

INSPECTION REPORT

HEBER PRIMARY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Southwark

Unique reference number: 100793

Headteacher: Tim Mamak

Lead inspector: Jo Cheadle

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th February 2005

Inspection number: 266985

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	273
School address:	Heber Road Lordship Lane London
Postcode:	SE22 9LA
Telephone number:	020 8693 2075
Fax number:	020 8299 0239
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	George Grime
Date of previous inspection:	February 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Heber is a large primary school, with 308 boys and girls between the ages of three and 11. Pupils come from mixed social and economic backgrounds. The largest ethnic group is of pupils from white British heritage, but many other ethnic backgrounds are represented at the school, including Caribbean, Black African, Asian and mixed races. At around 20 per cent, the proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is high. Six pupils are in the early stages of learning to speak English. Sixty-four pupils receive support for a range of learning and behavioural needs, and seven pupils have a Statement to support their special educational needs. At 20 per cent, the proportion of pupils on the official special needs list is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is also above the national average at just over 30 per cent. Standards on entry to the school have improved in recent years and are generally in line with expected levels. The school is involved with the following local and national initiatives that support its development: Education Action Zone and Excellence in Cities.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23233	Jo Cheadle	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Design and Technology Religious Education Special Educational Needs
9577	Elaine Parrish	Lay inspector	
22424	Kathryn Taylor	Team inspector	Art and Design Physical Education Music Foundation Stage
15023	Ali Haouas	Team inspector	English Information and Communication Technology History Geography English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Heber Primary is an improving school that currently provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Standards are in line with expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The headteacher's very strong leadership ensures that the school builds continually on its growing strengths and plans effectively to tackle weaknesses. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in Years 3 to 6 teaching is good, enabling pupils to learn well. Governors are fully aware of their responsibilities and support the school effectively. The school provides satisfactory value for the money it receives.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's leadership is very good and has ensured the firm establishment of an enthusiastic and purposeful staff team, who are committed to improving the work of the school;
- The provision for English, mathematics and science is good and this has brought about improved learning and improving standards of work;
- The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and this motivates pupils to learn well, behave well and have positive attitudes;
- Teaching and learning in Year 1 are not good enough and this affects pupils' behaviour and the work they do;
- Work in the Foundation Stage is not always effectively planned to meet children's personal and academic needs;
- The provision for pupils' with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.

The school was last inspected in February 2003. Since this time, appropriate priority has been given to ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently good enough and that the standards pupils attain improve. The school has been successful in both these areas and improvements have been good. In addition, pupils now have positive attitudes to their work, behave well and are motivated to learn, even when they know they have a long way to catch up. Through all of these improvements, the school has battled hard with the constraints of a very limited budget and staffing issues that have resulted in difficult decision-making and many changes. However, the good quality of leadership and management has enabled a firm foundation to be established and there is very good capacity for further improvements.

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	E	D	C
Mathematics	E*	E	D	C
Science	E*	E	C	A

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

Overall, pupils' achievements are **satisfactory**. Children join the school with a wide range of skills and knowledge, but there has been a notable improvement in standards on entry to the nursery and reception classes in the past two years. Standards are now in line with those expected. Through the nursery and reception classes, most children build steadily on their starting levels to reach the goals expected of them by the age of five. While this indicates satisfactory achievement for the majority, the Foundation Stage provision does not enable some children to do as well as they could. Pupils' achievement through Years 1 and 2 is also satisfactory and standards are as would be expected by the end of Year 2. Once again, a

significant minority of pupils do not achieve as well as they could by the age of 7. In Years 3 to 6, the majority of pupils achieve well to reach the levels expected of them by the end of Year 6. Many of the children in these year groups began school with lower levels than children now starting at the school. In addition, learning for some of the pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, has not always been as good as it should have been. Good quality teaching for the older pupils is enabling them to catch up quickly and do as well as they can by the time they leave the school. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily and gain positively from the school's focussed attention to the learning of literacy skills. Those pupils with special educational needs do not achieve well enough. This is because limited attention is given to planning work that exactly meets their individual learning or behavioural special needs.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are developed **well**. The majority of pupils have good attitudes to their work, enjoy learning and behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils who find it difficult to behave well at all times are very aware of the school's sanctions for poor behaviour. Some pupils do not behave well, because they are not managed well by the teacher. Rates of attendance are now in line with national averages, signifying a marked improvement since the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils. The curriculum is planned suitably for children in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 6, priority focus has been given to work in English, mathematics and science and this has encouraged better national test results. Developments in other subjects have been implemented steadily but slowly, a situation in part the result of very limited finances to make more notable improvements at a quicker pace. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory, as there is too little attention given to using strategies and planning work that is entirely suitable for their individual needs. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. There are clear strengths in teaching that encourage good learning in Years 3 to 6 and very obvious weaknesses in Year 1, where pupils do not learn enough. Teachers make thorough assessments of pupils' work and how well they are doing and have a good range of recorded information about each child. Where this information is used well, it helps pupils move quickly onto the next stages in learning. However, there are current inconsistencies in how effectively assessment information is used and these impact on learning in lessons. The school's accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils are well looked after and good links with parents, the local community and other schools are supporting curriculum developments and learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **well** led and managed. The headteacher provides very strong leadership, demonstrated by his capacity to build, empower and motivate a staff team who are very committed to the children and the school. The deputy headteacher supports the head well and is a good role model to other teachers. Most subject co-ordinators manage developments successfully, although aspects of leadership in some areas of the school's provision are not yet as effective as they need to be. This is particularly the case in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage and in work with pupils with special educational needs. Planning to sustain current improvements and ensure future successes is good. The governing body play an active and effective role in this development planning and governors have a useful range of skills and knowledge to support the school. Overall governance of the school is good and the governors largely ensure that the school fulfils all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views about the school and are very pleased by the improvements they have seen in the recent past. They are happy with the changes being made and with how these impact on their children's learning. Parents are aware that the school has a growing positive reputation in the local area and are pleased by this. Pupils are happy at school, feel proud to be there and do not hesitate to say how much they appreciate the way that things have improved.

