors in children' recognition in 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18466	Kevin Hodge	Lead inspector	Music, physical education.
32670	G Saltmarsh	Lay inspector	
26203	Jo Curd	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English, art and design; design and technology
2700	P Sudworth	Team inspector	Science, religious education, English as an additional language.
25787	E Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, special educational needs.
17078	M North	Team inspector	Geography, history, personal, health and social education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Wimbledon Chase is a very good school. It provides a stimulating range of opportunities for its pupils who reach high standards in key subjects. The pupils behave very well and the school is highly valued by parents. It has no significant weaknesses and it gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils reach very high standards in English, mathematics, science and Information and communication technology (ICT).
- Teaching is consistently good and often very good throughout the school.
- The headteacher is a valued leader, supported by effective senior managers.
- The pupils are very confident and approachable. They enjoy school and behave very well.
- Children make a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Links with the parents and community are of very high quality.
- The curriculum is **very** well organised, stimulating and relevant.
- There is a wide variety of very high quality activities that take place outside the normal school day.
- Assessment procedures are very thorough and well used.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and English as an additional language achieve very well.
- The work of the special needs unit is of high quality.

The school has maintained the generally high standards since the last inspection. There were no significant issues to address. The considerable disruption in changing from a middle school into a primary school between 2000 and 2003 has been handled very well and general improvement maintained effectively. Standards in mathematics have improved in Years 3 to 6.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils achieve very well overall, given their average attainment when they enter school. In the Foundation Stage, many children currently are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of Reception and they achieve well. In Year 2, the pupils reach above the expected levels in their speaking, listening and their writing, as well as science and ICT. In mathematics, they reach standards that are well above those expected nationally.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	A	A	C
Mathematics	A	C	A	B
Science	A	A	A	B

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are based on schools who attained similarly in the results at Year 2*

In the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils, results in English, mathematics and science, were well above average, despite a significant percentage of pupils having special educational needs. Compared to similar schools, results indicate that the pupils were above average in mathematics, which was an improvement from the previous year, and in science. In English, the results were very similar to the other two subjects, but were judged average. When compared to all schools, its value added score for all three subjects was well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils reach high standards in all three subjects. For example, the oldest pupils speak confidently, write imaginatively, and have well developed mathematical abilities. In science, they investigate very effectively and draw relevant conclusions. The pupils who have SEN achieve very well due to the good levels of support and the flexibility in providing the right level of work for them. The pupils in the SEN unit also achieve very well due to high levels of staffing and well-directed teaching. The pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well.

Pupils' personal qualities develop very well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to each other as well as to adults in the school. The relevant and interesting curriculum, supported by an extremely diverse range of additional activities, motivates pupils. High expectations of the pupils' contribution to school life promote a very positive ethos for learning. The social, spiritual, moral and cultural development of pupils is promoted very well. The multicultural aspects are high profile and catered for well. Pupils' attendance is very good and they arrive at school promptly. A significant number attend early for clubs such as choir and orchestra.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is very good overall. Teaching is very good overall. Teaching is consistently good or better in the vast majority of lessons. Good teaching was evident in all year groups, and was there was very good teaching in nearly a third of the lessons. Pupils in the special education unit achieve very well due to the way they are supported, both through direct high quality teaching in the unit, and when catered for within other lessons. The pace and quality of learning are consistently good, and activities are exciting and well planned. A stimulating and systematically planned curriculum is evident throughout the school. The Nursery and Reception provision is now fully established. It provides pupils with a stimulating learning environment. An excellent number of after school clubs, regular themed days and French lessons taught in Years R to 6, gives the curriculum a significant added dimension. There are very good levels of care, and pupils value their role on the school council, to shape the development of the school. The school's accommodation is good overall, and benefits from very spacious grounds and playing fields. The level of resources is good in most subjects, and particularly good in physical education and music. The school promotes excellent links within the local and wider community. Links with other schools are very well developed. The formal and informal links with parents are also excellent and the school prepares pupils well for their school transfers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The headteacher manages the school very effectively. The governors provide very good support. The headteacher provides determined leadership and works well with the governors. The teaching is regularly monitored and senior managers are very effective in promoting the curriculum provision and assessment procedures. Expectations of the staff are high, and they contribute directly to working groups aimed at raising standards. A significant number of staff also help run the many out of school clubs, contributing to the very good ethos for learning. The work of pupils with special educational needs is coordinated well, and the work of the SEN unit is well organised. Pupils take a full part in all activities and the school's inclusive approach is evident and effective. The governors ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements. Their committee structure is firmly established and its members are well informed. They support the work of teachers and headteacher very well. The chair of governors works closely with the headteacher and is a regular and valued visitor to the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are extremely supportive of the school. The response from the parents' meeting and from questionnaires was very positive. Many spoke very enthusiastically of the way in which the school cares for the pupils and provides a very good range of high quality activities. Pupils enjoy being in the school and appreciate having their say, in the school council for example.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant weaknesses in the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve well. All are on course to reach, and a significant proportion will exceed, the expected standards in all the areas of learning. Pupils achieve particularly well in Years 1 to 6 where they reach high standards in key subject areas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in national tests for the oldest pupils are consistently well above average.
- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve very well in English and mathematics.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve very well in science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Pupils achieve particularly well in musical and physical activities.

Commentary

1. The children come into the school with varying levels of ability, but show broadly average attainment overall. This view is confirmed by the school's own analysis. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well in all areas of learning. All are on course to meet, and many are likely to exceed, the Early Learning Goals that children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.2 (n/a)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.1 (n/a)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.4 (n/a)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In English, pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well. They listen carefully, have a good vocabulary and develop their writing skills well. Their reading ability is developed systematically. In mathematics, they achieve very well. They are confident in working out numerical problems and carry out investigations with confidence. In the national tests, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels in reading and mathematics was in line with the national picture. In writing, it was below average. Compared to similar schools, the pupils were below average in reading and mathematics and well below in writing. This was the first year that the school took the tests for Year 2 pupils since having the full primary age range. The school was disappointed with the results and points to its inexperience with this age group. The inspection evidence indicates this is likely to be true, as they do not reflect the standards found. There are clear indications that the results this year will show a marked improvement.

3. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well in English, science and mathematics. They have well developed and confident skills in their reading, speaking and writing. Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects such as science, geography and history. In mathematics, they are very confident in problem solving, mental calculation and investigational work. In science, the pupils achieve very well and reach high standards; they clearly understand concepts of testing and methods of problem solving.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (28.9)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.4 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Science	30.3 (30.2)	28.6(28.6)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The tables above show that results exceeded those reached nationally in all three subjects. Given that this group of pupils had a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, the results are particularly good. Compared to similar schools, these results were above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. The school had set some ambitious targets last year in both English and mathematics, and the national tests taken this term indicate that it will meet or exceed its latest targets. The results compared to similar schools are based upon the pupils' prior attainment. The Year 6 similar school comparison is based upon the results obtained when they were in Year 2 and it should be noted that these pupils were then being taught in 14 different infant schools. Other prior attainment information places the school very highly, compared to the national picture. Overall, the school has kept pace with national trends. No significant differences in current achievement between year groups or classes were noted during the inspection.

