

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LANGTONS INFANT SCHOOL**

Hornchurch

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102280

Headteacher: Mrs J Gilbert

Lead inspector: Mrs J Richardson

Dates of inspection: 12 - 14 January 2004

Inspection number: 256695

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	257
School address:	Westland Avenue Hornchurch Essex
Postcode:	RM11 3SD
Telephone number:	01708 447866
Fax number:	01708 457051
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Watton
Date of previous inspection:	11/05/1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 257 pupils aged from four to seven, with three classes in each year group. Children start in reception in the September following their fourth birthday, and usually go on to the junior school on the same site. The school has a broad social mix and overall socio-economic indicators for the area are in line with national averages. Around 86 per cent of pupils are white British. Others come from a range of ethnic minority backgrounds, mainly of Asian origin. A few pupils speak English as an additional language, but there are currently no pupils at an early stage in learning the language. The extent of mobility amongst pupils is average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, although a small number of pupils has significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children enter school with levels of skills which are broadly typical for this age. Three teachers joined the school shortly before the inspection, including two temporary teachers covering for experienced staff who are on maternity leave.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6676	Joy Richardson	Lead inspector	Science English as an additional language Special educational needs Foundation stage
9744	Peter Brown	Lay inspector	
33090	Jacob Herbst	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Personal, social and health education
32021	Andrew McClean	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good school** which is building confidently on its strengths. Pupils reach high standards because they are well taught. The school is very well led by the headteacher who is harnessing the efforts of the whole staff team in leading the school forward. The school gives **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve very well, reaching high standards in English and mathematics.
- Basic skills in reading and writing are very well taught.
- The school is led and managed effectively, creating a good environment for learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together, underpinning pupils' learning.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is orderly and pupils behave very well, showing very good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are not challenged enough to investigate, and to use their skills creatively.
- Attendance is well below the national average because of holidays taken in term time.

Following the last inspection, in May 1998, a period of illness and change in the senior management team slowed the school's progress in addressing areas for development, although the school maintained good standards of achievement. Since the permanent appointment of the current headteacher, the school has gathered momentum in pursuing improvement and addressing issues from the last inspection. A new senior management team is now in place, provision for the youngest children is developing well and links with the junior school are being extended. The school has developed strength in the teamwork of its staff, and in the evaluation of its own performance. As a result, it is now very well placed to continue to improve.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### **Pupils' achievement is very good.**

Children start school with attainment which is broadly average for their age. They achieve well overall in reception. They usually reach, and often exceed, the goals for the end of reception in all the required areas of learning. Standards are very good in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve particularly well in reading, making very good progress over the year. Children reach good standards in personal and social development and mathematical development. Standards are satisfactory in other areas.

Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2. The results of national tests show consistently high standards over the last three years. In particular, the school has been concerned to provide support for pupils in danger of falling behind. This is reflected in a high proportion reaching at least Level 2, the level expected of seven year olds. The school has been particularly successful in working to raise standards in writing. It sets and meets challenging targets for progress in writing and results in 2003 were well above those in similar schools.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A	A	A	B
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	B

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

The standard of pupils' work is very good in English and mathematics and good in science. Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology and the school is currently working to extend its provision in this area.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good overall.** Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave very well, in and out of lessons. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It is well below the national average because of the high incidence of holidays taken during termtime.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.**

**The quality of teaching and learning is good.** Basic skills are taught thoroughly and systematically, giving pupils a good grounding. Pupils' progress is carefully assessed. Classes are well managed so that pupils concentrate on learning. Teaching assistants provide skilled support, contributing strongly to pupils' learning. However, pupils are not challenged enough to think and to apply their skills in creative and investigative activities.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, making full provision for all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and organising an after school club for learning French. The quality of care for pupils is very good. The school guides and supports pupils well and makes very good provision for those with special educational needs. The school has developed a good partnership with parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The school's leadership and management are good.** The headteacher, ably supported by the senior management team, provides very effective leadership, setting sights high and building teamwork. The role of the subject leader is being developed. **Governance is satisfactory.** The governing body ensures that the school complies with statutory requirements.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents are very well satisfied with the school and appreciate the good education it provides, though a few would welcome more information about pupils' progress. Pupils enjoy school. The school seeks their views and takes them into account, for example in considering how lunchtime arrangements can be improved.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Extend opportunities for creativity and investigation, challenging pupils to think for themselves in applying skills they have been taught.
- Improve continuity in learning for all pupils by reducing absence due to term time holidays.
- Further develop the leadership of subjects.
- Implement plans for the improvement of lunchtime arrangements.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Achievement is very good overall. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make a very good start in the reception year, particularly in reading.
- Pupils achieve very well in literacy throughout the school.
- Pupils acquire a good level of knowledge and skills in the core subjects.
- Achievement is not as high in creative and practical subjects and areas of learning.