They feel able to speak openly and honestly and know that their teachers are working hard to help them to develop as well as they can.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school;
- Make sure that all children in the Foundation Stage are given the best opportunities to achieve well against their starting levels;
- Enable pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as all other pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards of work are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The achievements of pupils who speak English as an additional language are also satisfactory and there are no significant differences in the achievements of pupils from the range of ethnic groups represented at the school or between boys and girls. However, the majority of pupils with special educational needs do not achieve well enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science and the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels by the end of Year 6 is improving;
- Overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good;
- Pupils in the Year 1 class are not achieving well enough;
- Some children in the Foundation Stage do not do as well as they could;
- Pupils with special educational needs do not achieve well enough.

Commentary

1. The school has focussed appropriately on the need to improve standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Well-planned measures have been taken to ensure that the provision in all three subjects is good. In most cases, pupils' starting levels are accurately assessed, appropriate and interesting work is planned, pupils enjoy what they learn and they achieve well. This is a consistent picture in Years 3 to 6, where teaching is good and the overall outcome is that more pupils are reaching the levels expected by the end of Year 6, despite many of them being behind in their work in past years.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (24.8)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.3 (24.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.9 (26.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In Year 1, issues with the quality of teaching result in slow gains for pupils in lessons and their achievements are unsatisfactory. The school has taken measures to ensure that pupils do as well as they can and by the end of Year 2, the majority build steadily on their past achievements to reach the nationally expected levels. In the national tests in 2004, a lower proportion of pupils attained at the expected level than the national average. As a generally lower attaining group, the pupils' achieved satisfactorily on their starting levels. Overall, however, pupils' achievements are hindered by the patchy quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. Some pupils who have the ability to achieve well do not do so because teaching and learning are most often of a satisfactory quality. This is also the case for some children in the nursery and reception classes. Children often demonstrate good levels of knowledge

and skills in well-planned and effectively delivered whole-group teaching sessions. However, their achievements are hindered by a lack of effective consolidation in individual tasks and group work following whole class sessions. They do not do as well as they could because not enough attention is given to the timely repetition of key skills to ensure that consistently good learning takes place. For this reason their achievements are satisfactory not good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.7 (15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	12.0 (13.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.1 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

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

- The achievements of the majority of pupils with special educational needs are unsatisfactory. This is because their specific needs are not well catered for in many lessons. While the pupils have useful individual education plans, in most cases, they are not taught in the best ways, using the most appropriate strategies for pupils with special educational needs, to help them learn as well as they can. For this reason, it is hard to measure the progress they make towards the targets set for them. During the inspection, pupils with special educational needs learnt most effectively when they were in very small groups with enough adults to ensure they could have prolonged individual attention. However, there is generally very limited use of specialist intervention programmes, individualised resources and attention to specific learning styles for individuals with complex difficulties.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Pupils' attendance has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now in line with national averages. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils behave consistently well and have good attitudes to their learning;
- Many pupils are proud of their school and want to achieve well;
- The school's action to promote regular attendance is very good;
- Behaviour in some classes is unsatisfactory and inhibits learning;
- Some parents and their children do not make sufficient effort to arrive at school promptly.

Commentary

- Most pupils have good attitudes towards their learning and enjoy coming to school. This is particularly evident in Years 3 to 6, where enthusiastic and stimulating teaching encourages pupils to work hard and achieve well. Parents agree that their children enjoy school and are now proud to wear the Heber uniform. Pupils are overwhelmingly positive about school life and keen to enjoy it to the full. A newly arrived pupil in Year 4 announced that she loved the school "because everyone loves me". Year 6 pupils told inspectors that "the best thing about the school are the teachers" and spoke enthusiastically of the many improvements that have been introduced. Pupils are now thriving in a positive learning environment that motivates and values everyone, regardless of ability. Pupils are equally enthusiastic about the out-of-school activities available to them and the range of visits that they go on.

5. Standards of behaviour in most classes, in the playground and around the school are good. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and school rules are enforced calmly and consistently. Pupils respond well to this firm and fair approach and this has a positive effect on the quality of life within the school. Effective use of a learning mentor helps pupils to understand that their work and progress is affected when they do not behave well. Pupils have a good understanding of the school rules and they show respect for adults and for each other. Pupils and their parents are satisfied that the school deals well with any problems and do not think bullying is an issue at the school. There have been several exclusions in the last year, but the school sees exclusion very much as a last resort and none has been given lightly. However, in some lessons in Year 1, unsatisfactory teaching and poor classroom management have a very detrimental effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and this inhibits effective learning. Uncontrolled behaviour from some pupils can spill over into assemblies and playtimes, and is a marked contrast to behaviour in other parts of the school.
6. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and pupils learn how their behaviour affects others. They are given the opportunity to talk through situations and to reflect on how they might have behaved differently. Class discussion time enables them to consider making sensible, informed choices. Most adults provide good role models for pupils and relationships between all members of the school community are good. Social responsibilities are well developed by the school. Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to help in the running of the school, from class-based monitor duties to being members of the school council. All roles are undertaken willingly and responsibly. Everyone is welcoming to newcomers and helps them to settle quickly into school.
7. Many subjects make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through literacy, geography, music, art and religious education. There are regular visits to different places of worship. Each week the school has an assembly focus, which introduces different religions, beliefs and celebrations and enables pupils to acknowledge the diversity of their multi-cultural society. Assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the focus for the week in a calm and thoughtful atmosphere. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work together well and respect each other's cultures and beliefs.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	70	4	
White – any other White background	11		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	24	1	
Mixed – White and Black African	7	1	
Mixed – any other mixed background	3		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	7		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	68	6	
Black or Black British – African	24	1	

Chinese	2		
Any other ethnic group	16		

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

8. The school has worked extremely well to improve attendance, which is now in line with the national average. There are rigorous procedures in place to improve attendance and timely telephone calls and letters follow up any unexplained absences to parents. There are strict rules in place to reduce the amount of holiday leave taken in term time. The deputy head scrutinizes the registers regularly to identify any patterns of absence and there are close links with the Education Welfare Service. There are frequent reminders to parents in the newsletters about the importance of regular attendance and a very good rewards system to motivate pupils to come to school regularly. Punctuality remains unsatisfactory. In spite of the same diligent procedures to ensure pupils come to school on time, many pupils are late for school, some regularly. While the majority of parents support the school's efforts to maintain regular and punctual attendance, a few parents appear indifferent to their children missing school or arriving late.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.6	School data:	2.2
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Sustained improvement since the last inspection has ensured that the school now offers a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, as is the quality of the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, however, is unsatisfactory. Parents are well involved with the work of the school and positive in their support. Community involvement and links with other schools are also good. This has a positive impact on the rate of improvement and pupils' learning. Pupils' well-being is given good priority and they are prepared well for the next stages in their education.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers use good assessment methods very thoroughly to gather information about how well pupils are doing and the standards they reach. However, the information is used inconsistently to plan for the next stages in pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good subject knowledge and effective planning for learning in English, mathematics and science enable pupils to learn well;
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is most often good, and sometimes very good, and lessons are lively, interesting and motivating for pupils;

- While teachers collect very useful information about what pupils know and can do, it is not always use effectively enough to plan what they need to learn next;
- Teaching is not good enough in Year 1 and there is too much teaching in classes of younger pupils that is no better than satisfactory.