5. In ICT, the pupils achieve very well by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Increased resources are directly supporting pupils' application of skills, and their knowledge of how computers are used to enhance work and productivity. In other subjects, whether inspected in detail or sampled, pupils achieve at least satisfactorily. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well in music, physical education and religious education.

6. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as they move through the school. This is particularly so when they are well supported in lessons by skilled teaching assistants. Their achievement is so good that the vast majority of them reach the nationally expected level in English and mathematics before they leave the school. Pupils in the special needs unit also achieve very well as they are very well taught and always given very good support in the lessons they attend in the mainstream school. Individual education plans are very well written and the targets set are very clear and discussed with both parents and pupils.

7. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve very well. They are very well supported when at an early stage of learning English. They make very good progress in learning English and teachers and other pupils are sensitive to their needs. The good level of discussion in class supports their acquisition of English effectively.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is also very good. Pupils' level of attendance and punctuality is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos of care, trust and respect underpins positive behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good, linked with very good cultural and spiritual understanding.
- Pupils' personal development is valued and nurtured very well.

Commentary

8. The high standards and expectations have been very well maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' attitudes regarding every aspect of their school life are very good. They show thoughtfulness, care and concern towards each other. They respond well to staff expectations and consequently, behaviour is consistently very good. Occasional lapses in behaviour are very well managed by the staff with a minimum of fuss; the pupils clearly respect and appreciate this by their prompt response to any request made of them.

9. The very good levels of attendance reflect the pupils' very positive attitudes to school and the effectiveness of the school's policy to promote regular attendance. Parents clearly make an effort to ensure that their children attend school well and arrive punctually. This reflects the picture given at the time of the last inspection.

10. Pupils are attentive and absorbed during their lessons. They consistently behave very well working to simple and clear whole school rules based on courtesy, care, and mutual respect. The rules are based around everyone working as a community; rewards both within a whole class context, and the school's house system, reflect this ethos. All visitors to the school receive a warm welcome from staff and pupils alike. They are all proud of their school and are anxious to express this when given the opportunity to do so. Their overall enthusiasm for life in the school is very noticeable and infectious. Parents also view behaviour at the school very positively and many commented to the inspectors that this had had a positive impact on their children's learning. Overall, during the inspection, no oppressive or inappropriate behaviour and language were noted. Breaks are particularly safe for the pupils who play in a calm and very friendly way within the school's extensive grounds.

11. Pupils with special educational needs also show very good attitudes to their work. The very few pupils who have behavioural difficulties settle quickly and get on with their tasks very well. Children in the Foundation stage show very positive attitudes to learning; their behaviour is very good. All staff offer consistent support to children at every stage of their life at the school.

12. Pupils' personal development is very good with some strong features of social maturity and the desire to understand others. Personal, social and health education is very well co-ordinated and woven into the caring ethos of the school. Spiritual and cultural development is very good overall. Themes and thoughts are discussed at assembly and in class. The curriculum ensures a sound understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Varied trips, visitors of other faiths and projects support pupils' appreciation of other people's beliefs and traditions. The wider curriculum also supports learning in a diverse society very effectively. Examples seen during the inspection included a particularly effective display based on Martin Luther King's famous "I have a dream" speech where pupils had written and illustrated their own dreams and aspirations based around a peace and tolerance theme. Other high quality displays promote the achievements of pupils and classes effectively. Respect and care for their environment strongly feature across school life and activities. There were no exclusions of pupils in the past year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003/04

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is very good overall. The curriculum provides an organised, exciting and enriched framework for teachers to plan lessons. Extra-curricular provision is of top quality, with a good range of activities over the year. Teaching is very good overall and promotes high standards for all pupils, particularly in key subjects such as English, mathematics, science, ICT, and pupils' personal, health and social education (PHSE).

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Pupils' learning was good in most lessons and very good in those lessons where teaching was particularly effective. Assessment of pupils' progress is very good overall due to thorough, clear and productive systems for checking the headway they make.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The teaching throughout the school is often of high quality.
- Assessment is very thorough, useful, and used well by staff to gauge progress of pupils.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in English, mathematics, and ICT is very good.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well throughout the school.
- Lessons move at a brisk pace and activities are challenging.

Commentary

13. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with over a quarter of lessons being very good. It is consistently very good in the Nursery and Reception class and within subjects such as information and communication technology (ICT). The best teaching was characterised by teachers having very good subject knowledge, such as in English, mathematics and ICT, and energetic teaching, where pupils were challenged well to do their best. Good cooperation between teachers and assistants promotes a good ethos, although learning opportunities are not always fully capitalised upon. Relationships within lessons are good. Teachers encourage pupils well and they respond with very good behaviour and interest.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 57 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	17 (30%)	33(58%)	7 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception class is generally very good. The teachers plan a good range of activities and this helps pupils make good progress through Nursery and into the Reception classes. Activities are interesting, well organised and generally very effective. In number and literacy work activities are well directed, and their personal and social development is extended very well. Overall, the very clearly directed activities enable pupils to learn quickly, achieve very well, in a secure and happy atmosphere. In Years 1 to 6, teachers are particularly knowledgeable in key subject areas such as English, mathematics, science and ICT. This leads to pupils making particularly good progress in these subjects and achieving very well. Activities are stimulating. For example, in a Year 6 lesson discussing a story from a well-known children's author, the teacher skilfully brought out the range of vocabulary and how it enlivens the story. In another very good lesson in the SEN unit, the class teacher managed the pupils very well and used the class assistants very effectively while they discussed plants. Overall, the teaching stimulates the interests and abilities of the pupils. The learning that takes place is interesting and meaningful and they respond very well. Outside activities before school, at lunchtimes and after school, give pupils an enthusiasm for learning.

15. Assessment is very good, and is used very effectively to track the achievement of year groups, classes and individuals. Day to day assessment is also very good. Work is regularly marked and is usually of high quality. Comments upon pupils' work are diagnostic and encouraging. Information is collected and interpreted well in all subject areas and appropriate action is taken to improve standards. For example, the school believed the results Year 2 pupils reached in their national tests in 2004 needed to be improved and the indications are that the school has successfully promoted this. The school-based 'inquiry team', formed to see how standards can be raised, is an effective approach involving a wide number of staff. Assessment procedures are well managed by the staff, led very effectively by one of the deputy headteachers.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is very good throughout the school. It is enriched by an exceptional level of additional activities. The accommodation and resources are good.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- A high quality curriculum stimulates and interests pupils.
- There are outstanding opportunities for all pupils to participate in a wide range of stimulating activities.
- There is very good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).
- The curriculum provides very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- A very good range of suitably qualified teachers and support staff help pupils learn more effectively.