#### **Commentary**

1. Baseline assessment shows that children start school with levels of attainment which are broadly average. They make rapid progress over the reception year in reading, achieving very well overall in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve well in their personal and social development and mathematical development. Achievement is satisfactory in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. The school has adapted the curriculum in reception to provide more fully for each area of learning. However, independent activities are not yet richly developed to stimulate and to extend learning.
2. In Years 1 and 2, pupils build on strong foundations and make very good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are well above average because basic skills are very well taught, and the school is quick to identify where extra work is needed. The school has been particularly successful in raising standards in writing. This is reflected in the scores for writing shown in the table below.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.6 (15.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (18.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 86 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Over the years since the previous inspection, the school has maintained high standards and improved in line with the national trend. The school has developed greater consistency in its achievements, as shown in results for each of the last three years which were well above the national average in all the areas tested. The school 'adds value' in that many pupils do better than predicted from their attainment on entry.
4. The school achieves good results but it is not complacent. It tracks pupils' progress closely, sets targets for individuals, classes and year groups, and questions whether pupils could be doing even better. For example, it is looking to extend its provision for gifted and talented pupils and to set sights higher for able readers. Although many pupils achieve well for their age, they are not always challenged enough to pursue an enquiry, or to develop their own ideas in working creatively and expressively.



5. Standards are good in science. Pupils acquire a good base of knowledge and understanding, though they do not regularly test out ideas through practical and investigative activities. In information and communication technology, standards are average. The school has recently acquired a new set of laptop computers which can be moved between classrooms. It is now developing the planning of teaching and learning, using this facility, and the training of staff.
6. Standards in the work seen in other subjects were as follows: very good in physical education and good in music, history and religious education. In art and design and design and technology, pupils produce a wide range of work but have limited opportunity to explore and express their ideas creatively.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Teachers and teaching assistants are alert to their needs and provide good quality support to help them meet the targets set for them. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well. Because of strengths in its leadership and management, the school is becoming increasingly effective in monitoring the progress of all pupils, identifying strengths and weaknesses and taking appropriate action.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, and relationship with others, are very good. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils display very positive attitudes to work.
- Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and in the playground.
- Holiday absences disrupt continuity in learning.

### **Commentary**

8. The school sets high standards for pupils' behaviour which are consistently applied throughout the school. Consequently, pupils behave very well, both in the classroom and in the playground. They are supportive of each other and display courtesy and respect to others. Oppressive behaviour is virtually unknown but teachers react quickly and effectively in the few instances which do arise.
9. Attitudes to school, and learning in particular, are very good. Pupils are attentive in class and participate wholeheartedly in the wide range of activities made available to them in the classroom. The school builds pupils' confidence and self-esteem, making good use of 'circle-time' during which pupils are able to voice their feelings and aspirations.
10. The school encourages pupils to be responsible. Pupils are allocated tasks appropriate to their age, and care is taken to ensure opportunities are available to all. For example, all the pupils in Year 2 take turns as helpers in the playground. Clearly identifiable by their yellow bibs, they assist younger pupils with play activities and provide comfort and support when needed.
11. Provision for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. Opportunities for reflection and the exploration of moral themes are provided at assemblies. However, the physical arrangements, including the pattern of seating, and a long wait without music or a visual focus, do not serve to engender a sense of anticipation and occasion. Pupils, in all years, have a very clear understanding of right and wrong which is reflected in their exemplary behaviour. Pupils demonstrate a high level of responsibility to the community, as shown in their strong commitment to charitable fund-raising. They take an interest in the wider world, showing awe and wonder at a demonstration of the opening of gifts, associated with New Year in Portugal. The school has identified the need to extend further pupils' appreciation of cultural

diversity and it has acted on this. It encourages understanding of different faiths; for example, inviting visitors to explain, and illustrate, religious festivals such as Diwali and Hannukah.

12. The level of attendance is unsatisfactory, falling well below the national average. Withdrawal from school for purposes of holiday is the prime cause and this cuts across the learning of individuals and classes. Last year, for example, around 60 per cent of the pupils were absent on a holiday during term time. The school is promoting good attendance through rigorous attendance procedures, and is looking to discourage routine term time holidays through clearer communication of the school's expectations and firm governor support. Punctuality is very good which allows lessons to start promptly and without interruption.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.2	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

### **Exclusions**

There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Assessment is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Basic skills in literacy are very well taught.
- Teaching is thorough and systematic, so pupils learn effectively.
- Teachers manage classes well, creating a purposeful atmosphere.
- Class teachers and support teachers and teaching assistants work very well together.
- Assessment is used well to guide pupils' progress.
- Pupils are not challenged enough to pursue and develop their own ideas.