Commentary

9. The quality of teaching and learning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved as a direct result of the focus these subjects have been given in the school's overall improvement plan. Teachers feel confident with the subjects; they are guided by good quality planning and make effective use of carefully chosen resources. The majority of teachers have a very secure knowledge of the curriculum and the expected levels of attainment. For this reason, they talk confidently with children about the levels they attain and cite clear evidence to support the level of attainment so that pupils are convinced of their achievements. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment levels and teachers work effectively to meet the needs of each group. The challenges set are generally well matched to the group's ability and this ensures good levels of concentration, a real interest in learning and good behaviour in lessons. This was exemplified in a Year 6 mathematics lesson with higher-attaining pupils. The group was made up of pupils who, in the past, could easily present challenges to the teacher in terms of their attention span and behaviour. The teacher's good subject knowledge, the pacy delivery of the lesson and the lively interaction with individuals kept everyone focussed on the mathematics challenge. The teacher knew the pupils very well and used timely questioning to keep individuals on task. The pupils worked solidly for the whole of the lesson, signifying real improvement on past experiences, when fractious behaviour and low levels of concentration invariably affected learning.
10. Teachers are very aware of the quality that is now expected from them. The school has very clear standards about what are acceptable teaching and learning and there is open acknowledgement of where improvements must still be made. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are most often good and all very good teaching and learning was observed in these year groups during the inspection. The impact of a determined drive to improve the quality of teaching is now being seen in pupils' good learning in lessons. The most significant factor within this area of improvement is that most teachers are willing to talk about areas where they need to improve and make changes to their own practice. Where improvements are still needed, there is some resistance in accepting that too much satisfactory teaching is not good enough. Teaching seen in a Year 1 class was of a totally unacceptable quality and pupils' learning was seriously affected. Lessons seen were delivered in an uninteresting and ill-prepared manner, behaviour management in lessons was unsatisfactory and the pupils were unsure of what they were expected to learn. The school has been aware of this issue for a long time and many measures have been put in place to improve the situation. Plans for the future have been solidly formulated to ensure that pupils' achievements are not adversely affected in the long term.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (17%)	14 (33%)	18 (42%)	2 (4%)	0	2 (4%)

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.

11. One area for development within teaching overall is in the use of pupil assessment information. The school employs suitable and extensive methods to collect and collate information. Teachers are diligent in gathering the necessary data that informs the tracking process. However, in reality, much of this information is not effectively used to make any difference to what is taught to groups and individuals within lessons. In many cases, too much information actually leads to a confused picture. When good attention is given to the specific aspects of a subject that pupils have previously learned and, most importantly, which bits they have missed out, teaching and learning are very good, because pupils are taught exactly what they need to learn in a way that is right for their learning style. For pupils with special educational needs, this happens far too infrequently. This is because limited attention is given to **why** they did not learn effectively at previous points in their education and there is not enough knowledge of specific intervention strategies that are needed to help them most effectively. The quality of support provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. In the best teaching, pupils are effectively targeted and are either grouped to benefit from peer support or from effective teaching assistants. Where support is less effective this is because teaching assistants are insufficiently briefed about the best ways to support pupils, especially at the beginning of lessons. The school is beginning to make effective use of the information gathered about achievements of groups by ethnicity. Specific work has been planned to improve the achievements of Afro-Caribbean boys as a result of recent analysis, and their learning and achievements are improving.

The curriculum

The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils' learning and a good range of activities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range and quality of activities to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning are good;
- Opportunities for using speaking skills are effectively planned and promoted across the curriculum;
- There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in sporting and arts activities;
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory;
- ICT skills are not sufficiently harnessed and used to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

12. The curriculum is well planned, meets statutory requirements and is relevant to pupils' needs. The school has appropriately invested time and effort in improving standards in literacy and numeracy, and is now well positioned to improve provision in other subjects. It places important and very effective focus on the development of personal and social attributes, encouraging pupils to develop good skills and make appropriate choices. Provision for developing pupils' speaking skills has improved and is making a positive impact on their achievement. Pupils' developing ICT skills, however, are not yet widely used to support learning in other subjects. The school's curriculum does not reflect the need to make use of ICT as a tool for learning in and through all subjects of the curriculum.
13. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds have appropriate access to the full curriculum, including activities organised outside of the school day. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in most activities on offer. Opportunities are planned to celebrate and develop pupils' cultural awareness, for instance, through the use of positive models in history, with pupils using research skills in their study of Nelson Mandela and Mary Seakale. While the school does not yet draw sufficiently on pupils' linguistic backgrounds by including the use of first languages, there is an increasingly successful draw on the contributions made by parents to supplement the curriculum with cultural knowledge; for instance in music and in cross-curricular work on Bob Marley. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is currently unsatisfactory. The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for this group of pupils to learn effectively through specifically devised programmes to meet their needs.
14. The school offers pupils a satisfactory range of activities to extend their learning outside the school day. A range of clubs for French, sports, art and a choir are well attended. There are good opportunities for enriching the curriculum, including a number of activities funded through the Education Action Zone, as well as visits and visitors to the school. These are used well to enhance learning in religious education through visits to Southwark cathedral, to the local Gurdwara and a range of museums linked to Black History month and work on Florence Nightingale. The school has developed good links with a range of arts organisations including the Globe theatre, local artists and musicians. Good links with a specialist sports college have also enabled pupils' access to expert coaching in basketball and cricket and a range of other sports. These activities, together with the annual residential journey, add to the

rich diversity of opportunities open to pupils to develop their personal and social skills and learn new things.

