

# INSPECTION REPORT

## MANOR INFANTS SCHOOL

Barking

LEA area: Barking and Dagenham

Unique reference number: 101193

Headteacher: Mrs Thelma McGorrighan

Lead inspector: Miss Cheryl Thompson

Dates of inspection: 9 - 11 February 2004

Inspection number: 256834

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:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	412
School address:	Sandringham Road Barking Essex
Postcode:	IG11 9AG
Telephone number:	020 8270 6630
Fax number:	020 8270 6627
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Drain
Date of previous inspection:	11/05/1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Manor Infants is a large four-form entry multi-ethnic infant school. The school serves an area of mainly owner-occupied homes. There are 464 pupils on roll which includes 104 children attending the two part-time nursery classes. The main ethnic groups in the school are Asian and Black African. About a quarter of the pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The school has a lower than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs with the main difficulties identified as social, emotional and behavioural. Attainment on entry to the nursery is wide ranging but overall, at the level expected.

The school is oversubscribed, with a long waiting list of parents wishing to enrol their children. The school is a Beacon School. Together with Manor Junior and Barking Abbey Secondary school, it is one of only 34 schools in the country to be involved in the government funded 'ICT Test Bed' project. It gained an award for high standards of numeracy and literacy in 1998, a School Achievement award in 2000, and an award for ICT training in 2003. It is part of the Excellence in Cities Education Action Zone. In common with many schools in the area, the school has great difficulties recruiting and retaining teachers. There are strong links with the Lifeline Community Projects who provide courses for parents and children.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22822	Cheryl Thompson	Lead inspector	English Special educational needs
13828	Ron Ibbitson	Lay inspector	
18360	Cecelia Davies	Team inspector	Science Music
12367	Anthony Green	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language
32021	Andrew McClean	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography
10270	Sandra Teacher	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education Foundation Stage

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Manor Infants is a **very good** school where pupils do very well. Excellent leadership and management give the school a keen sense of purpose not only in sustaining high standards, but in providing excellent care and very good provision for pupils' personal development. Teaching and learning are good. Excellent links with parents mean that school and home work very profitably together. It provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Outstanding leadership and management ensure an excellent ethos; Manor Infants is a vibrant and interesting place to learn
- In spite of the school's greatest efforts, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching because of the difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers
- Pupils become thoughtful and responsible young people. They love coming to school and, from their start in the nursery, behave exceptionally well
- Standards are high in literacy and numeracy but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subjects (*already identified by the school*)
- Very good use of information and communication technology (ICT) is raising standards at a rapid rate

The previous inspection in May 1998 identified the school as *an exceptionally good school* and this remains the case. Its Beacon status is well-deserved. In spite of a very high turnover of teachers due to local difficulties in recruitment and retention, the school has made good improvement on the minor issues identified in the last report and in developing the excellent links with parents. High standards have been sustained in national tests.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 2 results

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	A
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

Standards attained in national tests have been consistently high since the last inspection and **achievement is very good** overall. Inspection evidence confirms very good achievement and high standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2. Year 2 standards in science, music, geography and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average and pupils achieve well. In Year 1, standards in ICT are well above average and pupils achieve very well in response to knowledgeable teaching and excellent resources. Children start in the nursery with around average attainment. By the time they leave Reception, standards are above those expected and children achieve well. Children who start in the school with limited English make very good progress because they are taught very well and they have the support of the school community.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**. The school is a well-ordered, friendly community. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and play. Throughout the school, behaviour is excellent, reflecting the very high expectations set by all staff. Attendance is very good because the school works very hard to raise parents' awareness of the importance of making sure

their children attend regularly. However, the overall attendance rate is lowered by holidays taken in school time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

Manor Infants provides a **good** quality of education. Pupils learn well from an interesting curriculum enriched with many visits and visitors. Excellent guidance and care ensure pupils have work at the right level and are happy, confident and very keen to learn. Excellent links with parents mean that parents contribute a great deal to their child's progress through homework activities and helping in school. **Teaching is good overall with much that is very good or excellent.** In the main, very good teaching is provided by the more knowledgeable, experienced and established staff who set very high expectations for quantity and quality of work. The headteacher wants all teaching to be of high quality, so she and the senior team work exceptionally well to support and train teachers new to the country and to the profession; consequently, all teaching is very nearly always satisfactory or better. Carefully structured planning means pupils learn literacy and numeracy skills at a good rate, although the school recognises that more should be done to allow pupils to practise these skills in other subjects. A very effective feature is the school's identification of pupils' special needs, and the resulting help provided. For example, small groups are helped to develop self-esteem and other groups help pupils learn appropriate social skills. Teaching and support for pupils with English as an additional language are very good so that they make rapid progress in learning and using the language.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The key features of the **outstanding leadership and management** are the headteacher's attention to detail and very high expectations of herself, her staff and pupils. These expectations are seen as challenging but not unreasonable and everyone is rewarded for achieving them; consequently, Manor Infants is a demanding but very enjoyable place to be. The senior team bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their role, sharing a clear vision and sense of purpose. They work exceptionally well together to achieve their goals, reflecting on accomplishments and seeking to improve further. Even though standards are high, there is no complacency. The highly effective culture of self-evaluation informs school improvement planning which, in turn, places a strong emphasis on staff developing their skills and knowledge. A very good illustration is the school's highly successful approach to the new 'ICT Test Bed'<sup>1</sup> initiative. Teachers and their assistants have willingly developed their skills and expertise and this is having a great impact on pupils' learning. Many governors are new to their roles; governance is satisfactory with improvements planned through training and more involvement in the work of the school. Reception children have daily assemblies but, currently, governors are not ensuring these include an act of collective worship. There are two pieces of information missing from governors' annual report to parents.

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

Parents have very positive views of the school and have many very good things to say about it; they like the high standards and teachers' approachability. Pupils say they like their teachers and know that someone will always listen to them if they are worried. They like the playground and hard work and going to the art and sports clubs. They like getting cards from their headteacher when they have done something special.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school has a very clear idea of what it needs to do to improve further. These have been confirmed by the inspection, and are to:

- Include opportunities for developing and practising literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
- Four fifths of teaching and learning are good or better. The school is continuing to work to improve the small amount of satisfactory teaching to make it at least good

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<sup>1</sup> A government initiative aimed at raising standards in all subjects through the use of ICT. It involves the provision of a higher than average ratio of computers for pupils, the latest interactive hardware for teachers and pupils to use, and greater links with parents and pupils at home through ICT. Only 34 schools in the country are taking part.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure a daily act of collective worship for Reception children

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Achievement is very good. Standards as measured by National Curriculum tests and teacher assessment are well above the national average and the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In Year 2, pupils' achievement is very good in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In music, geography and ICT, standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. Limited evidence shows that standards in religious education are at least in line with those expected. In Reception, standards are above those expected and achievement is good; children who have English as an additional language achieve very well.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards have been sustained, but there is no complacency
- Standards and achievement in ICT are rising rapidly
- Recruitment and retention difficulties and the resulting high turnover of staff mean some inconsistency in pupils' achievement as they move through the school

