

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SPRINGFIELD INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY**

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124658

Headteacher: Mrs Rosie Hill

Lead inspector: Mr Colin Henderson

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 267716

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 – 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 243

School address: 11 Wesley Way  
Bramford Road  
Ipswich  
Suffolk

Postcode: IP1 4PP

Telephone number: 01473 741305

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Appropriate authority: Local Education Authority

Name of chair of Mrs Gail Broom  
governors:

Date of previous 26<sup>th</sup> April 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Springfield School is a larger than average infant school that includes a nursery which has separate morning and afternoon sessions. Most pupils come from rented housing close to the school, although 23 per cent come from outside the school's catchment area. Pupils' mobility in some year groups is above average, with pupils often arriving at short notice from a nearby women's refuge. Pupils come from below average socio-economic backgrounds and an average proportion is entitled to free school meals. Most pupils are of white, United Kingdom ethnic background. There are small numbers of pupils from other ethnic minorities and 4 per cent speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. They include a broad range of behavioural, emotional, physical, communication and learning difficulties. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average overall, although attainment is higher in the current group of children. The school achieved Gold Activemark from 2002-2005 and School Achievement Awards in 2000 and 2002. A new headteacher, previously the school's

deputy headteacher, has been in post since January 2005. A new deputy headteacher was appointed for April 2005.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

| <b>Members of the inspection team</b> |                 |                | <b>Subject responsibilities</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 23742                                 | Colin Henderson | Lead inspector | Mathematics<br>Information and communication technology<br>Physical education<br>Personal, social and health education and citizenship<br>English as an additional language |
| 9334                                  | Jenny Mynett    | Lay inspector  |   |
| 30573                                 | Sonia Bosworth  | Team inspector | Foundation Stage<br>Science<br>Art and design<br>Design and technology<br>Music   |
| 29688                                 | Michael Brammer | Team inspector | English<br>Religious education<br>History<br>Geography<br>Special educational needs   |

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of Springfield Infant School and nursery is **good**. It is a very caring, harmonious and supportive school community in which relationships are very good. Pupils are very keen to learn and behave very well. Their personal development is promoted very well. Their good achievement owes much to the good teaching, very good leadership and a strong staff team. Pupils attain average standards overall by the end of Year 2. The school provides a good range of curriculum activities, enhanced by a good range of extracurricular activities. The school provides a good quality of education and gives good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The new headteacher, supported very well by a strong staff team and a good governing body, gives very good leadership to the work of the school.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and attain standards in ICT and art and design that are above expected levels.
- Teaching is good, supported by very effective teaching assistants.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Assessment information is not used consistently to evaluate pupils' progress and target improvement.
- The links with parents and with other local schools and colleges are very good.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. All points on the action plan have been successfully addressed. Standards overall are similar to those reported previously, although with some improvements, especially in mathematics. The caring and supportive ethos and the good quality of leadership and management have been maintained.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with: | All schools |      |      | Similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
|   | 2002        | 2003 | 2004 | 2004            |
| Reading   | A           | B    | C    | C               |
| Writing   | A           | B    | C    | C               |
| Mathematics   | B           | A    | B    | 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*

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. Most children enter the nursery with below average levels of attainment. They make good progress, and a smooth transition to the reception year ensures that this is maintained throughout the Foundation Stage. Good teaching and very good ongoing assessments help children to achieve well in all areas of learning. Most attain the nationally expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Many exceed expected levels in personal, social and emotional development

and in physical development. Good achievement in Years 1 and 2, promoted by good teaching, helps pupils to attain average standards overall by the end of Year 2. Standards are similar to those attained in the 2004 national tests in reading and writing. They are lower in mathematics as the proportion of higher-attaining pupils in the current Year 2 is lower than previously. All pupils achieve well, with very good support for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language helping them to achieve as well as their peers. Year 2 pupils attain average standards in science. They attain above nationally expected levels in ICT and art and design. Standards in design and technology, history, geography and physical education meet expected levels. There was not enough evidence to judge standards in music.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **very good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is good and punctuality is very good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall throughout the school. They are often very good. Assessment is satisfactory. The procedures are thorough, but the information is not used effectively to target improvement and help to raise standards consistently. The curriculum is good and enhanced by a good range of well-attended enrichment activities. The school takes very good care of its pupils and supports them well. The very good links with parents and with other local schools and the good links with the local community enhance pupils' learning very successfully.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The very good leadership of the new headteacher, supported by an effective governing body and a strong staff team, provides a very purposeful direction to the work of the school. Management is good overall. The leadership of the Foundation Stage and key subjects is good, although aspects of tracking pupils' achievement are not rigorous enough. Governance of the school is good and the governing body successfully ensures that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities.