Care, guidance and support

Procedures for pupils' care, welfare and safety are good overall. The procedures employed by the school to seek, value and act upon the views of pupils are good, and procedures to support and guide pupils are satisfactory. The school has satisfactory induction procedures for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school looks after its pupils well and induction procedures are good;
- Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and pupils have good and trusting relationships with them;
- The school has good links with parents and other responsible agencies;
- There is a school council which seeks pupils' views;
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive good support and guidance to help them to improve, but this support is not as effective in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

15. The school takes good care of pupils. Procedures for their care and welfare are fully in place and pupils feel safe in the school's caring atmosphere. Child protection procedures are well understood by teaching and support staff. There is close co-operation with parents and with various responsible agencies to ensure the pupils' welfare. Every effort is made to find out about pupils' health and dietary needs when they join school and the administration of medicines follows clear guidelines.
16. A good induction programme and good routines have been established in the Foundation Stage, and this ensures that children settle very quickly and feel confident to talk about anything that worries them. Children younger than five are well looked after, and this means that they enjoy school and think that learning is fun. There are equally good procedures when pupils join the school at other times and pupils of all ages volunteer to show newcomers the ropes. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well. They recognise their talents and know what they find hard. All staff make good efforts to get to know their pupils and to establish a trusting relationship with them. Teachers use praise readily and smile so that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds feel able to make a contribution in lessons. This makes a real difference to their self-esteem. Pupils told inspectors that teachers and support staff are friendly and approachable. The good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that children blossom and mature by Year 6.
17. The school clearly values its pupils and takes care to acknowledge their achievements, particularly when they have made efforts and tried hard. There is a good system of rewards that is greatly prized by the pupils and encourages them to work well and do their best. The school seeks pupils' views through an effective school council. Pupils are encouraged to express their views and they do this responsibly because they know their opinion will be taken seriously. They help to devise school rules and think of ways to improve school procedures and playtimes, and how to raise money for charity. The procedures for supporting and guiding pupils are satisfactory. Although the teachers know their pupils well and regularly assess their performance in the core subjects, they do not always use this information

effectively to tell them what pupils need to learn next. This was also the case at the last inspection.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents is good. There are good and developing links with the community and with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information for parents to support their children's learning;
- There are regular opportunities to talk to teachers and relationships are relaxed and friendly;
- Parents have positive views about the school, and particularly about recent improvements;
- Some parents find it difficult to support their children's learning by listening to their children read or helping with homework;
- Some parents do not co-operate with the school by ensuring their children arrive at school punctually.

Commentary

18. The information provided by the school, particularly about children's progress, is very good. Pupils' annual reports are extremely comprehensive and give a clear indication of the levels pupils are working towards. Each month the school produces an eye-catching and informative newsletter. Written in a very accessible and punchy style, it shares topical events and activities with parents, issues reminders of the school's aims and objectives, and gives easy to read updates about the curriculum. In addition to this, there are good induction meetings for parents, as well as many opportunities to talk to teachers. Termly consultation evenings are well attended and parents find staff friendly and approachable.
19. Parents have positive views of the school and recognise the great efforts that staff have made to turn the school around and bring about improvements. According to parents, Heber is now the "best kept secret" and the most popular school in the area. The headteacher and his deputy have a high profile before and after school, and parents particularly welcome the care and sensitivity with which the headteacher and his deputy deal with their concerns. They also praise many of the staff who will go that extra mile to help parents support their children's learning at home. Some parents make a regular commitment to help in classes, on outside trips and with extra-curricular clubs and many more help with individual projects. Parents know that the school values the contribution they make. Parents' opinions are important to the school and parents welcome the questionnaires that are sent out to seek their views in the knowledge that their opinions will be taken seriously and acted upon. In spite of the school's clear commitment to working in partnership with parents, some parents do not always co-operate fully with its aims and objectives. Some parents fail to send their children to school regularly and on time, and some do not support their learning at home by listening to their children read or by helping with homework. This lack of contribution by some parents impacts on the progress their children make.
20. There is a very active Parents' Association that works tirelessly to organise a programme of social and fundraising events to support the school's work and which cements the very good relationships between home and school. It was in large part due to their efforts that the school was awarded valuable funding to improve facilities in the playground.
21. The school is outward looking and is developing productive links with the local community. These are beginning to have an impact upon the progress pupils make through the provision

of additional resources and facilities. Teachers make good use of the local area to extend pupils' learning and there are good links with places of worship, the library and the emergency services. Theatre groups and other regular visitors come into school to speak in assemblies and to support various aspects of the curriculum. The school works well with feeder secondary schools to ensure smooth transition and induction arrangements, and greater curriculum links with subject leaders are being developed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher's very good leadership has been instrumental in bringing about school improvements. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory. Governance is good. The effectiveness of management is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's drive and vision is firmly based on his determination to raise standards and improve the provision for all pupils. He very successfully inspires, motivates and influences staff and pupils;
- The deputy headteacher and senior managers support the headteacher well and make a good contribution to the day-to-day management of the school;
- English, mathematics and science are well led and managed;
- There are some weaknesses in the way that work in the key areas of special educational needs and for children in the Foundation Stage are led and managed;
- Governors play an important role in the school's work;
- Good approaches to financial management have been established, but the deficit budget limits spending on curriculum development.

Commentary

22. The headteacher's appointment two and a half years ago was instrumental in HMI's decision to take the school out of special measures. Since the last inspection the headteacher has worked determinedly with staff and governors to effect considerable improvements, to raise standards and to establish firm foundations on which the school can build and continue to improve. Although inspection evidence clearly shows this to be an improving school, the quality of education and standards do not as yet fully reflect the headteacher's very strong leadership.
23. Parents and pupils agree that, under the current leadership, the school has moved on at a faster rate and is providing a better standard of education. This is also reflected in the school's increasing popularity. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has successfully developed a shared vision with all staff, which is increasingly demonstrated through good teamwork and a commitment to make things better. The senior management team works well under the headteacher's leadership and makes a good contribution to the smooth running of the school, to supporting new staff and to ensuring good communication.
24. Subject leaders have a clear vision for developing work in their subjects. The leadership of English, mathematics and science is strong and this has resulted in good improvements. The school has now reached a point in its development where it can rightly begin to focus on improving provision in some of the other subjects. Subject leaders have been appointed, many fairly recently, and they are starting to have a positive impact on improving the provision. Further work is needed to develop, monitor and evaluate the provision for pupils who have special educational needs. There are also weaknesses in the way that the provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is led. Some of the factors that have inhibited developments in these areas

include; a lack of key personnel to lead the aspect, staff instability and high staff turnover, budgetary constraints and many other demanding priorities. The school has nevertheless been able to effect some improvements.