#### Commentary

1. Standards in national tests have remained well above average since the last inspection. Standards in science dipped to average in 2002 but are well on the way up again because the school identified and addressed the issue of more investigational work.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.7 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	16.7 (16.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.9 (18.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 120 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. The headteacher, senior team and governors are not complacent. They are acutely aware that the school's intake is changing gradually, but noticeably, and more children are starting school with little spoken English. They have appointed a specialist teacher and bi-lingual classroom assistant to support these pupils and this has proved to be most successful, especially in the nursery and Reception classes. Very good assessment systems are in place to track all pupils' progress and the outcomes are used to provide the right support to help pupils achieve as well as possible and attain high standards.
3. The school's lack of complacency and keenness to improve are demonstrated in the very demanding commitment to the 'ICT Test Bed' project. As a result, standards in ICT are improving at a rapid rate. The greatest impact is noticeable in Year 1 and Reception where pupils achieve very well; these pupils have had the benefit of more use of the recently-acquired excellent resources.
4. In spite of the school's exceptional efforts, due to the high turnover of staff, there are inconsistencies in teaching across the school and this may impact on pupils' achievement at some point in their education at Manor Infants. Importantly, though, the headteacher ensures that as much support as possible is provided to teachers new to the school to ensure at least good achievement. Furthermore, she makes sure that pupils have opportunities to benefit from the very good teaching in the school to ensure high standards and achievement in Year 2.

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Behaviour is excellent. Attendance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the nursery and Reception classes make very good progress in their personal development
- Pupils' behaviour in all aspects of school life is excellent
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to work; they work very well together and on their own
- Relationships are excellent

### **Commentary**

5. Within a very happy atmosphere, all staff's very high expectations and insistence on appropriate behaviour help nursery and Reception children learn what is expected of them. They quickly develop very positive attitudes to all their tasks and their behaviour is impressive, both in class and in the playground. For example, nursery children wait patiently for their turn on playground climbing apparatus and Reception children apply themselves for good lengths of time to writing their Three Bears stories. By the time they start in Year 1, very nearly all children are likely to exceed the expected standards for their personal, social and emotional development.
6. Consistently applied, high expectations for good manners and respect for others result in excellent pupil behaviour, both in class and in the playground. Boys and girls of all ages and ethnic backgrounds play exceptionally well together and care for one another. There is a mutual respect evident between pupils and staff, leading to excellent relationships. Oppressive and aggressive behaviour were not seen during inspection. Teachers provide excellent role models for pupils in their dealings with each other. Circle time is used well to enable pupils to share their feelings and concerns with others. Pupils say that they would always turn to an adult in school for help if they are worried.
7. Attitudes to learning are very good. Participation in lessons is enthusiastic as a result of good teaching and high quality resources. Pupils work hard even when unsupervised. Many very good examples were noted of pupils working outside the classroom, listening to taped stories and reading quietly. In group work, pupils listen to each other, take turns and some demonstrate mature and thoughtful leadership skills. Reception children take their role-play activities seriously and were suitably behaved as Goldilocks or Father Bear.
8. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility with roles such as class monitors and helping younger pupils with playground games. Year 2 pupils take their responsibilities very seriously when they help the younger Reception children in the dining hall. Pupils enjoy their work and play, offering positive comments about their feelings of being valued at school.
9. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, with all teaching praising positive and discouraging selfish actions. Opportunities for reflection and review of moral themes are present in assemblies, which also allow pupils time to contribute their own experiences. Reception children are encouraged to think about the effect of actions on others' feelings when they consider how Baby Bear felt when Goldilocks ate all his porridge. Many opportunities are taken to engender a sense of wonder, particularly in teachers' use of ICT when pupils have the opportunity to see the perfection of a snail shell or the uniqueness of a pebble. From their start in the nursery, children learn to value ethnic diversity and to understand that cultural and religious beliefs affect the way in which people live their lives. The school encourages understanding of different faiths through the celebration of festivals such as Eid and Diwali. However, the school is not yet using the very good displays of work to bring to attention the many languages spoken by pupils.

10. The school has correctly identified that pupils may be able to benefit even more from the ethnic diversity of the school community. It has interesting plans in hand to encourage parents' involvement, for example, in cooking and in reading texts in home languages.

### Attendance

11. Children attend school regularly and punctually. The attendance rate has been well above the national average for the past three years and continues to improve. The school's very good attendance rate is achieved through its excellent arrangements for promoting and monitoring attendance.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.8	School data	0.7
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

12. There have been no exclusions in the latest reporting year.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Nursery and Reception children learn from a good curriculum and get a good start to school, especially in developing their social and literacy skills. Years 1 and 2 also work from a good curriculum enriched with a wide range of visits and visitors. The school has rightly identified that to improve on the quality of education it provides, it needs to bring literacy and numeracy into more subjects and to iron out inconsistencies in teaching.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. Assessment is very good because the school's systems are comprehensive, workable and, importantly, involve pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching
- In spite of the headteacher's and senior team's exceptional efforts, local difficulties in recruitment and retention of teachers have a big impact on the overall quality of teaching
- Planning and assessment are very good
- Teachers' very good use of ICT equipment has a good impact on learning
- Support teachers and teaching assistants are deployed very effectively

### Commentary

13. Teaching and learning are good overall and there is a high proportion (two-fifths) that is very good or excellent. In the main, this high quality teaching is by the more experienced and established members of staff. Their very good subject knowledge and teaching expertise mean that lessons are lively and challenging. Expert management skills mean pupils are proud to behave exceptionally well; consequently, they work at a very good rate and take pride in their achievements. Pupils of all abilities and stages of English acquisition achieve very well in these lessons for two reasons: because they are expected to; and, their tasks and support are at just the right level. Excellent links with parents also have a big impact on progress; parents know what to do to help at home and homework is taken seriously. Teaching and learning in the nursery and Reception classes are good and very good in the area of personal, social and