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

Parents are very supportive of the school. They agree that their children like school, are well cared for and make good progress. They particularly value the good teaching, the good leadership and management and the arrangements for settling into school. A very small number are concerned that the school does not consider their views. Discussions with pupils show that they like school, enjoy lessons and that teachers are fair. All know that they could go to an adult if they are worried. Some pupils were concerned about the behaviour of a small number of pupils. Inspectors agreed with the positive views of parents and pupils. They found that the school actively seeks parents' views and generally responds positively to them. Pupils' behaviour is very good and any inappropriate behaviour is managed well.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the use of assessment information to:
  - Help subject leaders evaluate and track pupils' progress rigorously.
  - Inform pupils how to raise the standard of their work.
  
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in the reception year.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Children in the Foundation Stage attain nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. Pupils attain **average** standards overall at the end of Year 2. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is **good** overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 2 pupils attain above expected standards in ICT and in art and design.
- Good teaching and teachers' very good use of ongoing assessments help children in the Foundation Stage to make good progress in all six areas of learning.
- Very good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs helps them to make good progress overall in their learning.
- Pupils' achievement overall is good in each year group, although some higher-attaining pupils are not always extended enough to attain consistently above average levels.

#### Commentary

1. Most children enter the nursery with below average attainment overall. They settle happily into the morning or afternoon routines due mainly to the good teaching and the good links with local playgroups that help to prepare them for starting school. Nursery and reception staff work very closely together, so that the transition from nursery to the next class is smooth. Achievement is good in all areas of learning, and by the time they enter Year 1, most children have attained the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. A significant proportion of children exceeds the levels expected in personal, social and emotional development and physical development and achieve very well in these areas of learning. Good teaching and very good assessment procedures ensure that children's skills and knowledge are built upon effectively throughout the Foundation Stage.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading       | 15.9 (16.4)    | 15.8 (15.7)      |
| Writing       | 14.9 (15.8)    | 14.6 (14.6)      |
| Mathematics   | 17.2 (18.0)    | 16.2 (16.3)      |

*There were 80 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Year 2 pupils attain average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. These are similar to the standards at the last inspection. They reflect

the average standards, compared to all schools and to similar schools, attained in the 2004 national tests in reading and writing, and the above average standards attained in mathematics. Assessment information shows that the current group of Year 2 pupils has a smaller proportion of higher-attaining pupils than previously, although an analysis of their work shows that teachers' expectations are not always high enough to attain consistently above average levels, for example, in writing.

3. Achievement is good overall throughout Years 1 and 2, with some very good achievement in Year 1 in mathematics. Boys achieve equally as well as girls. Good and often very good teaching of pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills, together with pupils' enthusiastic attitudes to learning, are key factors in promoting achievement. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language benefit from very good support both in class and when withdrawn for small group activities. They achieve as well as their peers and many attain average standards by the end of Year 2.
4. Year 2 pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) and in art and design is good. Teachers make very effective use of the school's computer suite to teach basic ICT skills well and help pupils to apply them in a good number of subjects. The good achievement in art and design is largely as a result of very good and enthusiastic subject leadership and very good links with other subjects to extend pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils' achievement in design and technology, history, geography and physical education is satisfactory overall. They attain standards in religious education that meet those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity are good, although they are less secure in their understanding of Sikhism, the other religion that they study. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on achievement overall in music.

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

Pupils have **very good** attitudes towards their learning and their behaviour is **very good**. Pupils' moral, social, cultural and personal development is **very good**. Attendance is **good** and pupils are punctual to school in the morning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Throughout the school, pupils are eager to learn – they find their lessons fun and interesting, and make good progress.
- Pupils behave very well in and around school – working and playing well together helps promote a harmonious environment.
- Pupils' awareness of how to treat others and their respect for each other contributes to a happy and welcoming school.
- Pupils' understanding of their own culture and that of others is very good.

### **Commentary**

5. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school, their learning, and the many different clubs and activities they all attend. Parents are especially pleased by

the way the school encourages their children to become mature and responsible, and as a result, they are developing confidence and becoming more independent. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school. They talk about the 'friendly school', the 'fun' lessons and the reward system that motivates them to work hard and behave well. The youngest children in the nursery and reception classes show very good attitudes to school. They are happy to share their toys and equipment, take turns and concentrate well. These children are likely to achieve their early learning goals in personal and social education by the end of their reception class.