25. The headteacher has successfully established staff stability and all classes now have permanent teachers. Many have joined the school in recent years and a significant proportion of them have been either new to teaching, or new to teaching in this country. New staff are well supported by good induction arrangements. Staff training and performance management for teachers are effective and well focused on improving teaching and learning so as to raise attainment. Support staff have yet to be included in the performance management process. The expectation that teaching should be of a consistently good quality is now firmly embedded at the school, and support programmes have been put into place where needed. Past and current weaknesses in teaching have been dealt with in a thorough and consistent way.

26. The governors' role has developed very well since the last inspection and is now good. Governors share the headteacher's goals and aspirations and are fully involved in planning for the future. They support and challenge the school and largely ensure that statutory requirements are met, with a few relatively minor exceptions such as ensuring that the annual report of governors to parents contains all of the necessary information and that children in reception classes take part in the a daily act of collective worship, once they are five years old. Governors are kept very well informed, both from headteacher's reports and by attending training. They and the staff are appropriately involved in drawing up the school development plan, which is a useful working document aimed at tackling the most urgent priorities.

27. School finances are now managed well. Past weaknesses in financial control, prior to the head teacher's appointment, have left the school with considerable debts, as the table below shows. More rigorous financial planning and control procedures have now been established and the school has agreed a plan for repaying the deficit. This, however, means the school has limited funds for curriculum development and extending and renewing learning resources. The headteacher, staff and governors have therefore worked hard to ensure that spending decisions are carefully considered and are made in accordance with best value principles. They have also been successful in attracting other sources of grant funding, including those provided by the school's involvement in the Education Action Zone. Taking account of the good improvements, the satisfactory and improving quality of education, the good leadership and management, the school currently provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,173,059	Balance from previous year	(113,672)
Total expenditure	1,196,392	Balance carried forward to the next	(137,005)
Expenditure per pupil	3,810		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is **satisfactory**.

28. There are 46 children in the reception classes, and ten children attend nursery full time and 26 part time. When children start in the nursery their attainment is similar to that usually found. Children of all abilities achieve satisfactorily during their time in the Foundation Stage so that, by the end of the reception year, most children are set to achieve the expected standards. This is a similar picture to the attainment of those children who left reception last year. Standards in children's personal and social development exceed those expected.
29. Foundation Stage provision is satisfactory, but with some weaknesses that need addressing, particularly in the reception classes. Although steps have been taken since the last inspection to bring about improvements, the extent of improvement has been hampered by staff changes and the lack of a suitably experienced Foundation Stage leader to ensure good, rather than satisfactory, developments. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Appropriate attention is given to all areas of learning and good attention is given to children's personal and social development. An important weakness is that the curriculum in reception does not do enough to extend children's previous experiences in the nursery, nor fully prepare them for the demands of the curriculum further up the school. The indoor Foundation Stage accommodation is satisfactory and outdoor space is good. Resources are adequate, but some equipment is old and drab.
30. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Staff work well as a team and nursery nurses and teaching assistants generally make a good contribution to children's learning. Staff promote children's personal development well and they often plan interesting activities linked to themes that cover a number of areas of learning. The direct teaching of skills is often good. Displays in the nursery celebrate children's achievements particularly well and stimulate their interests. The major weaknesses in teaching are firstly the imbalance between adult supported and directed activities and children choosing their own activities. This leads to children being left to their own devices too often, without sufficient guidance for their learning. Secondly, adults, especially in the reception classes, do not identify in their planning precisely what all children are actually meant to learn through their play and free choice activities, nor do they keep enough of an overview so as to be informed about what children have actually learned.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff form good relationships with children and their parents;
- Staff encourage children to behave well and foster good relationships with each other.

Commentary

31. Children's personal and social development is given good attention and teaching and learning are good. As a result, children achieve well and most will exceed the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children quickly settle into a caring environment where basic routines are established and expectations of behaviour are good. The good working relationships between members of staff are effective in showing children how to relate to each other. Improved induction arrangements help to ensure that children's first experiences of school are happy ones. Adults work hard to ensure that children feel comfortable and liked. Occasionally, however, children with special educational needs linked to difficulties in making friends, although given extra adult attention, are not sufficiently helped to develop relationships with other children, for example through adults inviting them and others to take part in shared activities. Staff promote children's self-esteem, confidence and independence effectively. They reward their particular efforts and achievement during the weekly Foundation Stage celebration assemblies. Children do not, however, attend any of the whole-school assemblies, which limits opportunities to learn from older pupils, or to develop a sense of themselves as members of the wider school community. It also means that older reception children do not partake in collective worship.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In whole-class sessions and in focused group work, teaching is often good and children learn well;
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to practise immediately what they have been taught during the whole-class teacher input;
- There are missed opportunities to extend children's learning through adults' involvement in children's free choice activities, especially in the reception classes.

Commentary

32. A fair number of children have reasonably good speaking and listening skills for their age when they start nursery and reception, and few children have additional needs in learning English or special educational needs. Teaching and learning in this aspect are satisfactory as are children's achievements. The majority of children reach the goals for early learning. Children in nursery soon develop the confidence to express themselves in larger groups and also make a good start in developing early reading and writing skills. They show interest in stories and books, understand that words carry meaning and begin to use picture and context clues. Higher attaining children have already begun to read and write by the time they join reception. They continue to build on these skills throughout reception.
33. Children in all classes regularly work with their teacher on short, whole-class and group activities that develop speaking, listening, sound and letter recognition and letter formation. Teaching and learning in these parts of lessons are often good, but a weakness in all classes is that too often and for too many children, the skills taught in these sessions are not then immediately followed through into activities that help children to extend their skills. Staff also miss opportunities to engage with children in other activities so as extend their communication skills and enable children to make good progress. Staff were rarely seen, for example, either initiating or taking part in imaginative role-play activities with children.

Mathematical development

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Focussed teaching is good;
- Opportunities are missed to challenge the potentially higher-attaining children and extend children's learning as part of other activities.