### **Commentary**

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12 (31%)	18 (46%)	8 (20%)	1 (3%)	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.*

13. Most of the teaching seen was good or very good. This was the case in reception, and in Years 1 and 2.
14. Foundations are very well laid in literacy from the start. Pupils are taught to identify sounds within words and they use this knowledge very effectively in learning to read, write and spell. In

- literacy and numeracy, teachers set clear expectations and help pupils to achieve them, taking learning forward step by step and providing plenty of practice.
15. Teachers insist and ensure that pupils behave well, listen hard and concentrate on the job in hand. They organise their classrooms well to provide a pleasant environment, and to make resources accessible, although the reception classrooms do not offer enough stimulus for learning through play. Teachers set a good pace in lessons, making learning interesting and varying their methods to keep pupils involved.
  16. Despite recent changes in staffing, a strong team ethic exists. In each class, a teaching assistant works alongside the teacher. They work seamlessly together, with a clear view of what needs to be achieved. Teaching assistants support groups well, helping to reinforce pupils' learning. The special needs support teacher provides well-targeted additional teaching. The 'float teacher', working closely with class teachers to introduce the new laptop computers during the inspection, contributes effectively to pupils' learning. Staff teamwork, characterised by mutual respect, good planning and shared understanding of pupils' needs, underpins the quality of learning in the classroom. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported so that they participate fully and keep up with the class.
  17. Teachers have a clear view of how pupils are progressing in key areas, because assessment is used to good effect. For example, teachers assess a piece of writing from each pupil each term, and work together to moderate their judgement of the level being reached. This feeds into the planning of teaching and the setting of targets for individual pupils. Assessment is being extended in reading and mathematics to get a clearer picture of how well pupils are doing, and teachers are also looking to improve assessment in science. The headteacher and the senior management team support and lead the staff in using assessment information to set sights high and to focus effort where it is needed.
  18. Teachers question pupils well to check knowledge and understanding but do not always explore how far the thinking of the most able can be extended. In mathematics and science there is not enough emphasis on applying and using skills to test ideas and to solve problems. In creative and practical activities, pupils reproduce what they have been shown, but are not encouraged enough to try out their own ideas.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum offering pupils a range of learning opportunities across all subjects.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A broad and balanced curriculum ensures that pupils make progress in all subjects.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Opportunities for expression are limited in art, dance and drama.
- The school provides a good environment for learning.

## **Commentary**

19. The school has developed a curriculum map for use by all staff, to ensure coverage of all subjects and continuity in planning. The curriculum for English and mathematics is particularly effective, resulting in very good progress. Since the last inspection, the school has reviewed and developed its practice, taking account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in order to secure further improvement. Pupils make good use of their reading and writing skills in subjects such as history, but the planning of links between subjects is not well developed. The school is now well resourced for information and communication technology, but has yet to develop its use as a tool to support learning across the curriculum. The curriculum in reception has been recently revised to take better account of the six required areas of learning. This is encouraging a more holistic approach to planning.

20. Teachers and support staff, with the help of the special educational needs co-ordinator, plan very effectively to meet pupils' individual needs. Individual Education Plans are well written with realistic and measurable targets. The support provided helps all pupils, including those with social, emotional and behavioural problems, to participate fully in lessons. Literacy and numeracy targets are shared with all pupils and updated on a regular basis.
21. Pupils in Year 2 have access to some additional activities. A French Club takes place after school. Recorder groups practise at lunchtime. Some pupils participate in choir and percussion band sessions taught during one afternoon a week. Although the provision for music is good, there is limited opportunity for creativity and expression. This is also the case in dance, and art and design. Although there are some opportunities for role play, drama is not well developed within the curriculum.
22. The curriculum is enriched by visits and visitors, and special events. For example, the planning of 'Music Week' following the inspection included demonstrations by visiting musicians of a range of music from different cultures.
23. Resources for learning are good, and classrooms are well organised. The accommodation is very well maintained and recent redecoration and refurbishment have improved the environment for learning. The school makes good use of its spacious and spotlessly clean hall. An attractive new library has been created, though it is not yet in full use. Displays in classrooms, and in the main long corridor, add interest and reflect the variety and quality of pupils' work across the curriculum. The playground, though small, is imaginatively equipped to foster constructive play. Pupils have access to a playing field in the summer.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides a very safe and secure environment in which pupils thrive. Pupils are cared for very well and given good guidance and support.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a high quality of care for pupils.
- Induction procedures for pupils entering school are very good.
- Lunchtime arrangements do not fully reflect the school's aims.

### **Commentary**

24. The school provides a safe and secure environment in which pupils thrive. Health and safety policies and procedures, including those related to child protection, are comprehensive and effectively implemented. Risk assessments are of very high quality. Welfare arrangements are very good and reflect the care and concern that all staff show towards pupils' well-being.
25. The quality of care reflects the very good relationships which exist between pupils and staff. Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge and understanding of individual pupils. Staff recognise and go out of their way to meet pupils' special educational needs, liaising closely with parents in this. Support mechanisms are established quickly and effectively. Procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements and personal development are good.
26. Staff in reception have worked successfully to smooth children's entry to school through very good induction arrangements. Parents and pupils are provided in advance with relevant information concerning school life, and parents provide teachers with comprehensive information concerning capabilities, health and social skills.
27. Good arrangements for care are carried over into the playground, and pupils enjoy their playtimes. However, the school recognises that there are areas for improvement in its lunchtime arrangements. Healthy eating is not actively promoted through the provision of

school meals, and teaching about this is not well developed within the school's curriculum. Midday assistants have not been fully trained in managing pupils' behaviour in line with the school's general approach. Arrangements such as blowing the whistle and stopping all pupils as each class is called for lunch do not work well as they interrupt play. Pupils are sociable and sensible in eating their lunch, but a high level of noise, accentuated by the poor acoustics of the building, inhibits conversation.