6. The behaviour of pupils has improved since the last inspection and is very good, both in lessons and around the school. Class teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage any minor disruptions very well. From early in the nursery and reception classes, children quickly settle into the routines of the classroom and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. They build firm and friendly relationships with adults and their classmates, learning to co-operate and play well with each other. These very good relationships are continued throughout the school, and promote a very effective learning environment that contributes to pupils' achievement. The very good promotion of positive social and moral skills shows in the pupils' developing self-discipline and in the lack of bullying or exclusions in the school. Older pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to undertake roles of responsibility as monitors. They help to look after the younger children and perform their different tasks around the school conscientiously.
7. Assemblies and 'circle time' provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of feelings and emotions, to discuss important issues and to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns. Adults treat pupils with respect – they value their efforts and pupils respond positively. Pupils copy these positive aspects and these show in the way they listen to and appreciate the efforts of others. Pupils are beginning to understand how their actions affect others.
8. Pupils develop a good understanding of their own culture because the curriculum links work very effectively to promote pupils' experience of their locality and heritage. Visits strengthen pupils' understanding, for example, comparing differences between Ipswich and Bawdsey or investigating the historic significance of Orford Castle. Pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own is promoted very successfully through a series of multi-cultural weeks held each term. These enable pupils to explore and celebrate the different foods, music, art and other aspects of various cultures from around the world.

### **Attendance**

9. Pupils are happy to come to school and are eager to learn. Attendance levels have improved since the last inspection and are now good and above the national average, with few unauthorised absences. Parents bring their children to school punctually in the mornings, and lessons start on time.

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

| Authorised absence |     | Unauthorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data:       | 4.4 | School data:         | 0.2 |
| National data:     | 5.1 | National data:       | 0.4 |

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **good**, enriched by a **good** range of extracurricular activities. The day-to-day care of pupils is **very good**. Links with parents and other local schools are **very good**. They are **good** with the local community.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality of teaching contributes well to pupils' achievement.
- Teachers manage their classes very well and encourage a very enthusiastic desire to learn in many lessons.
- The very good partnership between class teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils to be included successfully in learning activities and to achieve well.
- Detailed planning and good quality teaching of pupils' basic skills underpins good achievement in many subjects.
- Good and often very good teaching in the Foundation Stage helps children to settle quickly and make good progress.
- Teachers use questions very well to encourage pupils' participation, although they do not always use more challenging questions for higher-attaining pupils.
- Teachers do not evaluate pupils' work consistently to point out what they need to do to improve.

### Commentary

10. Teaching and learning are good overall and have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Teaching was often very good in the lessons observed, with examples of very good practice in each year group. The good teaching was clearly reflected in the analysis of pupils' work as teachers' encouragement of pupils and their effective use of time resulted in most pupils achieving a significant amount of well-presented work. The good teaching is valued strongly by parents and pupils.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good     | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor   | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 1 (3%)    | 9 (23%)   | 22 (58%) | 6 (16%)      | 0 (0%)         | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%)    |

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

11. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. They manage their classes very well and are confident that pupils will tackle their work positively and maintain their concentration. Some teachers use humour successfully to create an effective and warm learning environment, and pupils respond very positively. Most are very keen to learn and to please their teacher by achieving well. Teachers share with pupils the learning objective for each lesson so that they know what they are trying to achieve. This gives a clear focus to learning. Most teachers use the end-of-lesson feedback sessions well to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching. They use questions very well to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas and to help them evaluate pupils' progress in their learning. However, too few teachers use more challenging questions of

higher-attaining pupils that require them to apply their knowledge. This does not help these pupils to achieve as well as they could and to attain a higher level.