emotional development. As a result, children develop very positive attitudes to learning at an early age, behave exceptionally well and are very well prepared for Year 1.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	15 (35%)	18 (42%)	7 (16%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory or, in just one lesson - unsatisfactory, the main reasons are teachers' lack of subject expertise, lack of pace, and average, rather than high, expectations. The headteacher and senior team are acutely aware of the shortcomings in teaching through their rigorous system of lesson observation. They have excellent arrangements for helping new members of staff improve, such as teaching alongside them, allowing them to observe experienced teachers, attending suitable courses and having constructive feedback after an observation. These arrangements are successful. However, for teachers new to the country and the profession, there is a great deal to be learned and it takes time. For example, these teachers start with no knowledge of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The school has had a turnover of over half its teaching staff in the past year and, currently, there are four vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contracts.
15. The school's very good planning system has a good impact on standards. It is very beneficial to all, especially inexperienced staff. Year group teachers plan together along with the special educational needs co-ordinator and a senior teacher. Consequently, all pupils in the same year group have similar work and opportunities; senior staff know what is going on and add their expertise to ensure suitable work is provided for pupils of all abilities. Teachers are expected to, and do, evaluate their planning and share what has gone well, or not, with colleagues so that planning can be improved/alterd for the next lessons. The local education authority planning for literacy and numeracy is thorough and has been supplemented appropriately by the school to stretch more able pupils. Currently, there are not enough good links between subjects to allow pupils to practise, consolidate and refine their literacy and numeracy skills in, for example, science, history and geography. The school has correctly identified this as an area to develop.
16. Assessment is very good. A minor issue raised by the last inspection was that assessment, though good, was over-burdensome for staff. The school has resolved the issue very well. Assessment is in place for every subject in a simple, workable form to give teachers a comprehensive picture of what their pupils know, understand and need to learn next. In reading, writing, mathematics and science, teachers assess pieces of work termly against National Curriculum criteria and check to see if individuals are on course to attain the challenging end of year targets. Such systems keep a very high focus on standards and pupils' achievement. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have their own 'target books'. In Year 1, excellent use is made of these books to involve pupils in their learning. Pupils know their targets very well, self-assess and tell their teacher, very confidently, when they think they have achieved their target. In Year 2, the use of the books is less well developed; therefore, pupils in these classes are not as well aware of what they need to do to improve.
17. The 'ICT Test Bed' project has been a challenge the school has readily accepted and worked incredibly hard to make a success. There has been much to learn but, with the excellent guidance of the ICT co-ordinator, teachers have mastered the use of the screens and visualisers. In lessons, teachers make very good use of these tools to reinforce learning and help pupils assess their own work.
18. Support teachers and teaching assistants play a vital part in pupils' very good achievement. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good support in small group situations. Their work is closely matched to their specific needs and proficient teaching assistants help, support and praise to ensure success and high self-esteem. Pupils at an early

stage of English language acquisition receive very good support from teachers, learning support assistants and the co-ordinator for ethnic minority achievement. This support results in very good achievement. Pupils who are at the intermediate stage of learning and using English are also checked on regularly to ensure their continued progress.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A strong collegiate approach to curriculum development contributes to the maintenance of high standards
- Although planning of separate subjects is very good overall, there are insufficient effective links between different subjects
- The quality and quantity of resources and accommodation are very good and have a very good impact on learning
- A varied and wide range of visits and visitors support and enhance the curriculum

## **Commentary**

19. The school has developed a broad curriculum in which all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and statutory requirements are met. Sufficient time is allocated to each subject and religious education is taught according to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Provision for ICT has greatly improved since the last inspection with outstanding resources now available because of the school's involvement in the 'ICT Test Bed' project.
20. There are policies and detailed schemes of work for all subjects and these provide good support for teachers. This is important as many staff are new to the school and the country. The school follows the local education authority guidelines for English and mathematics. However, effective links between subjects are not yet planned into the curriculum and insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to practise skills learnt in one subject in another.
21. The school improvement plan is the means through which planning for curriculum development is identified. All subject co-ordinators have input into this plan by evaluating all aspects of their subjects and then identifying areas for further development. Consequently, overall, there are high standards and at least good achievement.
22. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language have equal opportunities because of the teamwork between adults that provides them with good support. Lessons are well planned to cater for the needs of all pupils. There is a register of gifted and talented pupils and all staff are aware of their needs.
23. There are a wide range of visitors and visits that enhance learning for all pupils. These include visits by music groups, a science theatre group and representatives of local faith groups. As part of studies in geography pupils visit local shops and the park. Visits to Eastbury House, the Ragged School and Valence House enrich the history curriculum. Clubs for sport and music give good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and they thoroughly enjoy these activities.
24. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good with all relevant policies in place. Regular opportunities for discussion are given to pupils in 'circle time'. Throughout the school, eye-catching displays celebrate pupils' work, demonstrating the whole school's respect for their pupils' efforts thereby enhancing pupils' personal development and self esteem. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stages of their education because of the high standards they achieve in their work and their good social skills.
25. Although the school has great difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers, there is a core of very experienced staff who provide very good, knowledgeable support for their less experienced

colleagues. Regular in-service training is seen as very important for teaching and support staff. Consequently there is a high percentage of good or better teaching. Support staff are highly proficient and, therefore, contribute significantly to pupils' progress both academically and personally.

26. The headteacher's attention to detail is clearly evident in the very good accommodation and resources which have a positive impact on the standards attained. For example, there is excellent behaviour at playtimes because of the imaginative playground design and the wide range of activities available, including a quiet area for sharing books. Furthermore, midday assistants have received training to help pupils learn and play playground games. Since the last inspection, the library has been refurbished. The senior leadership group's focus on quality is clearly demonstrated in the high standard of fiction and non-fiction books available for pupils to enjoy. Although space is at a premium, corridors are used effectively to provide study and investigation areas. The caretaker and cleaners take great pride in the school and this contributes significantly to the very good environment in which pupils work and play.

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

The school makes excellent provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Excellent systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress and personal development; these are used most effectively to guide and support pupils as they progress through the school. The informal methods of seeking pupils' views are good; the school listens to pupils and values their opinions.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's is vigilant in child protection arrangements and in providing a caring, healthy and safe, environment for its pupils
- Excellent monitoring systems ensure highly effective advice and guidance

### **Commentary**

27. There are very good systems in place for dealing with child protection issues but staff would benefit from further training. The deputy head is responsible for child protection and all staff are aware of the need for vigilance. Effective health and safety procedures ensure that children enjoy a safe and pleasant learning environment. Risk assessments are carried out prior to all educational visits to ensure that as far as possible children continue to be safe away from the school. There are several qualified first-aiders in the school, including some trained in the treatment of anaphylactic shock resulting from allergies. Following an accessibility audit the school has made several changes to accommodate pupils with disabilities, such as the installation of ramps at most entrances to facilitate wheelchair access and changes in colour schemes to aid partially sighted pupils.
28. Pupils say they feel safe in school and can discuss problems readily with adults in the school. Teachers and teaching assistants are very caring and know their pupils very well. They are always watchful for pupils experiencing difficulties. Excellent relationships with parents mean that home and school work together very effectively, not only in helping to attain high standards but to overcome difficulties. For example, a child having difficulties leaving Mum may be met at the school gate by a teacher or teaching assistant. Excellent systems for monitoring pupils' progress are used profitably to ensure optimum achievement. More able pupils are set very challenging work. Pupils' special needs are identified very quickly and highly effective support programmes put in place. Similarly, pupils' stage of English acquisition is noted and appropriate support provided.
29. Induction procedures are good. A presentation is given in the autumn to parents of children new to the school covering all aspects of Nursery and Reception. To ensure a good start to their early years at school, nursery and reception children, and their parents, are introduced to school through drop-in sessions. Reception children and their parents are invited to stay for school lunch so that they gain a good idea of the type of food served and the dinnertime routines. Staff

also meet parents and their children through home visits. Parents are encouraged to help with nursery activities and many do so.