Commentary

34. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area and overall standards are in line with those expected. Children learn to recognise numbers and shapes. They develop secure counting skills through whole-class and group teaching. There is, however a lack of challenge for the potentially higher-attaining children, who already have good knowledge of numbers.
35. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In a lesson in reception, children initially learned well when they practised counting to ten, learned how to count to 20, as well as to recognise and distinguish numbers in written form. This lesson, however, was brought to a halt after only fifteen minutes, (which is in keeping with the school's early years policy of limiting direct teaching to fifteen minutes at a time). This represented a missed opportunity to challenge children, since they were concentrating well and could have continued to learn. Children have some, but generally too few, opportunities to extend their learning through follow up work and activities following the whole-class teaching input. This was done well in a lesson in the nursery when children worked on a range of mathematical tasks, both indoors and outside, either independently or supported by the teacher and nursery nurse. Although teachers in all classes organise free choice activities that promote children's mathematical developments throughout the day, such as shopping, completing puzzles and using sand and water, there are no systems in place to ensure that all pupils take part in them, nor to check what children learn when they do.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some resources for learning are old and shabby.

Commentary

36. Children are provided with a satisfactory range of experiences that help extend their understanding of the world around them. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Activities based around whole-class topics, and cooking and tasting activities as well as walks to the library, all contribute effectively. Children have opportunities to act out roles, for example, as a waitress, customer or shopkeeper in the Chinese restaurant. They learn about animals and their young. In ICT, children learn to operate tape recorders and listening stations independently. They learn to use the mouse to control the cursor when moving images across the computer screen. Teachers and support staff effectively teach children about different customs, religions, values and beliefs. For example, during the inspection, when much of the class work was based around the story of Chinese New Year, children learned about many of the customs and religious beliefs. Most children are on course to attain the expected standard and their achievement is satisfactory. However, some resources for learning have been used by many children and are already shabby and not as stimulating as they should be.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their physical skills;
- Outdoor space is good in both nursery and the reception classes;
- In the reception classes, the use of outdoors is not well planned or managed to ensure that new learning takes place.

Commentary

37. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Children achieve satisfactorily during their time in the Foundation Stage and most children are on course to at least reach the expected standards by the time they join Year 1. Children have regular opportunities for physical activities such as dance, cycling, running, jumping and balancing, both in timetabled lessons and as part of outdoor learning. In both nursery and reception, staff set up a range of activities for pupils to take part in outdoors. In nursery, good examples were seen where the nursery nurse and the class teacher engaged children in activities and guided them to improve and extend their skills. In reception, this was not generally the case. Teachers allow too many children to spend too much time outdoors without checking that they are involved in purposeful learning, with the result that they do not learn as effectively as they should. Adults outside too often spend their time supervising children running around, rather than engaging them in and directing them towards purposeful activities. This is largely because there are too many children outdoors to be able to achieve this. Children in both nursery and reception have access during the day to activities that require using small tools and instruments, such as paintbrushes, pencils, scissors and crayons, which helps to develop their fine motor skills. They learn to use construction materials confidently.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery have many opportunities to paint and make things;
- Role-play areas are generally underused and some of the toys and equipment are old and unattractive.

Commentary

38. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and children meet the goals for their early learning. Teaching in the nursery provides good opportunities to develop children's creativity and self-expression because children have lots of experiences of painting pictures, collage, construction and exploring the environment outdoors. In reception, these opportunities are less frequent, but are satisfactory. No music lessons were seen, but children in nursery often sang songs and rhymes as part of their other work. The role-play areas provide satisfactory opportunities for children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination, but this aspect should be developed to make the areas more attractive and to ensure greater adult intervention that encourages children to play in them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Overall provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well led and managed;
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Year 3-6 and, as a result, pupils achieve well by the time they leave school;
- Speaking and listening skills are effectively developed in the subject and across the curriculum;
- Standards in handwriting are poor;
- ICT is not systematically planned and harnessed to enhance learning in the subject.

Commentary

39. Overall standards of work in English are lower than expected levels in Year 2 and reflect satisfactory achievement on lower than expected starting levels for this group of pupils. In Year 6, standards are in line with those expected. The majority of these pupils, including those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority backgrounds, achieve well by the time they leave school. This is primarily due to good teaching in Years 3 to 6 and the improved and effective tracking of pupils' progress to ensure that past gaps in achievement are acted upon and pupils' learning is quickly consolidated so that they do as well as they can by the time they leave the school. Effective intervention strategies, such as additional literacy support and booster classes in Year 6, are being effectively deployed to raise pupils' achievement. Teaching and learning in Year 1 are unsatisfactory and steps have been taken to ensure that pupils' achievements will not be affected in the long-term. There is a high proportion of pupils with literacy learning needs, and, as yet, these needs are not consistently addressed in all lessons. As a result, achievement for this group of pupils is unsatisfactory.
40. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Although many pupils' speaking is constrained by a limited vocabulary, many are willing to contribute when discussing texts and when presenting their work at the end of lessons. This is because speaking is well promoted both in English lessons and in the rest of the curriculum, often through the frequent use of partner talk and modeling by teachers. This approach supports their language development and often encourages more pupils to contribute to discussions and to participate more actively in lessons. The frequent use of talk as a vehicle for learning is clearly making a difference in terms of pupils' increasing confidence in learning.. The majority of pupils achieve well in their reading. From a low starting point they develop strategies for reading unfamiliar words and use the context to guess meaning. Many pupils show good skills in finding information and older pupils use books and the Internet to develop their research skills. Guided reading is used well and is effectively assessed against clear objectives with good diagnostic information being used to set targets for improvement. From a low start, pupils make good progress in writing by Year 6. The school's focus on improving pupils' skills in writing, and the way the week is structured to emphasize speaking and listening and reading as the basis for writing are making a positive impact on their achievement. However, standards of handwriting are poor and many pupils still do not use joint handwriting even by the end of Year 6.

41. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and there are significant strengths in Year 3-6. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers use the learning objective effectively to focus pupils' learning, to assess their achievement and guide their work. Skills are carefully demonstrated with a lot of emphasis on talk generated through partner discussion and skilful questioning by the teacher. Lessons are effectively structured with pupils intensively practising and rehearsing the skills they need to apply in their independent work. Marking is used well in Years 3-6 to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Where teaching was less effective, this was mainly due to overemphasis on behaviour management to the detriment of learning, occasional lack of knowledge of the subject and occasionally to lack of appreciation of the excessive demands made on average and less able pupils.
42. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has good knowledge and skills and has a clear overview of the subject. Careful monitoring has led to clear targets being identified for improving provision and outcomes, especially in reading and writing. Progress since the last inspection has been good and the proportion of pupils attaining at expected levels in national tests is rising.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

43. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well in other subjects, with particular emphasis on speaking and listening, with some good examples seen during the week of inspection in science, religious education and literacy lessons. The school has effectively reviewed the different types of texts used in literacy and identified carefully where other subjects might be harnessed to promote specific skills, with good examples being used in history where subject content is judiciously used in literacy lessons and in science where specific vocabulary is carefully presented.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and the proportion who attain expected levels in national tests is improving;
- Teaching is lively and interesting so pupils enjoy their work.