28. The school effectively seeks the views of pupils and, where appropriate, acts upon these. The use of questionnaires and discussion within class help to pinpoint what pupils enjoy, or do not enjoy, about school. For example, a recent 'happiness survey', showed that pupils were generally happy at school, but that minor concerns tended to focus on lunchtimes. The introduction of a school council is planned to strengthen and consolidate consultation with pupils.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Good partnerships have been established with parents, the local community, and other educational establishments.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parental support is good and this helps pupils' progress.
- The staff are accessible and work well in partnership with parents.
- The presentation of some documentation lacks detail and impact.

### **Commentary**

29. Parents hold the school in high regard. They consider it to be well led and managed, providing a safe and secure environment in which pupils are well taught and make good progress. This confidence and trust in the school reflects the school's openness to parents, and its concern to work with them for the benefit of pupils. Parental views are sought through questionnaires and regular meetings. The school takes parents' views into account; for example, in implementing measures to promote pupils' safety and security.
30. Valuable opportunities for feedback are provided through parent evenings, open afternoons and informal face-to-face discussions held immediately after school. Teachers are readily accessible to parents and are very helpful, displaying a good knowledge and understanding of individual pupils. The school provides annual written reports of a high quality which are clear and detailed, and include specific targets. These assist parents in supporting learning at home. Parents value the regular parent-teacher interviews, though some feel constrained by the strict time limits set for these. The school liaises closely and effectively with the parents of pupils with special educational needs, both through informal daily contacts and regular review meetings.
31. The school communicates well with parents, although it recognises that there is room for improvement in the style and content of some of its written communication. The school brochure is out of date. Termly information about what pupils will be learning is useful but fairly limited in scope. The school has developed a website, and is looking to extend its use. The school has improved the information provided when children start school. It is now looking to review and update the written information it provides for parents throughout their children's time in school.
32. Parental involvement in school life is good and significantly enhances the quality of learning. Many parents assist in the classroom and most help their own children's learning through supporting homework. A very active Parents' Association raises in excess of £10,000 per annum, which is carefully targeted to enhance the provision of educational resources. Any queries and concerns raised by parents are dealt with quickly and effectively.

33. Links with the local community are good. 'Reading partners' are organised through the Havering Business and Education Partnership, to support pupils with particular reading needs. Strong links have been established with two local churches and regular visits are made to the local fire station, library and park.
34. Links with local schools are strong, particularly with the adjacent Langtons Junior School. Transfer arrangements are now good, with pupils making a half-day visit prior to transfer and the Year 3 teacher visiting to acquire first-hand information about Year 2 pupils due to transfer. The special educational needs co-ordinator from the junior school attends the final review meetings at the infant school with the parents of pupils who are about to move on. Combined training days are now being held, and there are plans for the strengthening of curriculum links. Effective partnerships also exist with local pre-school providers, and with a local university to support students in initial teacher training.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and the leadership of other key staff is developing well. The school is well managed. Governance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is very effective in setting priorities and managing improvement.
- The efforts and skills of the whole staff team are being harnessed very effectively.
- The school is building processes of self evaluation to improve its performance.
- The school is very well organised so that it runs smoothly.
- The role of subject leaders is not yet well developed.

### **Commentary**

35. The headteacher is setting the school's direction, openly and honestly evaluating its strengths and weaknesses and how it can improve. In this, she is building on the school's longstanding strengths, while recognising that established practices may be in need of review. The headteacher is leading the school forward through the monitoring of teaching and learning, and the tracking of pupils' progress across the school. As a result, targets for teachers clearly reflect the school's priorities; for example, in raising standards in writing.
36. The headteacher and the senior management team harness the efforts of the whole staff very effectively. Teachers plan within year groups, and consistency has been growing in the way that teachers work with their classes. Teaching assistants are valued and respected as full members of the team and they work closely with teachers. New teachers, including three who started shortly before the inspection, are inducted effectively, helping them to fit in quickly. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and co-ordinated, fostering effective teamwork by all those involved.
37. The structure and working of the senior management team was raised as an issue at the time of the last inspection. Since then, there have been a number of changes within the team and the current headteacher, appointed permanently in September 2001, had no deputy until January 2003. A new senior management team is now in place, including the deputy headteacher and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator. This team is working well, though the pattern of its meetings and its interaction with the rest of the staff is still evolving. The headteacher is working with the senior management team, to broaden the base of leadership within the school; for example, through involving others in the observation of teaching and the sampling of pupils' work. Subject leaders are active and interested in promoting their subject, overseeing planning and the provision of resources. The school is now looking to develop the contribution of subject leaders in monitoring quality, setting sights high for subjects and steering improvements.