30. Although no formal arrangements exist for obtaining the views of children, the excellent relationships between children, teachers and ancillary staff, ensure that much is known about children's views of the school.

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

The school's excellent partnership with parents is a major contributor to pupils' learning. Excellent links with other schools, together with very good links in the community, are important factors in pupils' development.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents' high regard for the school and their children's progress
- The school's communication with parents and continuous efforts to improve its partnership with them
- The 'ICT Test Bed' project has raised standards, involved parents and facilitated extensive links with other schools
- Extended services and educational support for parents
- Infant, junior and secondary schools have a joint tracking system for recording progress of SEN pupils
- Governors' annual report to parents should cover all statutory requirements

### **Commentary**

31. The school's effective partnership with parents has a very positive influence on pupils' learning at school and at home. Parents like the well ordered school and are pleased that their children are safe and happy there. Parents take an interest in their children's work at school and there is a high attendance at school events. Many parents come into school to help in the classrooms.
32. The school management recognises the benefits of working closely with parents to enhance children's learning and to this end has a written policy for maintaining its strong partnership with parents. A member of the teaching staff acts as co-ordinator to oversee this work. The school has a good reputation in the community it serves. As part of the 'ICT Test Bed' project, the school is strengthening its links with parents and the community, for example by extending its ICT courses for parents and grandparents. It is also running a parenting course and a course for speakers of other languages to learn English. A new community room is now available for holding these courses. The school also takes advantage of the 'Solid Ground' project which runs sessions to help pupils develop self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils love these sessions.
33. There are varied means by which the school communicates with parents. The head writes a monthly newsletter to parents and recent copies are available on the school's new website. There are also letters from the year groups advising parents of a range of school activities, events and future topics to be covered by the children. Annual reports on pupils' progress are sent to all parents to enable them to gauge their children's academic and personal development. The school brochure is updated annually; it is a very comprehensive view of the school and particularly informative for parents of children just about to start school. The governors' annual report to parents is well presented but some minor pieces of statutory information is omitted.
34. Parent consultation meetings are held each term where parents have opportunities to see their child's work and talk to class teachers about their children's progress. Parents can also see teachers or the head by appointment.
35. Parents' views are sought formally through surveys and informally through meetings and casual contact. An active association of parents raises funds for the school through events that also

serve as social functions for the school, parents and the community. The association was able to contribute to the school's adventure trail, to the benefit of all children.

36. The school works closely with the adjacent junior and secondary schools; parents tend to look on the three schools as one campus. The infant and junior schools share a parent-teacher association. Very profitable initiatives arise from the liaison between the schools, for example, a joint tracking system used to record the progress of pupils with special educational needs through the infant, junior and secondary stages. Under the 'ICT Test Bed' project, the three schools share resources and expertise, and employ people across the three sites. Very good links with the junior school enable a smooth transfer of Year 2 pupils to their next stage of education.
37. As a result of its Beacon status the school has links with a number of schools in the borough. During its three-year Beacon period the school has worked with over 21 schools and other educational organisations. There are also strong links with an American teacher training college in Chicago.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are both excellent. Governance is satisfactory. Reception children attend assemblies but these do not always include a daily act of collective worship. In this respect, the school is not meeting statutory requirements.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and sets very high expectations
- There is no complacency; the headteacher and senior team have high aspirations which are reflected in the excellent ethos of the school
- There are excellent strategies to manage the recruitment and retention of staff; the school makes an excellent contribution to initial teacher training
- Excellent systems for checking on the work of the school contribute to the strong culture of self-evaluation

### Commentary

38. In January 2003, the headteacher took over *an exceptionally good school*<sup>2</sup> with a talented team of senior teachers. Since then, the school has improved still further through her determined, clear vision for a school with high standards and very good provision to make sure all are valued and included. She sets very high expectations for herself, staff and pupils and pays great attention to details; these are evident in areas such as the clarity of the school's management systems and high quality resources. The headteacher leads by example. She sets very high standards but is always ready to support and thank pupils, staff and parents. As a result, she has engendered a very strong, confident school team, not only of governors, teachers and non-teaching staff, but cooks, cleaners and caretaking and administrative staff. They all feel valued for the part they play in school life. Hence, Manor Infants is a school that sparkles and one that has high quality displays of pupils' work and staff who give so much 'extra' to the school. Currently, there are many governors who are new to their role. Governors are very proud of the school and supportive of the headteacher and senior team. Due to an oversight, in their annual report to parents, governors have not included information on access and arrangements for disabled pupils (although they have given considerable consideration to this and access is in place). Similarly, they have not included all the training teachers have undertaken and the impact of this on pupils' learning.
39. Delegation is highly effective. The senior team bring a wealth of experience and talent to their roles and work exceptionally well both in their individual areas, such as assessment and subject leadership, and as a team. Even though the school sustains high standards, there is no

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<sup>2</sup> Judgement at the last inspection, May 1998.

complacency. As a team, they reflect on achievements and are always looking to improve. For example, they have embraced the 'ICT Test Bed' initiative very profitably and are now at the point of evaluating whether the use of all the ICT equipment is always the most effective. They have identified that more needs to be done to ease the way for Reception children into Year 1 and have searched for schools in the country where they have methods to facilitate this move and are to visit. The team is acutely aware of the changing intake and values the ethnic diversity of its school community. It has good plans to take greater advantage of the cultural heritage of its pupils in order to develop the knowledge and understanding of all pupils and their parents.

40. Recruitment and retention of teaching staff are a continuous problem and have a significant impact on the rate at which the school can improve its standards even further and on its budget. The headteacher has taken a proactive stance. As well as making good use of agency staff, which is expensive, she has developed strong links with initial teacher training providers. These links are more beneficial in the long term as trainee teachers are encouraged to return to Manor Infants when they are qualified. Some do, and have remained at the school for several years. The deputy headteacher takes responsibility for trainees and ensures excellent support for them. Trainee teachers spoken with described the support and guidance they were being given by their class teachers and mentor as "excellent" and "brilliant". Representatives of the three teacher training institutions that place trainee teachers in the school also spoke very highly of the very good partnership between the school, the trainees and the training institutions. When trainees are at the stage of teaching a class for good lengths of time, class teachers use their 'free' time to work alongside other teachers or undertake other management tasks.
41. The systems for checking on the work of the school are impressive. The strong culture of self-evaluation informs highly effective school improvement planning. The quality of teaching is monitored very rigorously and regularly. Each teacher is observed teaching at least five times per term. The senior team undertake termly scrutiny of a range of pupils' work from across year groups. National Curriculum test results, and other school performance data are all analysed by the senior team. These analyses pick out trends and if boys or girls do better or if one ethnic minority groups does better than another. The outcomes of monitoring are used to support individual teachers to improve or if general points for improvement are noted, these are shared with all staff. In response to the detailed analyses of data, the school's curriculum or focus for support may be changed. The school's ethos is reflected in its quest for the best possible professional development courses and the fact that staff give generously of their time to travel far and wide to attend these. As a result, staff have up-to-date knowledge of effective methodology and initiatives to bring to their work.