Commentary

44. In the most recent national tests at the end of Year 2 (2004), a lower proportion of pupils attained at the expected level than the national average, but pupils' results indicated satisfactory achievement on their starting levels. In the current Year 2 classes, standards are in line with expected levels at the end of Year 2, indicating good achievement on lower than expected starting levels. In Year 6, past gaps in learning and a lack of time for pupils to catch up mean that standards do not meet nationally expected levels. Many pupils in this year group began with either low levels of attainment, joined the school late, or have not made as much progress as they should have done in earlier year groups, due to past difficulties at the school. As a result of recent developments in mathematics and a drive to improve standards, many more pupils are now achieving well on their starting levels. This is the positive result of well-planned strategies to improve the overall provision. Basic numeracy skills are well

developed and this means that many pupils learn to calculate swiftly and accurately. Pupils work hard to learn times tables and are proud to show off their skills. Pupils who speak English as an additional language do just as well as their peers; many are in the top ability group and are making good progress towards Level 5. Developments are leading to better standards, and results in Year 6 tests in 2004 showed a marked improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 and above, and overall proportions were only slightly lower than the national average. While individual education plans reflect the needs of pupils with difficulties in number work, the achievement of this group of pupils is unsatisfactory as there are inconsistent and too few learning opportunities where their needs are specifically addressed.

45. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons effectively, are accurate and clear in explaining new learning and encourage pupils to be confident with their work. Pupils are effectively taught in ability sets to ensure a good match of work to prior attainment levels. Teachers are very good at supporting pupils and this was often demonstrated during the inspection. In introductory plenaries, teachers quickly spotted pupils with concerns and reorganised groups for independent tasks to enable one-to-one or small group tuition as and when it was needed. This ensured that most pupils made good progress during the lesson. Currently, however, there are too few strategies employed and a lack of specialist resources to support the learning of pupils with special education needs. Teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and provide good pointers for future improvement.
46. Leadership and management of the subject are good and there have been effective developments since the last inspection. The headteacher as co-ordinator is confident and capable, and has a good handle on standards and achievement across the school. He is acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the overall provision and the need to appoint a long-term coordinator for the subject in order to sustain and build upon recent improvements. Teaching and learning have been regularly monitored and evaluated as part of the school's drive to improve standards and this has resulted in a more consistent quality overall.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. Pupils use their number skills and mathematical thinking suitably in other subjects. Times tables are well rehearsed and pupils calculate with growing confidence and accuracy. Pupils employ their mathematical presentation skills in other subjects to add information in tables and charts. Pupils' numeracy skills effectively aid and enhance their learning in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well through Years 3 to 6;
- Practical lessons make learning interesting for pupils and help them develop important investigational skills;
- Good teaching ensures that pupils acquire a wide range of knowledge and skills.

Commentary

48. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2004 indicated that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level and above was well below the national average. However, the actual number of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was an improvement on previous years. Standards are improving as the subject has been given priority focus and most pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve at least satisfactorily. Some now make good gains on their starting levels. Standards of work in the current Year 2 are in line with expected levels. These better standards are the result of well-planned opportunities for pupils to explore all aspects of science. In Year 6, teaching is sharply focused on key scientific language, knowledge, skills and understanding. The focus on scientific language encourages pupils who speak English as an additional language to make good progress and they achieve as well as their peers. Pupils' work is of an expected standard by the end of Year 6 and the majority achieve well on their starting levels. Pupils in Year 6 have been affected by difficulties and instability at the school that caused their learning to be slower than it should have been in past years. Improved provision has enabled them to catch up quickly.
49. Teaching and learning are good in science. Teachers generally have a good scientific knowledge and this ensures that pupils learn the correct skills and vocabulary. As a result, pupils' recording is clear and accurate, if not always as neat as it should be. Teachers mark work very thoroughly, giving clear indications to pupils of what they need to do improve. However, most books do not give clear evidence that this advice is worked upon or that pupils make improvements in the areas indicated. Lessons are well planned and take into account pupils' different abilities. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to think for themselves and teachers' astute questioning allows them to do so. Pupils are equally well encouraged to answer thoughtfully and they are learning to articulate the things they know and understand using suitable scientific language. Many pupils find this difficult, but are making good progress. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well in science so that accounts are accurately written and results of experiments are recorded in a variety of formats. Pupils with special educational needs, however, are not always provided with alternative ways of recording their work, despite have difficulties with writing. This affects their learning as they lose interest at this stage of the scientific learning cycle.
50. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has worked effectively to ensure that the quality of planning, teaching and learning are good enough to improve overall standards and bridge the gaps in achievement for pupils who have not made enough progress in the past. Lessons are now interesting and motivating for pupils, placing clear expectations on pupils to use their initiative and think for themselves. As a result, attitudes to the subject are now positive and pupils talk about their work with enthusiasm. They are very happy to work on many practical science activities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The direct teaching of ICT skills is good;
- Effective procedures for assessment are used well to inform teaching and learning;
- Insufficient monitoring of teaching is being carried out to enable the subject leader to influence practice and identify areas for improvement;
- ICT is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

51. Pupils across the school reach standards in ICT that are broadly in line with those expected, and the majority, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve satisfactorily against their prior attainment levels. Evidence gathered from discussion with pupils in Year 2 and from the analysis of their work shows that they are familiar with basic operating skills, with higher-attaining pupils showing good skills in using a range of programs with confidence. The majority of pupils are familiar with painting programs and can use and select appropriate tools and icons. In the direct teaching seen during the week of inspection, teachers used satisfactory demonstration of the skills to be practised by pupils and intervened positively to help them. Teaching assistants provide valuable targeted support, focussed on the needs of pupils with special educational needs. In the best teaching, pupils are enabled to draw on their previous learning and pauses are used effectively to provide guidance and refocus their learning. This was amply demonstrated in a Year 4/5 lesson where the teacher's demonstrations, skilful questioning and the use of partner discussion helped pupils design a playground using a graphics package. Where teaching was less effective, pupils were sometimes left to work for long spans at their own pace without attempting to evaluate what was being achieved and without teachers making the expected outcomes clear to them. As yet, little opportunity is taken to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties through the use of ICT.
52. The subject is satisfactorily led. It is well planned and covers all strands appropriately, with assessment opportunities built into the planning. Reference is made to levels of attainment, with the next steps for learning identified in teachers' evaluation. However, there has been insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning, and this limits the scope for the subject leader to identify precisely what is working well and what needs improving. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made in resources for the subject and staff confidence and expertise have been developed through training. Developments are impacting positively on learning in the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. The use of ICT across the curriculum is underdeveloped, with only a few examples, such as the use of the Internet in history to research information and the use of Power Point for presentation in literacy. Opportunities for the use of ICT are not planned systematically and sometimes opportunities are missed, for instance in literacy lessons, for drafting and redrafting work. The result is that pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to consolidate their ICT skills, by using them for a real purpose. Learning in other subjects is not enhanced by the use of ICT.