12. Teachers plan well in their year teams to ensure that pupils experience similar learning activities, with detailed planning enabling them to provide a good range of activities at three different levels. This helps them to largely meet learning needs of different groups of pupils, although an analysis of pupils' work shows that the activities for the most able Year 2 pupils do not extend them consistently to achieve above average levels. Teachers reinforce pupils' learning successfully by linking different subjects closely in their teaching plans, for example, when their science topic is supported well by activities in literacy, numeracy, ICT and in art and design. This, combined with good teaching in the basic skills of these subjects, promotes good learning.
13. Teachers work very well with skilful and experienced learning support staff to help all pupils to achieve well. This partnership is particularly effective in ensuring that pupils are fully involved in group activities. Pupils benefit significantly from very good individual and small group support. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported by an experienced and knowledgeable teaching assistant, both in the classroom and when withdrawn in a small group to extend their English language skills. Pupils with special educational needs who need extra support are identified at an early stage and placed on effective support programmes. Pupils' progress is recorded well towards their learning targets, although individual education plans are not always precise in what is expected of them.
14. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and often very good, particularly in the nursery, in all areas of learning. Very good teaching assistants play an important role in classrooms and contribute effectively to children's learning. Teachers plan well so that children are stimulated by the activities and focus on relevant learning. Often, small groups of children will be taken outside by teaching assistants to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in the wider environment. Teachers and teaching assistants undertake thorough and accurate assessments of children's attainment and achievement on a daily basis. These are used very well in grouping children for focused teaching and for planning subsequent activities.
15. The school has developed further the good procedures for assessing pupils' progress that were introduced just before the last inspection, especially in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The results of pupils' achievements are recorded for each pupil to track their progress through the school. In each year group, their future likely attainment by the end of the school year is predicted in October. However, these targets are not reviewed regularly to evaluate how well pupils are working towards them, to identify if any additional support is needed or to modify the original target where needed. The lack of rigour in monitoring and evaluating the end-of-year targets does not ensure that all pupils progress as well as they should.
16. The school has improved its day-to-day assessments, for example, by introducing key learning objectives for each lesson and assessing pupils'

progress in achieving them. This is reflected in teachers' marking when they indicate clearly when the objective has been achieved. However, where the objective has not been achieved, teachers do not let pupils know what they need to do to improve. The school has also introduced group improvement targets in literacy and numeracy. These are clearly displayed on the group's working tables and in pupils' books, and pupils know and understand what they are. These targets are set and reviewed termly. However, in discussions with pupils, several indicated that they had met their target but did not know what the next group target was or what they needed to focus on next in order to improve their work. An analysis of pupils' work shows that teachers rarely refer to pupils' progress towards their targets in their marking, even when the work is linked directly to the specific target. Teachers tick the target listed at the front of pupils' books to let them know when it has been achieved. Some record the date so progress can be monitored, although this is not consistent in each class. The lack of consistency in evaluating pupils' learning and informing them what they need to improve limits the rate of progress of some pupils.

## **The curriculum**

The school has a **good** curriculum. There are **good** opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences through extracurricular activities. The **good** accommodation and learning resources support pupils' learning well.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The well-planned curriculum enables pupils to learn well.
- Good curriculum enrichment makes what pupils learn more interesting and relevant.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The good range of extracurricular activities stimulates the interests of Year 2 pupils and enhances their learning well.
- The accommodation for the reception classes makes it difficult to offer a full range of curriculum activities.
- The range of learning activities is limited by weaknesses in resources in ICT and history.

## **Commentary**

17. The good curriculum has been maintained since the last inspection. It is well planned, includes a wide range of activities and meets the requirements of the national curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The planning covers what pupils should know in each subject. It makes effective links to other subjects and to a wide range of styles that help pupils to learn well. An effective personal, social and health education programme contributes well to the school ethos. Since the last inspection, the national literacy strategy and the national numeracy strategy have been successfully introduced. These have contributed to improved standards of spelling and to improved results in mathematics. The school's strong commitment to equal opportunities ensures that all pupils are successfully integrated into the school.

18. Good enrichment of the curriculum increases the pupils' experience and promotes good learning. It is planned to support a wide range of subjects, including English, science, geography, history, music and religious education. Discussion with pupils shows how much they learn from visits to a castle or a museum, and from theatre groups and a 'Zoolab' that come to the school.
19. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is a good range of well-planned programmes and they are used well to support identified pupils. These help pupils with learning difficulties and those with emotional and behavioural problems to achieve well.
20. Pupils in Year 2 support a wide range of extracurricular activities that are arranged for them in short four-week blocks. They include physical activities like fun and fitness, musical opportunities that include singing and playing the recorder and craft, gardening and board games. They stimulate pupils' interest, and are well attended.
21. A good range of resources overall supports good teaching and learning, although a lack of computers in the classrooms and a limited range of historical artefacts restrict learning opportunities. Interactive whiteboards recently introduced to the school increase the range of teaching and learning methods and capture pupils' interest successfully. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory. The nursery has an attractive outdoor area and a large indoor area to set out a good variety of activities from which children can choose independently. However, the element of independent choice in the learning of two reception classes is restricted by the limited classroom space available, and all three classes lack an outdoor secure area.