### **Financial information**

42. The school makes very effective use of all the money available to it to support improvement planning. The excellent links with the adjacent junior and secondary school mean that some costs are shared to the benefit of all and ensure monies are used efficiently. The carry forward figure includes a significant amount related to the ICT Test Bed project, earmarked for future equipment. The head, senior team and governors are adept at seeking out funding initiatives on offer from the government and other sources to fund beneficial things such as playground games and the parents in partnership co-ordinator.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,152,032.00
Total expenditure	1,148,473.00
Expenditure per pupil	2794.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	106,331.00
Balance carried forward to the next	86,612.00

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE (nursery and Reception classes)**

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. Children are given a first rate start to their life in school. Children enter the nursery with attainment that is average overall but covers the full range of attainment. Furthermore, a good number of children are at the early stages of learning English.

Children make good progress and firmly develop and consolidate their skills. They achieve well in all the areas of learning in the nursery because the quality of teaching is good. This, coupled with the good curriculum, where teachers emphasise the development of both language, social and independence skills, means children are very well prepared for Reception. Children continue to do well in Reception because the teaching is good and activities are well matched to their needs. The provision is well managed overall and children's progress is carefully monitored. Standards are similar to those identified by the last inspection but provision has improved.

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

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

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

- Children easily exceed the standards expected for their age in reception because of very good teaching and the very good emphasis placed on the development of these skills, particularly for those children with special educational needs
- Children respond very well to the expectation that they will behave sensibly and attitudes and behaviour are excellent

#### **Commentary**

43. From their first days in nursery, children are expected to take responsibility by recognising their name card on their peg as they arrive and hanging up their coats. Staff promote children's awareness of social responsibility by inviting the *helper of the day* to choose other children to be helpers for the day. Good manners were stressed as the helper politely asked children if they would like to be a helper. The children were expected to respond with 'Yes please'. The *helpers* undertake a range of responsibilities including taking the registers to the office. Numerous examples were seen where the children work unsupervised, behaving sensibly and sharing resources. For example, children fill containers with sand and water, managing not to spill much on the floor. Children walk sensibly to the hall for assembly and PE. The emphasis on this area of learning is continued in reception. Here, children eat their lunch in a mature manner and play with the older pupils. They take responsibility for their clothes when changing for physical activities.
44. All adults provide very good role models for children and treat them with a very high degree of courtesy and respect. This gives a very strong message to the children so that they begin to understand how to behave and what is expected of them. As time goes on, children develop their personal and social skills to such an extent that they have a secure knowledge of how to behave and they achieve well in relation to their capabilities. When 'tidy-up time' is called, they respond with great enthusiasm and willingness to help, stowing away items energetically. Everything is clearly labelled so they know exactly where to put things away.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall and staff provide many opportunities for children to develop these skills, particularly for those children for whom English is an additional language
- Children are encouraged to have a love of books
- The use of ICT and the library are additional dimensions to both the teaching and learning and help to raise standards

### Commentary

45. Most children are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception. They achieve well. Emphasis is placed on speaking and listening from an early age and this contributes positively to the above average standards attained, although many children enter the nursery with well-developed skills. For example, children in the nursery share books together, listening to each other's ideas. They talk about winter, learning what clothes to wear. Older children in the reception have ample opportunities to share books and most recognise initial sounds and talk about their favourite texts. They can sequence pictures to make a story and read simple texts.
46. Children develop their skills when visiting the library. During the inspection, children enjoyed looking at books there. Useful notices encourage the development of early reading skills. For example, each area is well labelled and colour coding helps children to find books. A writing area with a wide range of mark-making tools, blackboards and the use of word processing encourage the development of writing skills. The ethos of the area leads to much imaginative play - for example, children were initiating play about the *Three Bears*. Children are encouraged to take books home and share them with their families.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults take every opportunity to develop mathematical understanding and, as a result, children achieve well and are likely to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception
- The good ratio of adults to children helps them to make progress

### Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are good overall. Adults take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills. In the nursery, adults question them whilst they are engaged in a variety of activities, always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. For example, during registration sessions, children count the number present by touching each person on the head. Children learn to identify shapes when looking at books as adults question them. They learn to sequence the days of the week as they complete the calendar each day. During the inspection, the teacher asked the children if they could work out the date by counting on two days for the weekend. The nursery nurse encouraged number recognition in a way that motivated the children by asking them what size their shoes were as they changed into their plimsolls. The children were very keen to look inside their shoes if they did not know.
48. In reception children make good progress in number recognition because staff work with them in a small group to play a game to reinforce this aspect of learning. The high quality of this adult support helps them to recognise numbers in an enjoyable game.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- First-hand experiences and good teaching mean that children enjoy finding out for themselves in this area of learning; as a result, they achieve well and are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of reception
- Provision for ICT is excellent and children reach high standards in technological skills
- There is no daily collective worship for five year olds. Therefore statutory requirements are not met.

### Commentary

49. A wide variety of activities help children to learn about the natural world. For example, children feel oats and make porridge. They take care of plants in the garden. They develop knowledge of the characteristics of different materials through their play with sand, water and play dough. They learn the best materials to use for building. They have ample opportunities to use construction materials.
50. Excellent use is made of the ICT resources and children easily manipulate the mouse or remote slate to 'dress the teddy'. They achieve very high standards and are confident computer users.
51. Although there are assemblies, there is not always a daily act of collective worship. Children learn about different festivals but planning for religious education does not clearly relate to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for Reception children.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and are on course to exceed the goals expected by the end of reception because there are many opportunities to develop their skills.
- Children are well prepared before they start physical activities so that they can start promptly when they reach the hall.
- In some lessons, children spend too long sitting on the carpet with insufficient time for physical activity.