HUMANITIES

History and Geography

No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and therefore this subject was not inspected. History and religious education were sampled as only two lessons were seen in each subject. In religious education, additional information was gathered from discussions with pupils and from samples of work in books and on display to make judgements about the overall provision.

54. In **history**, it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. However, evidence in pupils' written work indicates that standards are broadly average and achievement is good. In lessons seen, emphasis is put on enabling pupils to develop a sense of chronology, with Year 2 pupils, for instance, showing a fair grasp of the period in which Florence Nightingale lived and using pictures to compare the conditions of hospitals in her time with those of today. In the best teaching, pupils were encouraged to discuss their observations in pairs and skilful questioning was used to generate their responses, focus on key vocabulary and scribing pupils' suggestions as they described the conditions in Scutari Hospital. From evidence of pupils' previous work, the majority develop satisfactory skills and understanding of key events such as Remembrance Day and Guy Fawkes.

Religious education

55. From lessons seen, a limited scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils, indications are that pupils' achievements in **religious education** are satisfactory and standards are in line with levels expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject has not received priority attention since the last inspection and therefore improvements have been satisfactory, but few. Overall judgements cannot be made about teaching and learning. However, in the two lessons seen, teaching was good and pupils made effective gains in their learning. Both lessons contributed well to pupils' cultural and personal development, by allowing opportunities for them to reflect on new learning in respect of how they live their own lives. For example, in a Year 4/5 lesson, pupils thoughtfully compared the respect shown through the Hindu practice of Piya to the people and things they respect in their own lives.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was seen in art and design, and two in physical education. In art and design, additional evidence was drawn from discussions with pupils and teachers, samples of work and scrutiny of planning, in order to make an overall judgement about the provision, standards, teaching and learning. Music and design and technology were not inspected.

Art and design

Provision for art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new subject leader has already made some good improvements;
- The school is making good use of resources outside the school to develop its provision.

Commentary

56. Standards in art are in line with expected levels across the school. There is some good quality work evident, as seen, for example, in the portraits in Year 4/5, inspired by the study of Picasso, and in the work on "Talking Textiles" in Year 6. Pupils' finished work shows some degree of individuality and pupils of all ages and capabilities achieve satisfactorily. Their finished work indicates good attitudes towards the subject.
57. The quality of pupils' completed work and the teaching in the one lesson seen, clearly indicates at least satisfactory teaching and learning. The basic skills are taught effectively and pupils of all abilities learn these well as a result. Teachers increasingly make good use of local facilities, such as the school's close proximity to Dulwich Picture Gallery, to enhance provision. Pupils in Year 2, for example, recently went there to see an exhibition of the work of Quentin Blake, and later produced some good quality work in his style, with good attention to detail. Staff and pupils throughout the school have also benefited from training and teaching input provided by a visiting artist and more is planned for next term.
58. The subject has been satisfactorily led and managed over time, since developing work in art and design has not been a major priority. Developments have been satisfactory, but few. The headteacher has recently appointed a very enthusiastic subject leader. She has already started to make good improvements, for example, by using the Education Action Zone funding to extend resources and provide training and some specialist teaching. She has clear ideas about how to improve the scheme of work currently used and to adapt it to better reflect pupils' needs and backgrounds.
59. Work in art and design makes an increasingly good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have opportunities to express themselves creatively, to work with others, celebrate their own and others' achievements and develop a better appreciation of their own and others' cultural traditions. Art and design was not mentioned in the last report, so it is not possible to make a direct comparison between provision now and at the time of the last inspection.
60. Although there is too little evidence of pupils' work in **physical education** to make firm judgements on overall provision and standards, all indications are that the provision is satisfactory and improving. In the two lessons seen, in Year 3 and 6, teaching, learning and pupils' achievements were all good. Standards were at least in line with those expected and about a third of pupils attained high standards. Pupils responded very well to their teachers' high expectations of their work, effort and behaviour. Other strengths in teaching were the good assessment throughout lessons and good attention to teaching skills, whilst also ensuring that pupils had lots of physical activity and opportunities to express themselves creatively. Pupils learned well, had good ideas that they were keen to develop and worked very productively and collaboratively. A weakness is that some pupils do not dress appropriately for lessons, indicating that the school lacks a clear set of guidelines and expectations about the correct clothing and footwear for different indoor and outdoor activities. The school makes best use of its limited facilities and resources. New, essential outdoor games equipment has been purchased, but gymnastics facilities are limited. The school has recently established links with a local independent school, whereby it pays to use their physical education facilities during weeks when the independent school is closed. This is an excellent initiative, which will enable pupils throughout Heber School to benefit both from the very good facilities and specialist teaching.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

61. The specific programme for personal, social and health education and the school's overall curriculum give appropriate attention to pupils' personal development and include sex education and drugs education. The school promotes good relationships and racial harmony, and staff generally provide good role models for pupils. The work of the learning mentor makes a good contribution to the provision, helping pupils to develop self-esteem, and to understand and learn how to work together as part of a community. Teaching promotes pupils' personal development well, because pupils are taught and given opportunities to work together co-operatively and collaboratively. Pupils develop confidence as they move up through the school and they develop a secure understanding of their own personal worth as well as an awareness of their place within the school community. During regular personal, social and health education lessons, pupils are encouraged to talk about and share their thoughts and feelings, and to explore relationships. In the lessons seen, staff led and managed sessions very sensitively, so that pupils felt confident to share and explore their feelings and fears. The School Council enables pupils to make a satisfactory contribution to the running of the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

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

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	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	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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