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

The school has **very good** systems to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety, and pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a safe, caring and supportive environment where pupils can grow into happy confident individuals.
- The sensitive induction arrangements ensure children are happy and settle into school quickly.
- Inconsistencies in monitoring pupils' learning do not help them to know what to do to improve.

### **Commentary**

22. Springfield Infants is a very caring school. The overall provision for pupils' health, welfare and protection continues to be very good, and parents are very pleased that their children are well nurtured and supported. They speak very positively about the kind and caring teachers and support staff and the way they treat pupils fairly. Arrangements for child protection and procedures

relating to health, safety and security are carefully organised. Regular audits and risk assessments are undertaken, with the governors taking their responsibility for health and safety issues conscientiously. The school has very good links with external agencies and funds a liaison worker to support vulnerable pupils and families. Very good induction arrangements help the youngest children begin their school life happily and confidently. Parents recognise that the good links with pre-school playgroups and the opportunities for home visits helps ease their children into school.

23. Teachers know their classes very well and provide good personal support where needed, such as through the innovative 'ginger group' system or support for pupils with special educational needs. However, procedures to monitor and support pupils' academic development and progress are not fully developed. Tracking systems are used successfully to predict end-of-year targets, and pupils have group targets in literacy and numeracy. However, these are not used consistently to evaluate progress and make clear to pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
24. Pupils are very happy and think it is a very safe and secure school. They feel that staff know them very well and talk of having forged trusting relationships with adults. The personal development programme is good and enables pupils to share their concerns and voice their opinions during 'circle time' lessons. Pupils are confident that they can turn to any member of staff if they have a problem or are unhappy. The plans to introduce a school council will provide further opportunities to consult with pupils and involve them more fully in the life and work of the school.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents, other schools and colleges is **very good**. The school has **good** links with the local community.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive and hold the school in high esteem.
- The 'open door' policy and access to teachers helps keep parents informed about their children's progress.
- The very good links with local primary and secondary schools help promote curriculum development and enrichment opportunities for pupils.

### Commentary

25. Parents are very positive about the education their children receive. The school has built very close links with parents, and provides them with many opportunities to become involved in their children's education, both at home and in school. A number of parents help out in the school with craftwork or listening to pupils read, which contributes very effectively to pupils' learning experiences. Class assemblies, parents' week, sports days and special events are all well supported. The parent/teacher association is run by an active group of parents who organise a number of successful social and fund-raising activities each year. They are also used as a sounding board for new ideas as part of the consultative process, which seeks parents' views about different issues.
26. Parents are generally happy with all aspects of the school, although some concerns were expressed about the effectiveness of the home-school reading diary as a means of day-to-day communication. These are checked most days when books are changed, whilst the open door policy means that staff are available in the playground at the start and end of the day if there are concerns or problems. Most parents feel they are kept fully informed about the good progress their children make. Consultation evenings are well attended and the pupils' annual reports provide a broad overview of what their child has covered. However, whilst they broadly indicate what pupils have been doing, they do not always provide a clear indication of what levels pupils are expected to attain. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully up-to-date and involved in the review processes, although a very small number felt that their views were not always taken into account. Inspectors found that these parents are kept well informed. The special educational needs co-ordinator knows the families very well and, often supported by the headteacher, runs review meetings effectively to focus on pupils' needs.
27. Visits to places in the local area help to develop pupils' contact with the local community well. There are close links with the local church – pupils sing at dinner parties for the elderly, local people have attended a fund raising events and the school is part of the Bramford Community Group. Business sponsorship has helped with some building projects and a local dance group uses the premises in the evenings.

28. Links with other schools are improving, both on a management and on an academic basis. The school is involved in an effective pyramid grouping with other local schools. This helps promote joint staff development activities, headteacher planning, moderation of standards and opportunities for enrichment activities for pupils. The links with staff from a local special school have been very helpful in providing training for staff caring for pupils with specific learning and behavioural problems. The transition to the junior school is sensitively organised to ensure the move to the next stage of education is as smooth as possible. There are a number of introductory visits and pupils from Springfield Junior School visit to share special events. A buddy system is set up early in the year between pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 so that younger pupils know somebody when they arrive there. The school has also forged very strong links with local high schools for work experience placements and local colleges in connection with the initial teacher training programme and some vocational courses for parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership. The governance of the school is **good**. The effectiveness of the overall management and the leadership of other key staff are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The new headteacher provides a very clear direction for the work of the school.
- The school has a very strong and supportive team approach that promotes staff professional development well.
- Governors know the school well and work in an effective partnership with the headteacher and her staff.
- Key subject leaders manage their subjects well, although they are not always effective enough in evaluating standards and targeting improvement.
- The finances are very well managed and the school runs very efficiently.