38. The school is well managed. It runs smoothly and has an orderly atmosphere. Pupils feel happy and secure. They know the routines and participate in them sensibly. Staff know what is expected of them. The headteacher is a visible presence and quick to deal with problems. The staff are accessible and inspire the trust and confidence of parents. Schoolwide systems, such as the use of book bags, and the setting of termly targets for pupils, are consistently implemented across the school. Arrangements for performance management are sharply focused on raising standards; for example in writing. Steps are being taken to extend the tracking of progress, and the measurement of the value added from year to year. The school is intent on evaluating its performance objectively and identifying where its efforts should be directed.
39. The governing body has been recently re-constituted, so that it is separate from the junior school management. Roles and responsibilities have been defined and committees set up. The governing body ensures the school's compliance with statutory requirements, and it has reviewed the school's mission. It has evaluated its own performance and sought training in areas identified for development. It is working hard to develop its oversight of all aspects of the school's work.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	635,689
Total expenditure	648,591
Expenditure per pupil	2514

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	136,410
Balance carried forward to the next	123,508

40. The school has carried forward a large surplus from the period of the previous headship. This is now being used for much-needed refurbishment projects, including the larger staffroom and new library, and for new computers, as well as increasing the provision of support staff. The school is planning financially to good effect, although the school improvement plan is not yet fully linked to the budget. Governors actively pursue 'best value'; for example, in the management of projects. They also test decisions about expenditure against the school's educational priorities.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together in supporting learning and taking care of children. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides effective leadership in drawing the team together and developing joint planning.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are helped to settle in and to be sensible and responsible.
- Children behave well and are eager to learn.

#### **Commentary**

41. Achievement is good and children reach good standards in relation to the nationally agreed early learning goals in personal and social development. The school has revised its induction procedures to make the start of school easier for children and for their parents. As a result, children settle quickly and feel confident about what they can do. They are mature and sensible in looking after themselves at lunchtime, and when changing for physical education. They know the routines and fit into them happily.
42. Children behave well, helped by the secure framework which the school provides. They are keen and eager to learn, taking pride in what they have mastered. Children accept and co-operate with each other, relating well to the staff and to other children.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The foundations of reading are laid very effectively.
- Children gain a good knowledge of sounds and letters.
- Children listen well and speak confidently in small and large groups.

#### **Commentary**

43. Children make a very good start in literacy and this is a major strength of the school. Most achieve and many exceed the early learning goals by the end of the year. They are very well taught so that they quickly learn to identify sounds within words and to relate them to letters. This gives them confidence in reading simple words. They enjoy reading with the teacher when sharing a 'big book'. Most recognise a good range of common words. Children take a reading book home daily and regular reading in school and at home builds their confidence and skill. The classrooms are well supplied with books, although these are not displayed in ways which draw children's interest when choosing their own activities.
44. Reading is related to writing and some children progress rapidly from copying to writing a sentence independently, helped by their knowledge of sounds and common words. Writing is well taught, though opportunities to practise in the course of playing independently are limited.



Some of the writing, which children copy, is too small to encourage them to form letters correctly.

45. Children learn to take part in discussion, and most contribute readily within the whole class, as well as in smaller groups or when playing independently. They explain their ideas and observations and recall their experiences.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make a good start in using numbers.
- Activities support learning about numbers, shapes and patterns.

### **Commentary**

46. Children achieve well in their mathematical development, generally meeting and often exceeding the early learning goals. They have plenty of opportunity to practise numbers. Most can count a set of ten or more objects reliably. Children have a good understanding of simple addition; for example, when working as a class to make 'number sentences' such as  $3+2=5$ . They are interested in numbers and keen to explore how far they can count.
47. Work with games, puzzles and patterns reinforces and extends children's learning. For instance, children became absorbed in fitting carpet squares and triangles together to make tessellating patterns. Group activities, often supported by an adult, are well adapted to children's different levels of understanding.
48. Plenary sessions are used well and the discussion consolidates learning; for example, when children were able to explain the meaning of the equals sign, or how to write a number such as 16.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT and CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have access to a wide range of activities, equipment and materials.
- There is not enough encouragement to explore, investigate and create.
- Independent play activities are not always structured imaginatively to extend learning.
- Children enjoy singing and making music.

### **Commentary**

49. Children's achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development is satisfactory. Until recently, these areas of learning were taught within separate subjects, following the pattern in Years 1 and 2. This has now been revised so that planning takes fuller account of the sequence of steps towards the early learning goals and the links between areas. Efforts are also being made to extend and enrich opportunities for children to learn through activities for independent play.
50. Children take an interest in the world around them, watching the roots and shoots appearing from bulbs displayed in the classroom, and investigating puddles on the playground to see if it

was possible to float boats on them. They have regular access to sand and water. Children are only sometimes challenged, by the materials provided, to extend activities imaginatively and investigative, as when the sand tray became the site of a 'bear hunt'. Role play in the 'home corner' tends to be repetitive because equipment is not chosen and arranged to stimulate the playing out of stories or of experiences from daily life.