### Commentary

52. Children have good opportunities within and outside class to develop their co-ordination. The very good range of outdoor equipment is well used to climb, balance and slide. Slices of logs acting as paths are used for stretching and hopping along. Large wheeled toys and barrows are handled competently and children handle balls and small equipment to develop their manipulative skills. Children squeeze and roll dough. However, at times, children spend too long sitting on the carpet and do not always have free continuous access to the outside area.
53. Over time, very good teaching to promote children's physical development has had an enormous impact on their independence and self-control. As a result, nearly all nursery children can undress themselves and change into their PE kit. In hall time sessions, they listen intently, watch carefully and try very hard to follow and copy movements demonstrated by their teachers. They

work hard, showing a good understanding of space and demonstrating very good control and balance for their age.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities for imaginative role-play
  - Creative development does not feature strongly in the reception timetable
54. Children's development is strengthened through stimulation in art and design, music, dance and imaginative role-play. They are likely to exceed the expected early learning goals by the end of the year and achieve well.
55. The environment makes full use of a wide range of experiences and resources to enrich the children's learning. For example, role-play areas based on The Three Bears or a robot factory help to stimulate the imagination. There is a wide range of activities on offer that the children can respond to by using different senses.
56. Children enjoy singing a range of well-known songs and making their own music in the outdoor area. However, further planning to give this area of learning greater prominence within the reception timetable would be beneficial.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High standards have been sustained in reading and writing
- Literacy skills are taught thoroughly and systematically with ICT used very efficiently as a teaching aid
- Not enough use is made of aural strategies (sounding out) to help pupils spell and to work out unknown words in their reading books
- Parents make a valuable contribution to their child's progress in reading
- Currently, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in other subjects

### **Commentary**

57. Well above average standards in reading and writing have been sustained over the past four years. By Year 2, pupils' achievement is very good. On average, pupils are ahead of their age by two terms with very nearly half attaining the higher Level 3 in national reading tests. These standards are particularly noteworthy because about a quarter of the school population has English as an additional language and a high proportion of these pupils start school with little English. Boys do particularly well compared to the national picture. The school's, and parents', very high expectations, pupils' excellent behaviour and very interesting resources all play a big part in boys' success. Pupils who have difficulties learning to read and write are given very good help and individual attention. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English also have very good support. Both groups achieve very well from their starting points.

58. The school uses the local education authority scheme for teaching literacy and supplements this to add challenge for more able pupils. This scheme, coupled with the school's very good procedures for assessment, makes sure that pupils build up their knowledge cumulatively and have work at the right level. The scheme is also very beneficial in terms of providing a very clear structure for teachers new to the profession and the country to follow. Very good provision in the nursery and reception classes ensures children make a good start on learning the names and sounds of letters, and develop a love of books. In Years 1 and 2, very good use of ICT equipment is very beneficial for pupils to see clearly how letters are put together to make a particular sound, for example c + h makes the sound 'ch'. The software also makes it possible to bring in pictures to reinforce learning of the newly learned 'ch' as with 'church' or 'chin'.
59. At the present time, not enough emphasis is being given to making sure pupils listen carefully to the sounds in words they want to spell and have a go at spelling them. Pupils tend to rely on copying words from word cards or their personal dictionaries. Similarly, pupils tend to rely on being able to recognise a whole word and do not always use a 'sounding out' strategy for attempting words they cannot recognise.
60. Parents make a valued and valuable contribution to their child's reading progress. The amount of reading pupils do at home is impressive and is a reflection of the excellent relationships with parents. Pupils also read very often to adults in school. Teachers, teaching assistants and a good number of parents and grandparents hear pupils read in school and talk about the stories. As a result, pupils read a great deal which helps them to reinforce and consolidate their skills and make very good progress.
61. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has a very clear understanding of standards in the school through her checks on planning and teaching. Great thought has gone in to the library stock. The library is a very well organised resource which is used most effectively for pupils to learn library skills and to have a wide choice of books. The school has rightly identified that there are not enough dual language books.

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

62. Speaking and listening skills are developed very well. The school's very good focus on encouraging pupils to give good answers to questions and to be confident in talking to others is noticeable in many lessons. Pupils explain their ideas very well in science and geography lessons. Pupils' reading and comprehension skills are very good; they use these skills competently when finding out information. The school has correctly identified that practising and consolidating literacy skills in other subjects is a priority for improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

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

- Pupils' enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of, the subject is evident
- Very good use of teaching assistants, particularly in support of pupils with special educational needs
- Continuity of planning from all staff
- Use of ICT as an aid to teaching
- Use of assessment data to promote pupils' understanding of their own progress
- Leadership and management of mathematics
- More opportunities to use and apply mathematics in real life situations
- Greater use of investigations involving mathematical skills and knowledge
- The use of practical materials to encourage visual imagery

## Commentary

63. High standards have been sustained over the past four years. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good with some aspects being very good. The basics of numeracy are well taught with pupils achieving very well in their time in school. The introduction of a national pilot scheme for the use of ICT to support teaching is being particularly effective. All lessons are well planned producing a continuity of learning for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language.
64. As a result of well-planned support from teaching assistants and other adults, pupils with special educational needs receive very good support; this ensures their active participation in lessons and contributes greatly to their self-esteem. Mental and oral skills are practised regularly. All teachers emphasise the need for pupils to explain their mathematical reasoning and to express themselves in full sentences. In this way, speaking and numeracy skills are well linked. In all lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent which has a considerable impact on the amount of work they do and the way in which they work in groups and individually. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use white boards to show their very good knowledge of number bonds to 10 and 20 respectively. Opportunities to apply these skills to pupils' own experiences are yet to be fully developed in class.
65. Teachers use ICT resources very well in all lessons to give pupils a clear understanding of their learning objectives. In the best lessons, detailed planning, questioning to all pupils, well-prepared resources and focused support for less able pupils result in very good pupil progress. Throughout Years 1 and 2, all pupils have short-term numeracy targets and understand what they need to do to improve their mathematics learning.
66. Using the very good technical resources available in a Year 1 class, the majority of pupils tackle difficult problems which require them to partition numbers e.g.  $(1+4)+5=10$ . Practical materials such as number lines and squares are available, less evident is the use of counters and cubes to assist less able pupils with 'hands on' experience.
67. Leadership and management of the subject are very good from a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Regular planning meetings, lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and their progress upon targets result in all teachers having a very clear picture of each pupil's mathematical needs. Whilst ICT is very well established as a teaching tool, less well developed is the use of such resources by pupils to enhance their learning. Resources are very good.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Cross-curricular mathematics is established in some areas of the school curriculum. In music, pupils count the beat of different tunes; Year 2 pupils examine the linear patterns from Mondrian's paintings in art. In science, Year 2 pupils use simple graphs and charts to record the melting of different substances. They use skills of estimation, ordering and measurement in PE activities.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils very achieve well by Year 2
- Very good quality assessment and target setting
- An enthusiastic co-ordinator who provides very good leadership
- The subject knowledge of some staff new to the school is not yet secure