### **Commentary**

29. The overall leadership and management have been maintained at the good quality reported at the last inspection. The new headteacher has gained a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. She has a clear vision of how she wants the school to develop in the next few years, and this promotes strong and purposeful leadership. Her good leadership is valued by parents and pupils, who find her approachable and fair.
30. The headteacher has used her experience as a mentor for initial teacher training students very effectively to monitor teaching and learning. This contributes well to maintaining good teaching. She has extended the monitoring and evaluation programme, as reflected in the school's development plan, to include other key staff, as it was focused mainly on English, mathematics and science. She has built very successfully on the strong team approach identified

in the last inspection by broadening the range of opportunities for staff, governors and parents to contribute their ideas to school improvement, for example, through extending the school leadership team and developing the school change team. The very good communication between staff and the new headteacher, for example, through individual meetings each term with all staff and regular year-team and whole-staff meetings is greatly valued and helps to ensure an agreed sense of purpose. It also enables the headteacher to promote staff professional development well, for example, by agreeing areas for development and arranging for staff to visit other schools to observe very good quality practice. Teachers, support staff and managers are keen to build on the school's effectiveness and are in a good position to improve the provision and raise standards.

31. Governance of the school has been maintained at the good level reported previously. The governing body has had a high level of change recently and has benefited from some good quality training from the local education authority. Governors are keen to work with the school and extend their role and contribution in evaluating and improving the education provided. They are supportive of the school and successfully ensure that it meets all the statutory responsibilities. Governors visit school regularly, often linked to a priority issue in the school development plan or a specific aspect of the school's provision, such as special educational needs. This, together with detailed termly reports from the headteacher, helps them to evaluate the progress being made in improving the quality of education and in checking the effectiveness of their spending decisions. Governors work hard to seek parental views, for example, through attendance at parents' evenings, and this helps to inform their discussions and strategic planning.
32. Key aspects of leadership are good, especially in special educational needs, the Foundation Stage and in the subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Subject leaders provide good support and guidance to other staff teaching their subjects. They check regularly on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, through some lesson observations, discussions with staff and pupils and samples of pupils' work. However, key staff do not always have a clear understanding of how well pupils are achieving across the school. Although some monitor pupils' progress by identifying strengths and weaknesses in their learning, for example, by analysing test results, they do not use this information to guide subject teaching and evaluate improvement. Procedures to assess pupils' achievement are implemented regularly by all staff, but subject leaders and other key staff do not use the information consistently to track pupils' progress across the school and identify specific points for improvement. Some management procedures have been developed well. Others are not established with sufficient rigour to promote a consistent focus on raising standards. The new headteacher has recently introduced a more structured pattern of evaluating teaching and learning and its impact on standards, linked closely to the school improvement plan.
33. The financial planning and management of the budget are very good. Governors, with very effective support and guidance from the Senior Administrative Assistant, carefully plan and target the budget on improvement priorities. They closely monitor spending levels and ensure that the principles of

best value are applied very well when purchasing goods and services. They evaluate how their spending decisions affect standards, for example, when increasing the funds for teaching assistants. Funds are usually spent fully, although recent appointments of new staff have resulted in a small surplus being built up that is used mainly to maintain staffing levels.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

| <b>Income and expenditure (£)</b> |         | <b>Balances (£)</b>                 |        |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income                      | 665,046 | Balance from previous year          | 37,590 |
| Total expenditure                 | 639,830 | Balance carried forward to the next | 25,216 |
| Expenditure per pupil             | 2,379   |                                     |        |

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** overall.