51. Children learn to cut and stick and mix paint to make pictures. They are usually shown what to do rather than being encouraged to elaborate their own ideas in what they create. There is not enough emphasis on learning to use tools and materials so that skills can then be applied during independent activities.
52. The opportunity for outdoor activities has been extended with the re-arrangement of the reception classrooms, and the creation of a fenced play area. Although not seen in use during the inspection because of poor weather, this area gives children the chance to practise physical skills; for example, in using scooters and tricycles. Groups from each class are timetabled to use it each day, though the lack of direct access from the classroom is a constraint.
53. Children take part in physical education lessons, learning to control their movements, for example in transferring their weight onto different body parts. Children enjoy singing and using percussion instruments, and matching actions to music. They learn a good range of songs in weekly singing sessions for the whole year group.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attainment is high in all areas of literacy, especially in writing.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and teach skills very well.
- Teachers' lesson plans provide appropriate support and challenge to all pupils.
- Pupils are achieving well and assessment is being used well to help them do even better.
- Drama is not developed to support work in language and literacy across the curriculum.

#### **Commentary**

54. Pupils achieve very well in English and standards are very good. The school has maintained high standards since the previous inspection and has continued to improve. In 2003, test results at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average in both reading and writing. The school is focusing successfully on raising standards in writing. It is now working to extend the challenge for more able pupils in reading, focusing on the development of comprehension. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good because of effective teaching, and good support from teaching assistants.
55. Speaking and listening skills are good throughout the school. The supportive school ethos creates an environment where speaking and listening flourish. Pupils develop confidence in asking and answering questions because teachers ask questions skilfully and give clues to help pupils respond appropriately. High expectations and modelling by adults contribute to the high standard of discussion during group work. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by skilled teaching assistants who help them to participate. Pupils also have the opportunity to discuss issues during personal, social and health education and citizenship. There is some planning for role play, but drama is not widely used to extend speaking and listening skills.

56. Standards in reading are very good throughout the school. The foundations laid in reception are built upon very effectively in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are taught to build words from sounds and this gives them confidence in tackling unfamiliar words. Teachers and teaching assistants hear pupils read regularly. All classes make good use of volunteer helpers, including parents and members of the business community, who listen to children read. Most children regularly read at home and good use is made of homework to extend and consolidate spelling and reading skills. In consequence most pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic readers. Most are reading at the level expected for their age and many are reading beyond this. The school has a very good and comprehensive range of graded reading books, which is used effectively by pupils and staff. In addition, the school has begun to replenish the stock of library books, which is currently low following the recent refurbishment of the library. Although many pupils read well, the school recognises the need to challenge fluent readers further in order to extend their comprehension skills.
57. Standards in writing are very good. This is due to the combination of good teaching, carefully organised opportunities to practise writing and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress in writing, identifying areas for improvement. Pupils take pride in their work and are keen to learn, often concentrating on a writing activity for some considerable time. Pupils in Year 1 write in sentences, often spelling simple words accurately and using capital letters and full stops appropriately. In Year 2, many pupils are able to organise a sequence of ideas in writing, making good use of vocabulary. Throughout the school, the careful attention paid to spelling and handwriting results in high standards.
58. Teaching and learning are good in literacy across the school. Teachers and teaching assistants are knowledgeable about what they are teaching. They work well as a team in supporting different groups within the class. Lessons are well planned, interesting and purposeful, and basic skills are taught thoroughly and effectively. The pace is brisk and resources are used well to help pupils learn. As a result, pupils concentrate well and settle quickly to the tasks they have been set. Marking is constructive, and regular assessment helps to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' progress, particularly in writing. Pupils are set realistic targets to help them improve.
59. The subject is led and managed very well. The senior management team and the co-ordinator have a clear vision of ways in which the teaching of reading and writing can be improved further. The tracking of progress across the school helps to guide teaching. Displays of work and word banks throughout the school reflect the importance attached to literacy.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

60. Pupils' skills in language and literacy are frequently developed within other subjects. Good discussions are encouraged in lessons; for example, during 'circle time', and in religious education and history. Pupils are given many opportunities to practise and use their reading and writing skills in the course of work across the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy the subject.
- Good teaching lays strong foundations in numeracy.
- Lessons are well planned and organised so that learning is thorough.
- Pupils are not challenged enough to apply their skills in investigating and solving problems.