COMMENTARY

16. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including provision for sex and drug education. The whole curriculum is planned to ensure that the available time for learning is used very well. The various well planned themed days and weeks help to inspire many pupils to try new skills and explore different subjects. During the carefully planned enrichment week there were many opportunities to study a range of topics as diverse as boxing and knitting. The various subjects of the curriculum have been reviewed to find appropriate links that enable learning in one area to support the learning in another. The school is constantly reviewing the curriculum to find more. For example, pupils in Year 5 improve their ICT skills by producing a newspaper whilst honing their writing skills for English. The wide range of high quality displays around the school reflects the quality of learning taking place.

17. The school gives pupils of all ages superb opportunities to sample and enjoy experiences and activities over and above those included in the National Curriculum. Many of these are clubs held before school, at lunchtime and after school. They cover an exceptional range of sporting and other activities. The level of participation in competitive sporting events and in musical and dramatic performances and events is very high. Pupils also go out of school regularly to visit museums and other places of interest that are carefully planned to improve their knowledge and understanding. Visitors to the school help provide a focus to learning by grabbing the pupils' imagination and making the work much more interesting. There are two annual residential school trips for pupils, to France and to the Lake District. These enable pupils to participate in outdoor and adventurous activities as well as learning to live together harmoniously in an environment away from home.

18. The provision for pupils' social and health education is very good and is a key element in supporting the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. All of the aspects are thoroughly and systematically taught to pupils as they move through the school.

19. The curriculum provision for pupils with SEN is very good and, where possible, is linked to the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils have full access to every subject of the

National Curriculum as well as all the additional activities provided by the school. They are able to access the full curriculum as they receive very good quality support from teachers and teaching assistants. The pupils in the special needs unit also have access to a very good quality curriculum that is enhanced by imaginative planning of interesting activities by their teachers. They go on visits to such places as the Science Museum that help improve their social skills and independence as well as being a great deal of fun and a strong learning stimulus. For lessons other than English and mathematics they are fully integrated with the pupils in the main school and are very well supported in these classes.

20. Because of the high quality curriculum with its many extras, the pupils are all very capable of coping with the demands of the next stage in their education. The very good curriculum for the Nursery and Reception children ensures that they move productively into Year 1 and continue to achieve very well. The same is true for the Year 2 pupils who have few problems with the work expected of them in Year 3. The proportion of Year 6 reaching and exceeding the nationally expected levels in key subjects, means that they transfer confidently to secondary education.

21. The school is well staffed with experienced teachers who have a range of expertise in different subjects. Teachers willingly share their skills and knowledge with colleagues when planning the curriculum so that all aspects are taught successfully. Many additional specialist teachers are skilled in subjects such as music, art, French, and physical education. They work well with individuals and groups of pupils to improve their learning. Learning assistants are generally well deployed, although their effectiveness sometimes varies between classes. The extensive outside environment is very conducive to learning and provides exceptional facilities for sport and other subjects such as science. Internally, the school is well kept, although it does not fully match the quality of the outside facilities, as some areas are in need of updating. Overall, the school is very well maintained and used very regularly through the week by parents, pupils and outside visitors. The recently built Nursery is very high quality and is very well equipped. Resources throughout the school are good, particularly in music and physical education.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are very well cared for, their views are sought and acted upon; a happy, healthy and safe environment has been created for them to enjoy their life and learning at the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a safe and caring environment for pupils to learn and develop.
- Pupils know that they are important and that their views are valued.
- Pupils have trust and confidence in all staff at the school.
- Information for parents about pupils' progress is extremely thorough and clear.

Commentary

22. Pupils are provided with a very caring and supportive environment. They know that they are important and matter as individuals. The emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills and their understanding of good citizenship has created a strong community feel to the school. Staff make every possible effort to get to know their pupils well so that every child gets the help that he or she may need. The school has recently achieved the "Healthy Schools" status.

23. Pupils are actively encouraged to share their concerns, and any child with a personal or academic problem is treated with sensitivity and in confidence. Pupils trust the staff at the school. The comparatively recent implementation of a Peer Mediation scheme involving specifically trained older pupils at break times has proven to be particularly successful. This, together with a "Friday Forum" and the school's "Worry Box", where children can post their concerns, have been reassuring for pupils who are upset or troubled about any aspect of school life. This has also very impressively developed the confidence and maturity of those pupils who run the scheme.

24. Child protection procedures are comprehensive and effective. There is an emphasis on whole school involvement in every aspect of childcare and protection. The school has good links with all of the other caring agencies and is ready to work closely with them on the rare occasions that matters of concern arise. Health and safety checks of the entire site and school equipment are regular and thorough. Staff trained in first aid look after pupils who are ill, and arrangements for dealing with accidents, should they occur, are clearly set out. All pupils and their parents know that bullying, together with any other form of inappropriate behaviour, language or harassment will not be tolerated. There was very little evidence that bullying exists. Pupils confirmed both in their questionnaire and during the inspection that they would not hesitate to report any instances and they were confident that any occurrence is promptly addressed.

25. The school makes a considerable effort to seek pupils' views; examples include both comments through the very effective school council and questionnaires. The school listens to its pupils and takes their advice. Upon their initiative the dining hall has been improved, the playground areas further developed and a new policy on healthy eating and anti-bullying adopted. Pupils are also encouraged to share their opinions or concerns through regular class discussion times.

26. There are very good arrangements for new pupils, which are informative and reassuring. The Nursery team leader visits local playgroups and sees parents before their children start school. This is reinforced by meetings and coffee mornings where children can visit their new class. Parents confirm that any concerns that they may have at this critical time for both themselves and their children are always comprehensively and sensitively addressed by the school.

27. Links with all of the main local secondary schools are particularly close. Transfer and induction arrangements are reassuring for both pupils and their parents. Secondary teachers visit the school prior to transfer and visits are arranged for pupils to see their next school, familiarise themselves with it, and take part in activities and sample lessons.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the local community are excellent. Parental involvement with the overall life and support for the school is also excellent. Parents appreciate the quality of information the school provides. There are very strong links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very strong links with parents contribute extremely well to pupils' learning and development.
- Parental support through the Parents & Friends Association is excellent.
- Highly developed community links maintain the school's reputation and pride in all that it does.
- Very strong links with other schools and colleges benefit all pupils and staff.

Commentary

28. Every contact with parents during the inspection process revealed that they were delighted and positive about almost every aspect of the school, which is oversubscribed in the Nursery and Reception classes. Parents and children love the school and have a very strong sense of ownership towards it. Responses to the parents' questionnaire were all very positive.