34. Most children enter the nursery with below average knowledge and skills compared with children of a similar age, although the attainment of the current nursery children is nearer to average than in past years. Children attend the nursery part-time, mostly for two terms. They enter the reception classes in the term of their fifth birthday, so that the school has to create new classes and appoint new teachers in the spring and summer terms. The eldest reception children benefit from three terms of full-time schooling and the youngest from just one.
35. A new and enthusiastic Foundation Stage co-ordinator has a very good understanding of how young children learn. She leads the team of staff very effectively and provides good management of children's early schooling. The school has developed a good curriculum, which meets the requirements for the teaching and learning of young children. This is good improvement from the last inspection. Very good systems ensure that teachers who join the Foundation Stage team throughout the year are informed well about procedures and resources and are supported very well in the whole-team planning sessions. Children settle into school life quickly because the nursery staff have good links with the local playgroups and get to know children well through very useful home visits prior to starting. Parents receive good quality information about school and the part they can play in their children's learning. Children with special educational needs are identified early in their schooling, supported well in activities and make good progress. Good advice from a local authority adviser helps adults to support children with English as an additional language well, so that they achieve well.
36. Children achieve at a good rate overall because of good and caring teaching in all areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, most children reach the levels expected for their age (the early learning goals) in all areas of learning. Most children exceed these goals in personal, social and emotional development and in most aspects of physical development. They achieve very well in these areas of learning. Lessons are managed effectively so that children engage in a range of interesting activities and get on busily with the tasks set. Teaching assistants contribute very well to children's learning, guiding them with good questioning skills and lots of sensitive encouragement. Teaching and learning are consistently good and often very good, especially in the nursery where good accommodation and an attractive outdoor area provide children with an exciting place in which to learn. The reception classrooms are small for the numbers of children and have no immediate access to the outdoor area. Teachers plan carefully to use the hall and outside areas to ensure that children have good opportunities for creative and physical activities and use the environment of the school as much as possible. However, there are no opportunities for children to select physical activities for themselves during the

day, and the size of classrooms limits spontaneous imaginative play. This restricts the development of children's independence, curiosity, interest and creativity. Teachers and teaching assistants undertake thorough and accurate assessments of children's achievements in all areas of learning on a daily basis. Teachers make very good use of this information when planning subsequent activities.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- The positive ethos established by staff results in a happy, supportive learning environment in which children achieve very well.
- Teachers' planning is good and gives a clear focus to the promotion of children's personal development.

#### **Commentary**

37. This area of learning is given a strong emphasis from the time children start nursery. With good and often very good teaching, very good relationships in the classes and well-planned and ordered environments in which they feel secure, all children achieve very well. By the time they start in Year 1, their attainment is above that expected nationally for their age. All teachers plan good activities that include taking turns, working co-operatively with a partner and organising themselves to get out equipment needed for a task. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour, and children quickly learn right from wrong and respond very well. When behaviour is inappropriate, children are sensitively moved on to another activity and good behaviour is reinforced with praise or 'stars'. They are frequently encouraged to share their own views from an early age and often to share their news with the rest of the class. Teachers encourage sustained interest and concentration from children, which helps them to learn effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good role models for children and promote children's self-worth and confidence in their learning well. Children love being the 'child of the week'. Good manners are developed during snack time each day. Independent learning skills are promoted very well in the nursery and well in reception classes, when children choose from the good range of activities on offer.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

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

- Early reading and writing skills develop well through play and structured activities.
- Adults encourage children to speak and listen effectively in all activities.

## Commentary

38. All children achieve well, and most are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1, and a few will exceed them. This is because of good teaching and learning. From the early stages, teachers and teaching staff promote very good opportunities for children to talk so that they can develop their language skills throughout the day. Adults are good role models in their own speech and use good questioning techniques to improve children's answers. Vocabulary is developed well to ensure that children have a clear understanding of activities and tasks. Good whole-class activities improve children's capacity to concentrate and listen to adults and other children.
39. The school has developed a more systematic approach to the teaching of early reading skills than at the time of the last inspection. From the nursery, children are encouraged effectively to enjoy stories and books and to 'guess' what will happen next. They often choose to sit in the book areas to 'read'. Children make good progress in developing their reading skills because they regularly have short sessions that focus on letters and their sounds in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers plan a variety of interesting activities for children to develop a thorough understanding of letters, sounds and their combination and to recognise a number of frequently used words. Most parents share books regularly with their children and help them to practise these words, which increases children's achievement. Most children quickly learn to read common words in a range of contexts. Some older reception children read simple stories well. The school monitors children's attainment and achievement well and found that frequently children's writing skills were weaker than other aspects of this area of learning. Strategies are in place for children to use writing more frequently and for it to become exciting, for example, when the youngest children in the reception year wrote out a 'sandwich' menu for a friend. Children often choose to write during 'free choice' activities. By the end of the reception year, most children begin to write short pieces independently, with plausible spelling and some capital letters and full stops.

## Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with a strong emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- The Foundation Stage co-ordinator analyses assessment data well to identify which aspects of learning need to be improved.