## Commentary

61. Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and reach high standards. Good teaching lays firm foundations in numeracy, enabling pupils to make very good progress. Pupils' attainment is well above national expectations by the end of their time in school. In 2003, almost all the pupils reached at least Level 2 in the national tests and the proportion reaching Level 3 was above the average in similar schools.
62. Pupils enjoy their work, responding well to teachers' questioning. Teachers match their questions to pupils' different levels of understanding and plan tasks well for each ability group. Teaching assistants provide very effective support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, helping to reinforce their learning.
63. Skills in mental calculation are practised successfully at the start of lessons, as in a Year 1 class where pupils worked out the doubles of numbers, recording their results on whiteboards. Pupils worked hard, striving to recall number bonds or strategies for working them out. Frequent practice, at a purposeful pace, consolidates pupils' learning so that they build on what they know. As a result, they make very good progress.
64. Teaching is good overall, and often very good. Lessons are well planned and resources are usually well organised. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively. Classes are well managed so that little time is wasted. This encourages positive attitudes and eagerness to learn. Although work is well matched to different abilities, pupils are not always challenged to go as far as they can, or to test their skills in solving problems from real life.
65. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a three-part daily mathematics lesson, including class and group work and a review of what has been learned. These lessons are well planned and well resourced. There is currently some discontinuity in the leadership and management of the subject, because of a change in staff, but the school has a very clear idea of what future developments in the subject should be. However, opportunities are limited at present for the sharing of good practice in teaching.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Pupils use mathematical skills in the course of work across the curriculum. In music, pupils count the beat of tunes and repeat set patterns of notes in numbered sequences. Good use is made of estimation and measurement skills in design and technology; for example, in the construction of articulated skeletons and puppets. In physical education, pupils use mathematical language when talking about gymnastic sequences. In art and design, the painting of geometric patterns reflects work on two-dimensional shapes.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils cover a good amount of work, acquiring a broad base of knowledge and understanding.
- Investigative activities are not well developed to extend learning.

## Commentary

67. Pupils achieve well and reach a good standard in science, because the curriculum is covered well. They complete a good amount of work in all areas of the programme of study and develop a good level of knowledge and understanding, building on the general knowledge drawn from everyday life. Since the previous inspection, standards in science have been maintained.

68. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers are interested and enthusiastic and pupils respond well. Pupils enjoy practical work and are keen to investigate; for example, when challenged to identify different substances by smell. Teachers help pupils to relate what they are learning in science to everyday life; for example, when pupils identified the different purposes for which electricity is used.
69. Teachers ask questions well to check what has been learned, but do not always prompt pupils to think for themselves or to pursue further questions. Pupils are told in broad terms what they will be learning; for example, 'We are going to learn that eyes are for seeing'. But this is not always translated into questions to explore or problems to solve.
70. Pupils undertake a range of investigative work and clearly enjoy this. However, practical activity is sometimes limited to demonstration by the teacher. At times, the task set for pupils to investigate is too open-ended to channel thinking productively. As a result, pupils do not steadily build skills in planning and carrying out simple investigations and testing out their ideas.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, overseeing planning and resources. Assessment is being piloted to gauge pupils' learning in each unit of work, and there are plans to extend the monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school now has the resources needed to develop its provision for all pupils.
- The use of ICT as a tool for learning across the curriculum is not yet well developed.
- The school is planning to strengthen the systematic teaching and monitoring of ICT skills.

### **Commentary**

72. Pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory and standards, as at the time of the previous inspection, broadly reflect expectations for this age. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided and use the classroom computers confidently, for example in drawing pictures, or practising basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
73. Although pupils have regular access to classroom computers, opportunities have been constrained until recently by a shortage of equipment, and the difficulty of teaching skills to a group or a whole class. The school has recently acquired a bank of laptop computers which can be moved between classes, allowing whole class lessons. The 'float teacher' is now introducing pupils to the computers and working with groups within lessons to develop their skills. The school is in the process of planning the use of these computers to strengthen the systematic teaching of skills in ICT, and their application across the curriculum.
74. Teaching is satisfactory. All staff are committed to improving their skills and to use these skills in lessons. The school has purchased three interactive whiteboards and is looking to develop their use as a tool to support teaching. The administrative use of ICT by staff is helping to extend their skills; for example, for planning.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Plans for the future development of the subject are realistic. The school uses funds effectively to ensure technical support is available to deal with breakdowns.

## **Information and communication technology across the curriculum.**

76. Although there has been little teaching of ICT as a discrete subject, computers are used to support learning in a number of subjects. Children in reception use computer programs to reinforce their knowledge of sounds and words for reading. The new computers are beginning to be used by groups within lessons to practise skills in literacy and numeracy. Learning in art and design is extended by the use of computers to design pictures. The school is beginning to develop its planning, to extend the use of ICT in support of learning across the curriculum.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Although no lessons were seen in geography, pupils' work showed the development of knowledge and skills. Pupils have learnt about the function of an atlas and have begun to develop mapping skills. The subject leader, who took on the role in September 2003, has revised the scheme of work and plans to develop the use of information and communication technology in the teaching and learning of geography. The monitoring of teaching in geography, and the assessment of pupils' learning have yet to be developed.

### **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils make good use of artefacts and the local environment to find out about the past.
- Teachers and pupils are interested and enthusiastic.

### **Commentary**

77. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards are above average. Pupils recognise changes over time, for example comparing past and present toys and housing. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of aspects of Victorian life. They remember what they have learned; for example, about Florence Nightingale, and relate this to their study of artefacts from the period.
78. Pupils are taught well. Teaching is characterised by good subject knowledge, very effective use of resources and good classroom management. In consequence, children are keen to learn and become actively engaged in their work. Displays and artefacts are used well to stimulate interest, curiosity and discussion.
79. The subject leader took up responsibility for history in September 2003 and has updated the scheme of work and plans to monitor teaching and pupils' standards in the summer term. Pupils' skills in reading and writing help their learning in history, although the use of information and communication technology is undeveloped.