## Commentary

69. As at the time of the last inspection, attainment in science is above the national average. The school is not complacent however, and has identified strategies to further raise standards by finding ways to challenge higher attaining pupils in developing their skills in investigating. Already this work has resulted in higher standards than those seen in 2002. By Year 2, pupils make predictions and begin to understand the importance of having a fair test during investigations. For example, when pupils are finding locations where ice will melt the quickest, they understand the importance of having the same size ice pops and leaving them for the same amount of time. There has been good improvement in the quality of investigative methods since the last inspection. Older pupils recognise sources of light both in-doors and outdoors and make a circuit using batteries, wire and a switch. They sort natural and manmade materials and identify habitats of plants and animals. Younger pupils recognise and name parts of a plant and identify materials such as metal, wood, plastic and glass and their uses in the home. They begin to make predictions as how to make a toy car travel further.
70. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well because of the structure of the curriculum, good teaching and support given by all adults. Very good assessment procedures are in place and pupils' progress is closely monitored to ensure sufficient challenge for all pupils. As a result, tasks are well matched to pupils' learning needs. Pupils have their own targets to work towards to give them a better understanding of their own learning. Pupils work hard and are enthusiastic about their own work. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to talk together, for example when discussing their predictions. Pupils respond positively and their behaviour is very good.
71. Overall, teaching is good. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed in Year 1 where the teacher's subject knowledge was not yet secure. The school recognises that staff new to the school and the country who are not yet fully familiar with all aspects of the National Curriculum do need extra support and is addressing the problem. Pupils in Year 2 achieve very well. They are encouraged to use a variety of ways of recording to reinforce understanding. This enables pupils to learn effectively. In the best lessons, teachers ask questions to encourage thinking and insist that pupils answer in complete sentences. Lesson plans are clear; teachers make good use of ICT ensuring that pupils are shown visually exactly what they are expected to learn. ICT is used very effectively to project work sheets on to the screen so that pupils are clearly shown what work they will have to do. This means that pupils get straight on with the minimum of fuss. Good use is made of the digital camera to photograph results of an investigation so that work can continue in a future lesson.
72. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and leads the subject very well. She has successfully used elements from her own professional development to influence the progress made in improving the science curriculum. Teachers are supported well by conscientious and rigorous monitoring of lessons and planning. The co-ordinator has organised special events such as a science week where the focus was on the environment, visits from a theatre company and participation in an energy saving project organised by the borough. Such events add greatly to pupils' enjoyment of science. The detailed action plan ensures that the development needs of the subject are well met. These include creating an environmental area and involving pupils even more in their own assessment. The accommodation and resources for the subject are very good. Attractive displays of pupils' work, investigation tables for first hand experiences and displays of scientific vocabulary all contribute to pupils' learning.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average
- Teachers are confident with information technology and use it well
- The quality of teaching is good
- The quality of resources is excellent
- The leadership and management of the subject are excellent

### Commentary

73. By Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average and their achievement is good. The attainment of pupils in Year 1 is well above average and their achievement is very good. This is a result of recently acquired high quality resources for information and communication technology (ICT), which is beginning to have a very positive impact on teaching and learning. The school is part of the government's "Testbed Project". In the short time that the school has been involved, the project has had a significant impact on teaching and learning, which is raising standards in ICT throughout the school and is also having a positive impact on standards in other subjects of the curriculum.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In almost half of the lessons observed in the computer suite teaching was very good. The use of computer hardware in class lessons by teachers to demonstrate activities is good. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to use class computers to complement and consolidate their own learning. Teachers set interesting tasks for pupils in the suite and, as a result, they are very motivated and show very good attitudes and application in their lessons and so behave very well. In two lessons observed, related to the work of the artist Mondrian, pupils were totally engrossed by the large images of his work projected onto a large screen. This motivated them to produce their own pictures on the computer in the style of Mondrian. Their attitudes and behaviour during these lessons were excellent. When the teachers projected their work on to the large screen, the pupils cried "wow" in wrapt appreciation of each others picture being displayed.
75. Pupils are very interested in their work and give considerable effort both independently and when co-operating with each other. Pupils support each other very well. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils have equal access to the mouse and keyboard when working in pairs. Assessment of pupils' work is good. Teachers and learning support assistants give very good support to pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, which ensures they are fully involved in lessons and achieve equally as well as other pupils. A gifted and talented register also identifies pupils who excel in ICT. However, in some lessons the pairing of more able pupils to work with lower attaining pupils sometimes prevents the more able from moving on at a faster pace. Teachers confidently use computers for planning, delivering lessons and researching information. They use hardware and software well, including the computers linked to projectors to display lesson objectives, the activities and pupils' work; this motivates and engages pupils. Very good use is made of electronic enlargers to display images onto the main screen. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson the teacher ended the lesson by placing pupils' work on the enlarger for all to see and discuss. He used this as an opportunity to praise pupils' achievement and to recap whether the objectives for the lesson had been achieved.
76. The leadership and management of the subject are excellent. The co-ordinator has guided and trained teachers and support staff very well through the introduction and the development of the 'Testbed project' and the new hardware that has come with the project. She has produced an extremely detailed development plan, which identifies clearly the strengths of the subject and areas for development.

77. The quality of computer hardware is excellent. The ratio of computers to pupils is line with the national recommendation. The school also has digital cameras and a video camera. However, as part of the 'Testbed project', the school is awaiting imminent delivery of a large number of laptops for use in school and for loan for home use by pupils and parents, which will result in the ratio far exceeding the national recommendation. The school has a well-equipped and dedicated computer suite. This will be complemented by a suite for use by the community, which was almost completed at the time of the inspection. A teacher has recently been appointed to develop home-school links for ICT. Like the co-ordinator, she has an excellent vision for the future development of ICT in school and in the community. Both have already held very successful practical days for grandparents and parents. Through the project the school has established very good links with the local junior and secondary school and other schools in the authority, which are involved in the project. The school is developing a good and informative website and aims to develop links with parents by e-mail.

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

78. ICT is used well to support English, mathematics, science and art but has yet to support other areas of the curriculum. This is recognised in the action plan for the subject. For example, in English Year 1 pupils word process sentences and instructions based on class stories of "The Big Hungry Bear". In mathematics Year 2 pupils produce computer generated graphs of favourite pets and in art pupils produce pictures in the style of Jackson Pollock, Mondrian and Matisse.

### **HUMANITIES**

In humanities, work was sampled in **history** and no teaching was observed. Therefore it is not possible to give a judgement on provision in the subject. Work scrutiny was limited to aspects of the subject displayed in school, such as visits by the Royal British Legion to celebrate Remembrance Day and visits to the Tower of London. Discussions with pupils shows that these experiences are used effectively to help pupils appreciate the wealth of historical evidence in their locality. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. From the work seen and discussions with pupils it can be said that standards in history are satisfactory.

#### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

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

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and communicate great interest and enthusiasm for the subject
- Links with pupils' own local environment and other areas of the world, including partnerships with other countries and the use of visitors from the USA, are used beneficially
- Use of ICT to develop investigational skills is limited

#### **Commentary**

79. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2; standards are above average. These are similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils contrast their own home environment with other areas of the world. Teachers make very good use of the school's links with other schools in Chicago. Students from Chicago work in the school periodically and are very willing to talk to pupils about where they live and their way of life. Regular visits to places of both geographical and historical interest such as the Tower of London, give pupils practical experience of how such places came to be established and their current importance within the city.