29. The school places great importance upon its relationship and partnership with parents. It welcomes contributions and participation in all aspects of life in the school. Parents for their part respond very positively; their support is very strong because they know their views are valued. They are routinely consulted by the governors and headteacher about the school's development, and there are daily opportunities for parents to meet any of the staff. The range of information to parents is excellent. The school brochure is especially comprehensive. Regular newsletters are varied and full of information, which keep parents well up to date with life at the school. Annual

reports to parents are detailed yet easy to read and understand. Parents are invited to respond or discuss any areas of concern arising from their child's report.

30. Very many parents provide regular help to the school in a variety of ways through the school's own "Parents in Partnership Programme." This ranges from reading with pupils, working with bilingual children, to working in art lessons and Information Technology support. Termly review meetings are then held which give the parent helpers an opportunity to share their experiences and ideas. Grandparents and other visitors, some of whom were former pupils, have been into the school to talk about their life experiences.

31. The parents, who automatically become members when their children join the school, strongly support the Parent Teacher Association (Friends). It is an established part of the school community. Their fundraising initiatives raised £16,000 to assist in focused school projects such as developing the school library and improving the grounds and wooded areas of the site. A parent and toddler group is now run solely by members of the Association. A Summer Fair, called the Family Day involve every member of the school and welcome involvement from the local community. Additionally, pupils, staff and parents imaginatively raise substantial sums of money for major charities and local appeals.

32. Conscious of the need to be visible and accountable to parents, the governing body has a dedicated "Community Links Committee" with its own newsletter. This committee has also taken responsibility to routinely survey parents for their views, comments and suggestions. The group reaches out to local business through the Chamber of Commerce to promote support and sponsorship for the school. Through productions and events during the year, the school promotes its work and achievements with pride. Parents are active participants in the school choir and orchestra. They have also now set up their own choir to raise further support for the school. Families and the community are welcomed to all school productions, musical evenings and events, with contributions and support from parents with such items as costumes and equipment.

33. The school has excellent co-operative educational links and provides support to a wide range of other schools in the area. It has a particular role within the LEA to support the provision of French to other primary schools. The school is part of a cluster of five primary schools which work closely together to share ideas, resources and joint Inset days. It shares its facilities for a number of inter-school sporting events. It also works closely with several teacher-training faculties. Workshops for newly qualified teachers are hosted at the school to support and provide training for teachers starting work in the Borough. The school had its "Investor in People" accreditation renewed and this took into account its close work with other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well led and managed. Governance is very good. The leadership of key staff is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision and the school's aims are reflected very well in its practice.
- Very good systems for monitoring teaching, learning and attainment ensure good standards are maintained.
- The governing body is very well organised and informed.
- The complementary skills of the headteacher and senior staff combine very effectively.

Commentary

34. The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior staff are very good. They combine their complementary skills very effectively. The clear distinction between the roles of the senior management team provides a secure arrangement for managing the school. Regular senior management team meetings oversee the successful daily running of the school and take a longer strategic view.

35. The headteacher has a very clear vision and the school's aims are reflected very consistently in its work. She leads and manages the school very effectively. She helps to maintain a very good level of harmony amongst the staff and ensures all members of staff are committed to doing the best for the pupils in their care. Teachers know about their responsibilities through a range of well-documented policy statements and their individual job descriptions. The well-established systems in the school for monitoring provision ensure that standards of teaching and attainment are maintained, so that pupils achieve successfully. Monitoring procedures are rigorous and well planned. Staff are enabled to improve their practice through reviews of their teaching, attendance at courses, well thought through appraisal systems, and annual professional discussions. Teaching assistants are well deployed and largely effective, although this does vary between classes. There is a very good system of analysing results and learning lessons from them. The school runs very well on a day-to-day basis so that time is used efficiently. The large number of staff is well managed. Leadership and management remain as strong as they were at the time of the previous inspection.

36. The school is keen to keep abreast of new initiatives and to obtain further credentials. Its commendations as an 'Investor in People' for a second time, healthy school status and sports gold active mark, amongst other tributes, testify to its success. Its recent participation in the Primary Leadership Programme has benefited the work of key subject leaders in the maintenance of standards and in keeping abreast of new developments. Its strong allegiance to a local cluster group ensures that ideas are shared for the benefit of all its members.

37. The process for planning and reviewing the school improvement plan is very good and encompasses a good range of opinion. The plan reflects the current needs of the school with a good emphasis on maintaining and improving pupils' achievements even further. The plan clearly indicates the personnel involved in the different initiatives, the success criteria of different priorities, responsible personnel and completion dates. The latest plan takes a long-term view that helps to match finance to future initiatives in a more beneficial way than before. There are a number of aids to learning, such as the accommodation and levels of staffing, and few significant barriers.

38. The work of the governing body is very good and it fulfils its statutory duties very effectively. The governing body is very well led and organised. It has a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and its areas for development. Committee and full governing body meetings are regular, with clear agendas, and are carefully recorded. There is a regular pattern of governor visits. The curriculum committee is well informed about the curricular organisation. The governing body is prepared to challenge in discussion and in the decision-making process and it works hard to ensure that the pupils receive the best possible provision.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

<i>Income and expenditure (£)</i>	
Total income	1316653
Total expenditure	1244674
Expenditure per pupil	2571

<i>Balances (£)</i>	
Balance from previous year	110831
Balance carried forward to the next	71979

39. Financial planning is very good. The budget is prepared thoughtfully and with due care. It is monitored at regular intervals. Subject leaders prioritise their requirement, which helps in the distribution of limited finance for books and equipment due to the large percentage of the budget spent on staffing. Subject leaders manage their limited budgets effectively. The most recent Local Education Authority audit, October 2004, regarded the day-to-day financial systems as satisfactory, and the recommendations for improvement have been actioned.

40. The carefully planned budget, the very good work ethic, high expectations and very good provision for the pupils' rounded education, with much success in statutory assessments indicate that the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. The Reception classes of the school started in 2001, the Nursery in 2002. Each Reception class is staffed by a full time teacher and two part time teaching assistants. The Nursery has two parallel classes with morning or afternoon sessions and new children start at the Nursery each term. There are two intakes, according to children's birthdays, into the Reception classes.

42. Accommodation indoors and out in the Nursery is bright, spacious and very well used. The sizes of the Reception classes are adequate and used very well. One of the classrooms leads onto the Reception playground that is small but used effectively. Resources, which are used well, were new when the classes started. Links with parents make a significant impact on children's learning at home and in school. Good relationships are established through home visits before children start at the school. Transition arrangements for children's start in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 are detailed and very good.