### **Religious Education.**

Provision in religious education is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are interested and thoughtful.
- Discussion and writing both support effective learning.

## **Commentary**

80. Pupils achieve well in religious education and standards are good, meeting the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
81. Teaching is good. Pupils learn about Christianity and Judaism and recognise the significance of religious festivals and customs. Teachers use Bible stories well to elicit thoughtful responses to moral issues; for example, when pupils in Year 2 considered the story of Joseph and his brothers, exploring the nature of jealousy. The high standard of discussion and written recording in religious education lessons supports pupils' learning while contributing to their language and literacy skills.
82. The subject leader has a good knowledge of standards from a scrutiny of pupils' work in the autumn term. Observations of lessons are planned for the summer term.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Art and Design**

83. No lessons were seen in art and design, but evidence was gained from pupils' work and work on display, and from the school's planning.
84. The curriculum plan shows that the required programme of work is covered. Pupils are introduced to the work of artists such as Kandinsky and Renoir. They use ICT to make their own pictures. They experience the use of a range of media. However, basic skills such as drawing and mixing paint are not developed systematically through the school. Pupils often produce work based on templates, with little opportunity for creative expression.
85. Art and design is valued by the school and pupils' work features strongly in attractive displays around the school. The work of visiting artists and illustrators also enriches the school environment, showing pupils what can be achieved.

### **Design and Technology**

86. One lesson was seen in design and technology. Evidence was also gained through the scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work and school displays.
87. Pupils enjoy working practically; for example, when making puppets in Year 1. Teaching is well planned and organised, and products are made to a good standard. Pupils learn to design, make and evaluate simple products, though opportunities are limited for solving problems and finding different ways of achieving the goal.
88. Work on display shows links between work in design and technology and other subjects. This was evident in articulated skeletons and caterpillars, pupils' designs for Joseph's coat of many colours and the making of bears with moving arms and legs.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Music is an important part of school life.
- The deployment of a music specialist enhances overall provision.
- The school has good resources and uses them well.
- Opportunities for performing and listening to music are not regularly provided.

## **Commentary**

89. Pupils achieve well and standards are good. The subject is taught with expertise and enthusiasm and pupils respond accordingly. The contribution of a part-time music specialist in planning and teaching the subject benefits the whole school.
90. Lessons are well planned and resourced. Singing features strongly. There is a weekly session for each year group where pupils learn a variety of tunes and songs. Pupils learn to use a range of percussion instruments, and many pupils in Year 2 participate in the school band. Pupils learn to evaluate their work; for example, when pupils practise high and low notes on a xylophone in preparation for a school assembly. The school choir meets weekly during the school day and practises a wide variety of songs from African chants to hymns. The teaching of the band and choir is good; the pace is brisk and frequent changes of activity keep pupils involved.
91. The school performs at various festivals in the local church and participates with other schools in an annual music festival. Recorder groups practise regularly in the lunch hour. However, opportunities for performance are limited, and music is not used regularly to set the atmosphere for assembly or to encourage active listening. Special events, such as 'Music Week', introduce pupils to a wide variety of music, working with visiting musicians.
92. The leadership of the subject is good. The school has a good range of musical instruments.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses.**

- Lessons are well planned and taught to ensure all pupils gain maximum benefit.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy the subject in a safe and healthy environment.
- Aspects of physical education, such as dance and team games, are underdeveloped.

## **Commentary**

93. Pupils achieve very well and standards were well above average in the lessons seen. The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good. Lessons are very well prepared. All pupils change. Very good use is made of the large school hall. Staff take great care in ensuring the health and safety of pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to ensure that all pupils participate and receive praise for their enthusiasm and efforts. Teachers use demonstration to very good effect; for example, in a Year 1 class when pupils performed a series of balances using different parts of the body. Balances were demonstrated by pupils and then others were asked to improve their own performances. Pupils concentrate and participate with interest.
94. Very good coaching in short tennis is provided by an external coach. However, opportunities are limited in some aspects of the curriculum, such as dance and team games.
95. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Resources are good.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

Provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

- The school has a detailed scheme of work and uses 'circle time' well.
- Little attention is given to the promotion of healthy eating.



96. The school has a strong ethos of respect and care underpinning all activities and all relationships. In consequence pupils reflect these values in their behaviour to each other and to adults.
97. Teachers make effective use of the scheme of work and regular weekly 'circle time' to reinforce the school's values and to give pupils the opportunity to explore and understand their own and others' feelings. Themes, such as understanding different emotions, are developed through stories and assemblies.
98. The subject leader is currently absent on maternity leave, but has plans for the school to take part in the Healthy Schools initiative, including giving more attention to the promotion of healthy eating.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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