80. Pupils are well taught. In one excellent lesson, many artefacts are linked with inspirational use of ICT and questioning to enable all pupils to picture the contrasts between their lives and those of children at school in rural Mexico. Artefacts and displays are well used to stimulate curiosity and discussion. Teaching assistants are very well employed to ensure the inclusion of all pupils.
81. Teachers make very good use of the school's excellent ICT resources; however, the school has rightly recognised that pupils' use of the Internet for finding out their own information is an area for development.
82. Leadership and management of geography are satisfactory. Resources are good.

### Example of outstanding practice

Whole class lesson for Year 2 - To introduce a Mexican family and contrast their daily life with the pupils' own lives in Barking.

Planning is assiduous with a clear outline of the learning objectives, resources to be used, key questions to be posed and extension activities for more able pupils. Relationships are excellent. Very good use is made of a teaching assistant and a graduate trainee to prompt the more reluctant pupils to participate and to encourage their interest. The lesson begins with pupils seeing the impact of large photos projected onto a screen using the latest ICT. Images from text books and other resources are projected to a size where all pupils can see the smallest details. Such images are up to date and allow pupils to make telling contrasts with their own lives such as Mexican children wearing very similar leisure clothing to them and recognising the advertising of similar products. All pupils are genuinely surprised and engaged by the clarity of these images which are enhanced by the teacher's careful attention to open-ended questions which draw out the pupils' opinions.

Pupils are enthusiastic in their desire to show their teacher what they know and what contrasts they can draw from the resources seen upon Mexican village life. "Can we see a school in the picture? How is it different to our school?" To which pupils list a variety of contrasts after discussion in groups. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge is linked with enthusiasm and a desire to impart interest in a totally different environment. Pupils are given every opportunity to discuss their work with each other and report back to the rest of the class. At the end of the lesson, pupils are genuinely disappointed to finish and are left eager to find out more.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Due to timetabling, only one very good lesson in Year 2 was observed where standards and achievement were good. Evidence from planning, discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils show that requirements of the locally agreed syllabus should be met by the end of Year 2.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good promotion of self-esteem and care for others
  - There is not always a clear record of pupils' work as there is much discussion rather than written work
  - There are few visits to or visitors from faith communities other than Christianity
83. The curriculum is broad and balanced so that the religions studied are given equality, an important emphasis in a school where different religious faiths are represented. As a result, the quality of provision and the respect shown to religious education are making a positive impact on the excellent relationships highly visible within the school between pupils, adults and parents and with the local community.
  84. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is acting in a caretaker role and has yet to produce a clear plan of action to help raise standards.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

85. No lessons were observed in **art and design**, **design and technology** and **physical education**. Therefore, it is not possible to report fully on overall provision in these areas. Inspectors spoke to the subject co-ordinators and looked at examples of displays of pupils' work, teachers' planning and the co-ordinators' files.
86. On the limited evidence available, it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching, learning, standards and achievement in **art and design**. Teachers' planning, photographs and displays around the school show that the subject has a high profile and that pupils use a good range of media in a variety of contexts. Pupils' sketch books show good opportunities for observational drawings. Winter paintings in Year 2 are vibrant and pay good attention to mixing colours and different media. Good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support the subject. For example, Year 2 pupils use an enlarger, attached to a computer, to magnify leaves, plants and rocks for observational drawings. Pupils also use computers to generate pictures in the style of Kandinsky, Matisse, Mondrian and Jackson Pollock.
87. In **design and technology**, pupils use a range of materials and work on design projects using textiles, materials and food. Photographs and displays around the school suggest well-planned coverage of the curriculum. However, it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching, learning, standards and achievement on the evidence available. Displays and teachers' planning indicate good links to other subjects such as English and science. For example, to support English pupils make porridge and ginger bread people in food technology lessons. They use card and split pins to make jointed models of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and use a variety of materials to design and make bear hand puppets. There is a dedicated cookery area for pupils which is used well because parents give valuable help to cook with small groups.
88. In **physical education**, evidence from discussions with the enthusiastic and experienced co-ordinator shows pupils are given good opportunities for sporting activities, including swimming in Year 2. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection as the positive ethos towards sport and dance in particular has been maintained. There is a sports after-school club and opportunities to play football which help develop pupils' personal potential.

### Music

Provision in music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and achievement is good because teaching is good
- A well developed scheme of work which supports teaching
- Good leadership

### Commentary

89. Achievement is good and pupils have positive attitudes. This is related to good teaching. As at the time of the last inspection, standards are above those expected. In Year 2, pupils begin to compose simple rhythms with four beats in a bar. They co-operate very well together to combine their pieces on order to create longer pieces that they perform confidently. Their use of musical vocabulary is developing well because teachers take every opportunity to use the correct musical words. Younger pupils enjoy composing music to tell the story of Goldilocks and the three bears.
90. Pupils have good opportunities to listen to music as they come into and leave the hall for assembly. This sets the scene for assembly and pupils are encouraged to reflect on the music they hear. They sing enthusiastically and enjoy joining in with the actions.

91. The subject is well led with appropriate ideas for its future development. The school is making plans to make more use of ICT by providing stimuli for listening and composing. The co-ordinator has observed other teachers and models lessons to support them. A good scheme of work is in place that also supports teaching. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and the quality of teaching is good.
92. Pupils in Year 2 are all given opportunity to learn the recorder in school time and many do. There are also good opportunities for pupils to go to music club after school. Visitors such as African drummers and brass players also enhance the curriculum. Pupils enjoy taking part in Christmas and summer concerts and the choir performed in the Barking Primary Choir festival last year. Such activities add to pupils' enjoyment of music.
93. There is a very good range of tuned and un-tuned instruments, including those from other cultures.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This area is a high priority for the school
- By Year 2, pupils are responsible, confident and thoughtful young people

### **Commentary**

94. This area of the school's work is seen as crucially important. The headteacher and senior team work on the premise that unless a child is happy, secure and confident, they will not achieve as well as they might. The excellent relationships within the school and with parents soon highlight if a pupil is in need of extra help or encouragement and this is provided in small groups or on an individual basis. An inspector joined an excellent session where a small group of Reception children were helped to develop self-confidence and self-esteem. It was very clear that all enjoyed this session. It achieved the objectives, helping children through their shyness to bubble with laughter at the end.
95. Assembly themes are carefully thought out to give pupils opportunities to reflect on personal qualities such as kindness and showing respect. Circle time sessions give pupils the opportunities to share feelings and learn to understand other points of view.
96. Year 2 pupils are given responsibilities for helping younger children in the dining hall and in the playground. They take these responsibilities seriously and have obviously learned from the excellent role models set by teachers. They talk nicely to their younger friends and go out of their way to be helpful.
97. The school takes advantage of free fruit for school and, in food technology sessions, teaches pupils to prepare healthy snacks.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<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	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>1</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	1
The effectiveness of management	1

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