43. Children achieve well in all areas of learning and very well in their personal development. Children start at the Nursery with levels of learning and skill on a par with those nationally. By the time they leave their Reception classes standards are above average for all areas. In their personal and social development they are well above the average expected at that age. Children with special educational needs are supported and integrated well. They are well cared for by staff and peers and make very good progress.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal and social development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations for pupils promote and maintain very good behaviour.
- Children develop independence, enjoy responsibilities and develop very good attitudes to learning.
- Very good relationships between staff provide very good role models for pupils.
- Very good behaviour means that pupils learn very well.

Commentary

44. Pupils leave with personal and social skills well above average, due to the very good teaching that takes place. All the staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. Nearly all the children behave very well. They are guided consistently by asking them if this is 'a good choice or a bad choice'. Children respond well to this. Time is used well for learning and developing social skills. Children are encouraged to choose their activities when they are not engaged in adult led activities. Children in the Nursery are clearly developing this independence well although some still stand and watch rather than engage in activities themselves.

45. By the time they reach Reception class, children confidently and eagerly pursue the well-organised range of activities offered. They develop very good attitudes to learning and enjoy taking responsibilities. Children with special educational needs are supported appropriately and included in jobs such as taking the register to the office. Relationships between staff are very good and they all work very well as a team. This provides a very good role model to the children. Relationships between staff and children are very good and children are eager to do as they are asked.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make particularly good progress in reading in the Reception class.
- A clear focus on improving writing in the Reception class has improved standards.
- Children use and develop language and literacy skills well.
- Very good links with parents successfully help children's learning.

Commentary

46. Achievement of the pupils is good due to the consistently effective teaching that takes place. Children come into Nursery with average skills and go out with skills of communication, language and literacy above the national average. The well-focused action plan, consistency in approach from Nursery to Reception, and effective teaching combine well to promote the pupils' progress. An established scheme is used to introduce children to letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds. Having learned the letters and sounds, children go on to make rapid progress in reading in their Reception classes. Parents are informed of the school's approach to literacy and most help their children regularly at home. All the children in the class read at home at least twice a week and most do it every day. This has a big impact on their learning.

47. Children listen very well and are successfully developing their vocabularies and use of spoken language. They are also making good progress in writing. Staff have worked hard to implement a clear action plan for this. Teachers use imaginative methods such as puppets and making deliberate mistakes. Children correct [these](#) with excitement and enjoyment and go on to use correct patterns in their own work. Opportunities for imaginative play are particularly well developed in the Reception classes and successfully encourage reading, writing, speaking and listening.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT.

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's very good behaviour means that time is used well for learning.
- Mathematical language and concepts are included well in games and activities in the Nursery.

Commentary

48. Teaching is consistently good and often very good. Children achieve well. They come into Nursery with average standards in mathematics and leave their Reception class with skills and understanding above average. A group of older children in the Nursery sat attentively for fifteen minutes at the end of the afternoon session playing a game with mathematical shapes. They were able to describe the shapes and most knew the names of some. A number line helped pupils during register time in the Nursery. Numbers from 1 to 26 were displayed, as this was the total number of children in that class. The number of children absent was then covered with leaves and children counted that the number present corresponded with the line. Mathematical language and concepts are included well in games and activities in the Nursery, such as scoring goals in basketball. Reception children's work shows that they are developing secure mathematical skills and understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given lots of interesting first hand experiences.
- Children are engrossed by some very good teaching.
- Teachers and children make very good use of technology including the interactive white board.

Commentary

49. Teaching is very good. Children achieve particularly well in this area and leave their Reception classes with knowledge and understanding better than expected at this age. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes are given lots of interesting first hand experiences that successfully engage their interest, and contribute well to their growing knowledge. In one Reception class, all the children were fully engrossed as their teacher talked about animals they might find in the rainforest. They listened intently as she taught them about it, and looked carefully for the creature that was camouflaged against its background. The children then used boxes to make models of animals that opened their mouths as they blew up plastic bags that were inside. Children also hear about the lives and experiences of visitors from Ireland and Finland, and representatives of major world faiths. Staff and children make good use of technology including programmable toys called 'roamers' the internet for research, cassette players and computers. Children are all extending their knowledge well and developing very good enquiring attitudes to learning.

50. Other areas of learning were sampled. Opportunities for **creative** development are good. Children in the Nursery use a wide range of materials, which are well-presented and organised, imaginatively to make various pictures and models. They like music and enjoy singing and dancing outside to a tape. Both boys and girls like brushing, curling and styling the hair of two large dolls. Children in Reception classes benefit from music lessons with specialist teachers. They enjoy using instruments they made, along with puppets and actions to accompany a song they had learned. Opportunities for imaginative play in the Reception classes are particularly good. Children buying masks and snorkels in a 'diving shop' developed their role-play skills well and they signed themselves into a 'rainforest' in case they had not returned by evening. Children improve their **physical** skills well both indoors and out. Reception children carefully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the playground and gain confidence on the much larger climbing frame in the main playground. Their fine-motor physical skills are good and develop well through painting and improving their handwriting. Nursery children show confidence climbing on the frame and sliding down the pole in their outdoor area. They persevere well in trying to score goals through the basketball hoop. Staff join in, encourage and develop these games well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

Unless otherwise indicated, the pupils with SEN achieve very well. Class teachers give all pupils with SEN good support. They make very good progress as they move through the school. Their achievement is good and most reach the nationally expected level in English and mathematics. Pupils in the special needs unit also achieve very well, receive very good levels of support and make good progress when they integrate into other lessons.

ENGLISH

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils leave the school attaining standards in English well above the national expectation.
- Teachers plan well and have very good subject knowledge.
- A consistent use of joined script throughout the school results in a high standard of handwriting.
- The school's action plan for writing has extended the pupils' skills effectively.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

51. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is well above the national expectation. Pupils achieve very well over time and within lessons. Last year's results showed that girls reached higher standards than boys. Significant work to address this took place and overall boys and girls are now working at similar levels and achieving similar standards. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are divided into smaller groups once per week and are taught with peers of similar abilities. This is very effective for all the pupils of all abilities, who very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported well and are making very good progress.

52. Standards in speaking and listening at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above the national expectation. Pupils use a good vocabulary and listen very well. They are well used to discussing topics in pairs and reporting to the class. They do this quickly, without fuss and with confidence. This approach is used well in all classes throughout the school. Teachers plan carefully and choose imaginative starting points that successfully engage and excite pupils. Year 3 pupils excitedly discussed how characters in the short film 'El Caminante' about a tightrope walker coming to town felt, and how they could, as 'Town Criers' publicise his visit to others. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 successfully gain confidence to share ideas and experiences in their small and appropriately paced English lessons. An 'inquiry team' of staff closely monitors the achievements of underachieving pupils who are sometimes taken out of class for additional support. Faster learners speak very confidently and in depth in their group. Boys and girls both contribute to discussions.

53. Pupils of all ages make very good progress in reading. Parents are used effectively to support this and most children read regularly at home. A good number of volunteers listen to children read at school. Although planning indicates that pupils in each class read at the beginning of each afternoon, the practice and effectiveness of this varies between classes. The spacious and well-stocked library is an asset to pupils' learning. A sponsored walk two years ago raised over £11,000 to refurbish and replenish this. The school now has over the national recommendation of books per pupil. The library working party consisting of parents, governors, pupils and staff, work hard to maintain this. Classes visit the library each week and it is open before and after school once a week so that parents can use it with their children.

54. The school has worked hard over the past year to improve pupils' achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2. The well-focussed 'Writing Action Plan' is proving effective. Writing has a prominent position in the school and pupils' efforts and achievements are frequently celebrated. Joined-up handwriting is taught from the Nursery and children's faltering attempts are welcomed and praised.

Regular formal practice at home and in school result in fluent writing developing as pupils get older. Most teachers' writing is well formed and neat providing a very good role model for pupils, but some comments are not so carefully written. Lower attaining pupils are usually supported well. Pupils have opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and audiences. These are usually well chosen relevant and interesting. Pupils in Year 6 have well developed writing skills and reach very high standards. Their reports about recent changes in the school timetable, formal letters in response to the redundancy of a school crossing assistant and articles for the school newspaper are of high quality. Pupils of all ages are involved in this publication, which makes both reading and writing relevant and interesting. A focus on improving boys' writing which includes 'timed' and 'competitive writing' is proving successful in raising motivation and achievement. Pupils of all ages have found specific targets of how to improve their writing helpful. When they reach these, their achievements are celebrated.

55. Teaching and learning are good. Time in lessons is used very well. Teachers are generally well organised and focused. Planning is good. The pupils' very good behaviour enables a good pace to be maintained without interruptions. Teaching assistants are used well to support tasks but are sometimes underused in introductions to lessons. Marking is usually accurate and clearly shows pupils how they can improve or develop their work.

56. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject manager has very good experience and expertise in the area. She has monitored lessons, planning and pupils' work astutely. A notable aspect of this is her emphasis on quality rather than quantity, and that the process and development of writing is as important as the result. Her detailed analysis of results, her focused programme for development and her writing action plan, are all having impact on raising standards and pupils' achievement. She is determined that these improvements should continue.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

57. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects. A good use of paired and group discussions in lessons promotes pupils' learning across the curriculum and their overall development of speaking and listening. Writing skills are used well across the curriculum in subjects such as science, history and geography. Very good listening skills enable pace and learning in all lessons. Speaking and listening are developed well in subjects such as PSHE discussion times and in drama activities and performances.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

58. The school teaches French in Years R to 6. The school also has an annual residential trip to a small French village where pupils undertake a range of activities and mix with local residents. The school has arranged a number of French themed days, and a visiting theatre group visits the school annually to perform in French and develop pupils' understanding. During the inspection, two lessons were observed, one in Year 5 and one in Year 6. In both of the lessons seen, the pace and expectation of the pupils was high. Most of the discussions and teaching are conducted in French, with only minimal explanations given in English. This motivated the pupils to listen and to respond well. Their vocabulary was wide and in Year 6 pupils used it confidently. Most were willing to answer questions in front of classmates with little reluctance. The use of partners to discuss certain phrases and responses also helps to promote pupils' learning well. In a Year 5 session, the teaching was particularly good due to the good subject knowledge and very good tasks that were set to pupils of different abilities. In a Year 1 activity, good use was made of the interactive whiteboard to teach number vocabulary. The subject is coordinated enthusiastically and ably by the headteacher, who has developed it over a number of years. It is high profile within the school and the additional activities contribute to its place as a strength within the curriculum provision.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils leave the school attaining standards in mathematics well above the national expectation.
- Teaching is very good throughout the school. Pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to their work.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- There are good links made with other subjects.

COMMENTARY

59. The pupils in Year 6 are in line to attain standards well above those expected for their age. The consistently good and predominantly very good teaching is significant in helping pupils reach such high standards. They achieve very well. In 2004, the pupils in Year 2 attained standards in line with the national average but below those found in similar schools. The school was disappointed with these results; partly caused by their inexperience in dealing with the tests for the first time. Effective action was taken to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of the Year 1 and 2 curriculum with the result that pupils currently in Year 2 are now working at standards well above those expected for their age. Throughout the school pupils are actively encouraged to develop their mental skills so that they can work quickly and accurately on solving problems. There is a very good level of investigational work included in lessons so that the pupils become competent mathematicians. In the Year 6 set of more able pupils, the work was extremely challenging and they had to use all their skills with number and logic to decode a times table with letters replacing the numbers. The whole class worked with intensity to crack the problem and all were justifiably proud of their efforts.

60. The quality of teaching is very good overall with no teaching being unsatisfactory. Two-thirds of the lessons seen were very good. Such very good teaching helps pupils learn at a very fast rate. Teachers have very high expectations and set work designed to challenge pupils of all abilities. They create an extremely positive working environment and insist on the highest standards of work and behaviour at all times. The teachers with interactive whiteboards use them very effectively to grab the pupils' attention and add more interest to the lesson. The setting of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is having a most positive effect on the standards attained. Teachers are able to plan work very closely matched to the prior attainment of their pupils. In all classes, teachers ensure that every pupil is fully included in the many learning opportunities, by carefully grading the work to suit the differing abilities of the pupils in their class. Teachers use support staff well to help their pupils learn more effectively. Their impact on learning is even more effective when they are actively involved in monitoring or supporting pupils in all parts of the lesson and not just during group work.

61. Pupils respond extremely well to the very good teaching, are very attentive in lessons and are most keen to learn. They are very proud of their many achievements. Work is presented neatly in their books and the vast majority successfully complete the work set for them. Their behaviour in lessons is very good or better and leads to a calm and peaceful working atmosphere in which all pupils can flourish and produce high quality work.

62. The subject is very well led and managed. There are very useful assessment procedures in place that are used most successfully to help pupils reach their full potential. The information collected shows how individual pupils or particular groups are progressing and triggers action if they are not performing well enough. Pupils are set targets and their work is adjusted to meet their needs. Test papers are analysed to identify areas of strength or concern. Planning of work is then adjusted to address any perceived problems. For example, problem solving was identified as an area for improvement and has been a recent focus with very positive results.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. The pupils' skills in mathematics are often used in other subjects of the curriculum and their inclusion is planned. When these links are made they prove very useful, making learning more relevant and helping pupils reinforce their skills and understanding in mathematics. For example, pupils use measures in science lessons, and draw tables and graphs of their findings. In geography lessons they use scale, measure distance accurately, and locate features using coordinates. Links to ICT are also good, especially when the pupils can use the bank of laptops in their mathematics lessons. Year 6 used them very effectively to create spreadsheets about planning a family holiday.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a long history of good results in the subject.
- Pupils enjoy the subject and have very good attitudes towards the work.
- Teachers research their lessons well and demonstrate **very** good subject knowledge.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

64. Pupils achieve well throughout the school in reaching above the expected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6, continuing a good pattern of results in national tests in recent years. Pupils' learning is good. They enjoy science because they relish the good level of opportunities provided for activity and discussion in which they participate with much enthusiasm. Pupils behave very well and have very good attitudes to the subject. This supports their progress. They organise themselves well when involved in practical activities and listen carefully to the views of others. Pupils use their good background knowledge to advantage in discussion. Problem solving is used effectively in some lessons. Year 2 pupils were challenged to think like scientists to sort pictures of animals into categories, and to determine the criteria for their choice. They worked hard and achieved well. The range of activities in a Year 5 lesson kept pupils interested in their study of keeping healthy with a focus on food. Discussion of true/ false statements about food with a working partner, kept the pupils interested throughout the lesson and the activities helped them improve their understanding.

65. Teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared with a good structure, and they begin promptly. They are well sequenced so that pupils make connections between different lessons. Questioning is mostly good, enabling them to take an active part in discussion, which supports their speaking and listening skills. On occasion there is a tendency to provide too much of the factual detail for the pupils, rather than drawing this from them. Teachers make good use of vocabulary specific to the different studies in science. They afford pupils very good opportunities for practical activity and investigation, so that they get a good understanding of fair testing. Year 3 pupils did well in a lesson about the requirements of plants for healthy growth. They knew that for the test to be fair the plants had to be the same size and type. Pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs are well provided for, often with pictorial aids and equipment, so that they can take a full part in lessons.

66. Pupils have good opportunities to set out their own work, which supports their writing skills. Relationships are respectful and pupils are well managed. Teachers research their lessons well, although marking suggestions are not always followed through by the pupils.

67. The subject leader is very effective. She is well informed and knowledgeable and has monitored the provision effectively, including an analysis of standards, and this has led to improvements in provision. She has ensured that information and communication technology is

available for use in science and obtained good technical equipment to help pupils' understanding. Furthermore, the outside grounds are a big asset in studying elements of natural science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision is **very good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are high at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils have a very good attitude to the subject.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- There are many well thought out links to other subjects.

COMMENTARY

68. By the time the pupils leave the school they reach standards in ICT that are well above those expected nationally. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection when overall standards were judged to be above those in other schools. All aspects of the subject are taught to a high level. This is a result of the very good level of resources in the school, the constant use of the equipment and the very good teaching throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make very good progress as they are very well supported by both adults and their classmates.

69. Pupils thoroughly enjoy ICT work and are very proud of their efforts. They talk animatedly about their many successes. Year 2 pupils explained at length how they produced their own travel brochures and combined text and graphics for their brochure covers. They treat all equipment sensibly and are often allowed to use other devices such as digital cameras and scanners in their work. They are confident users of a wide range of ICT equipment and have a very thorough understanding of how it is used in the wider world. The behaviour of the pupils is very good in lessons and this helps all pupils learn more effectively as no time is wasted.

70. The quality of teaching is very good. Two-thirds of lessons observed were very good. Teachers with very good subject knowledge taught all of the lessons seen. They manage their pupils very well and create a good working atmosphere in which all pupils can concentrate without interruption. Work is very well planned at a level designed to help pupils of all abilities learn effectively. It is often imaginative and interesting. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson the pupils were designing a website for the school. They made many decisions concerning the layout, size and style of writing, suitable pictures to include and how to include hyperlinks. They all worked very well in pairs with minimal supervision, as they were intent on making their work as attractive as possible for a child to view. All pupils were keen to make their website the best and worked diligently to complete the tasks.

71. The subject is very well led and managed. There is a clear vision of exactly how ICT can be taught successfully throughout the school. The use of a suite of computers and a bank of laptops is proving to be most effective in teaching the full ICT curriculum. Pupils are regularly and accurately assessed at the end of each unit of work so that planning of future lessons can be adjusted to meet their needs. The lunchtime computer clubs are very popular with pupils from all years and give them many opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills in ICT.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

72. The school has worked hard to find useful and profitable links with other subjects to make learning more relevant and fun, as well as using learning time more effectively. For example, in Year 6 the pupils use the laptops in mathematics to create a spreadsheet. Year 5 pupils successfully use a digital camera to take their photographs to use in a class newspaper linked to

their literacy work. ICT devices such as sensors are used in science lessons to record temperature and light and sound levels. Pupils also use the Internet regularly to find out about a wide range of subjects. For instance, Year 2 pupils successfully researched the lives of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole.

HUMANITIES

73. It is not possible to make reliable judgements on standards or the quality of learning and teaching in **geography** as only two lessons were seen. Comments are based on the scrutiny of pupils' books, teachers' planning, attractive displays of work and from discussions with staff. Only one **history** lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2; most seen were for pupils between Years 3 and 6 so judgements relate to them only.

74. **Geography** is taught throughout the school with an appropriate emphasis on geographical skills. This is because the overall planning reflects the National Curriculum requirements and is rooted in nationally published schemes of work. From an early age, pupils learn to use maps appropriately and are taught the vocabulary to explain direction and movement between places. This can be seen in Year 1 as pupils enjoy using a simple robotic toy that follows their directional instructions. By Year 2, pupils examine and begin to contrast localities through their study based on the Isle of Struay. They have made interesting models as part of their work on rivers that demonstrate their understanding of the development of landscape features. There is good use of recent global events, such as the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami, to support the Year 6 pupils' understanding of some geographical processes. Field trips also are used well to stimulate and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding as in the trip to the Lake District. Effective use is made of ICT to research geographical facts.

75. Pupils' work and achievement in **history** is good. Teachers have good command of their subject and bring it alive by effective use of artefacts and good use of ICT. Pupils examine objects from a Victorian classroom and are given time to think about their possible use. In the best lessons, pupils are challenged to devise questions that reveal the use of the artefacts. This investigative skill is developed further in Year 6 as pupils are set the demanding task of devising questions that will uncover details of the Ancient Greeks' way of life. Teachers have high expectations for their pupils' responses and frequently challenge their initial answers with supplementary questions that lift the quality of their next responses. The quality of the pupils' learning is good, aided by the clear purposes of lessons being shared with them. This helps them focus on what they should achieve. The good relationships between pupils are used to profitable effect as they work in pairs or in small groups. They sustain concentration as they speculate on the use of ink-wells and other objects from a Victorian school, and share their ideas. This promotes new learning.

76. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate very good skills of listening to each other and sharing ideas so assisting in each other's learning. This good learning across the Years 2 to 6 is reflected in good standards being achieved by pupils, so by Year 6 they have achieved beyond the standards expected for their age. Pupils have a good chronological understanding and an awareness of when events happen in relation to each other. They are also aware of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence. Effective use is made of special events to enrich the curriculum such as Black History week. A visitor, who had been an evacuee in 1940's Britain, brought relevance and meaning to pupils studying that period. Visits to local museums and places of historic interest are also used to enliven and enrich the curriculum. The school's annual visit to France gives pupils the chance to see the D-Day landing beaches and the Bayeaux tapestry.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject receives a good emphasis in the curriculum.
- Good use is made of expertise of members of the community.
- Children respond well to the varied teaching approaches and share their learning confidently with others.
- The subject leader has made a good start to leading and managing the subject.

Commentary

77. The school fulfils the requirement to follow the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The allocation of time to religious education allows the subject to be studied in sufficient depth. Teachers promote religious education effectively. Past work indicates that the pupils study a range of faiths and customs associated with them. In the two lessons observed, Year 4 pupils showed enthusiastic interest in studying and discussing the Biblical version of Creation, whilst Year 6 pupils were studying the concept of death and how funeral services aim to pick out memories and personality traits from the life of the deceased. In both classes, pupils treated the subject matter with much seriousness. In the Year 6 lesson, very good use was made of a video clip to show an excerpt from a film, which helped to set the scene for the lesson in a detached way.

78. Pupils reach the expected standard against local expectations and achieve well because of the depth of knowledge that they acquire. They study a range of faiths, including Christianity. Good use is made of visits to places of worship. Visitors from different faith communities make a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of major world faiths and the customs associated with different faiths, such as marriage and death. The subject leader has a good knowledge and much interest in the subject and has made a good start in developing it.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. Two lessons were seen in **art and design** and one in **design and technology (DT)**. Two activities were seen in **music**, along with out of school clubs such as choir and orchestra and some individual instrumental teaching. Additional evidence was taken from an evaluation of the curriculum and from samples of pupils' finished work.

80. The quality and standards of pupils' **art and design** work around the school are good and often very good. Large, high quality, imaginative displays are an attractive feature of the school. Pupils are developing a good understanding of styles, artists and techniques. Those in Year 6 studied Andy Warhol and Sixties art and painted vivid portraits in this style. Others studied Aboriginal art and created some outstanding pictures of their own. In the one lesson seen, Year 5 pupils showed good critical appreciation of colour, valuing each other's opinions and tastes. They were able to discuss and compare some of William Morris's paintings, saying which they each preferred, how they made them feel and what the designs made them think of. There are good links with the art college next door. Pupils benefit from the skills and experience of a current student there who helps in art lessons two afternoons per week. Pupils and staff enjoy annual creative art days and enrichment days. Last year the mayor opened an art gallery of pupils' pictures that were then sold to raise additional money for art resources.

81. **Design and technology** is planned well and is linked effectively to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 had made careful models of mountains and rivers connected to geography work. There is a good emphasis on process as well as product. A display of slippers clearly shows the effort pupils put into research, design, trial and evaluation in making their final product. Pupils are often encouraged to continue or develop their work at home. Teachers

successfully capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. For example, pupils made shelters for small models which they then tested to destruction. Pupils evaluated successfully their work even if their models did not always stand up to the rigorous testing.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of activities
- Good use is made of specialist teachers
- The level of resources is good
- The extra curricular activities support the class based work well.

Commentary

82. The teaching is good and pupils achieve well. Good use is made of specialist teachers who are enthusiastic and skilled in developing the pupils' abilities. In Year 1, the pupils developed their listening skills well by listening to an audio CD of an orchestra. They also played a variety of percussion instruments to create a pleasant ensemble sound in connection with their topic on minibeasts. The class teacher organised the session well, involving all pupils effectively and extending the higher attaining pupils to do more. In a Year 2 lesson, listening to an audio CD was also the starting point for the pupils to think about abstract sounds connected to a space theme. They made relevant comments about what they liked or didn't like, before working in pairs to compose their own musical space themes. These were good and some managed to use a computer to record their compositions. In the Year 4 lesson, the focus on composing successfully developed the pupils' knowledge and skills of playing percussion instruments such as Tibetan bells. Good use was also made of the computer, where children used a 'music maker' programme to extend their composition. There are a number of clubs, such as the choir, orchestra and the recorder group. There is a large provision of additional music tuition during the week, covering keyboard, brass and strings. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She promotes the school's wider musical involvement and the many musical activities that take place over the year. The level of resources is good, and combined with a dedicated music room, provides valuable and well-used facilities.

83. In **physical education**, three outside games activities were observed. No gymnastic or drama activities took place. Overall, subject provision is good, but judgements on teaching are not possible. The pupils achieve well in their games activities. There are significant strengths in the way the curriculum is supported by the use of outside specialists, and in the quality of the accommodation which is very good overall. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils warmed up quickly and effectively developed their fine motor skills in dribbling and controlling small footballs. They worked together well to devise their own rules for a game, as part of the challenge planned by the class teacher. All pupils were involved purposefully, and all groups managed to agree on simple rules to guide their game. In a Year 4 lesson, athletic activities such as javelin and discus throwing were taught satisfactorily. Nearly all pupils were well organised, and began to improve their throwing techniques. In a Year 6 cricket lesson, the pupils were taught effectively using a wide range of activities. Simple tactics were discussed such as 'backing up' when someone is throwing the ball towards the wicket. Other pupils were skilful at batting and bowling. The school's links with other schools are very good and it has been successful in both football and cricket in local competitions. The subject is effectively coordinated. A high number of sporting clubs help to support class activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

PROVISION IS **VERY GOOD**.

- There is a very clear and structured programme.
- There are class discussion times held in all year groups.
- All pupils have a high degree of involvement in activities.
- The local community is involved effectively in activities.

Commentary

84. This aspect of the curriculum is a significant strength of the school. Pupils experience rich, challenging and diverse experiences. These are often supported by the very effective use of visitors such as the school nurse, fire fighters and the local police. Topical matters are addressed and pupils are made suitably aware of environmental issues such as effects of traffic on the environment. They participate in a Walking Wednesday when no cars come to school. Pupils in the Eco Club also bring environmental issues to the fore, collecting rubbish, and working on the **wild area**. Courses take place for pupils to develop their self-esteem through role-play activities. Good provision is made for them to have appropriate understanding of issues relating to sex and relationships, smoking and alcohol and substance abuse. The peer mediators and the school council reflect a high degree of pupil involvement in their own personal and social development. Teachers respond empathetically to sensitive situations. In one instance, a lesson on families, caused some pupils to reflect upon their own circumstances. The calmness and very good quality of understanding shown by the teacher supported pupils who found the lesson content difficult. Discussion times are used very effectively throughout the school to help pupils explore their feelings and understand aspects of personal development. Awareness of civic issues is raised regularly through discussion of topical concerns such as the recent general election, the Tsunami appeal and their study of what makes the news. The programme for PSHE and citizenship is well established and backed by a substantial handbook for staff.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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