## Commentary

40. Children have very good attitudes to mathematics, and good teaching and lively learning activities help children to achieve well. Most achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. A majority of children exceed the goal of

recognising, counting, ordering and writing numbers to 20, but an analysis of children's attainment at the end of the reception year in 2004 showed that many children could not use a range of strategies for addition and subtraction. Currently, teachers plan well to address this weakness, ensuring that children have a good, fundamental understanding of number and are on target for most children to attain the goal for calculation. In the nursery class, the teacher and teaching assistant provide many clearly focused activities for children to count, match and sort. Children are guided and encouraged well to recognise shapes and numerals around the room. Children in reception classes choose from a variety of well-linked activities that support the particular mathematical focus of the lesson. This consolidates their understanding and learning well. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively with groups of children to teach and develop new skills at appropriate levels according to children's prior attainment.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned topic work is complemented by exciting contributions from visits and visitors.
- Staff use questions skilfully to help children extend their ideas.
- Limited space restricts the range of activities for reception classes.

## Commentary

41. Teaching and learning are good overall and promote good achievement. Most of this area of learning is effectively planned through interesting and lively activities that stimulate children's curiosity about the world around them. By the time they enter Year 1, most children attain the expected early learning goals. Teachers and teaching assistants use the school environment very well to study mini-beasts and plants and many young children talk knowledgeably about what they have found out. Well-planned visits and visitors enhance children's learning. Children were particularly enthused by the visit of 'Zoo-lab', and saw and touched animals, such as a giant millipede. From this study, there are good links with religious education, when teachers guide and encourage children well to say why it is important to care for living things. From the nursery, children have good opportunities to draw and move objects around the computer screen as they become adept at using the mouse. Reception children use the computer suite regularly and, with very good support, they experience a good variety of programs to extend their skills. Teachers and teaching assistants use good questioning techniques to help children to think for themselves. As a result, children make sense of what they see and hear and a few children are confident enough to initiate ideas or to ask questions of their own. Through topics about other countries, teachers plan good activities that promote children's cultural understanding, for example, in a topic on China. In the nursery, children constantly have 'free choice' experiences to explore the properties of sand, water, dough and other media. Because of the limitations of space within the reception classrooms, the range of experiences is more restricted. Children have good opportunities to make things, such as in junk modelling, the use of construction sets and cooking activities, and all try very hard in these activities.

## Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good outdoor area allows nursery children to extend their physical development through spontaneous play.
- Good use is made of the school hall for regular physical education lessons.
- The development of independent outdoor play is hampered because reception classrooms do not have a designated and secure outdoor area.

## Commentary

42. Consistently good teaching and learning help children to achieve very well. By the time they enter Year 1, all children are likely to attain the early learning goals and most will exceed them. However, children's co-ordination and control in the use of scissors and other small tools is less developed than in large movements, such as in dance or gymnastics. Nevertheless, teachers plan a good range of activities for children to develop these skills, such as using a knife to spread butter and to cut a sandwich. Teachers encourage children to use a pencil successfully to form letters and numbers, but they do not consistently enforce a good grip. Children in the nursery frequently choose to use the large-wheeled toys and use the outdoor space well without bumping into each other. However, children in reception classes cannot choose activities throughout the day that will extend their physical development because there are no access doors from the classroom to the outside area. The school is aware that there needs to be further development in provision and intends to take action when finance is available. Nevertheless, teachers plan carefully to use the outside area for supervised activities when the weather permits. The hall is used frequently and children's skills are good when running, climbing, balancing, jumping and dodging.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The emphasis on developing children's creative imagination is effective.
- The limitation of the accommodation for two of the reception classes and the lack of a secure outside space restrict opportunities for imaginative play.

### **Commentary**

43. Children achieve well because of the good teaching, learning, and levels of support. Most achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teachers encourage children effectively to use their own ideas in the composition of a drawing or a painting and sensitively encourage children to think how they could improve their work. Teachers and teaching assistants guide children well to use their bodies to express themselves in dance and movement, although sometimes children are directed too much and rely on the teacher's ideas rather than their own. Music is linked well to a published scheme. The nursery teacher sets up stimulating activities for children to explore the sounds made by various instruments. They enjoy learning new songs and are particularly adept at thinking of new actions for the words. Reception children sing well in assemblies. There are good opportunities each day for imaginative play in the nursery and in one reception class that has fewer children in it. For example, the eldest reception children were very motivated to 'find' mini-beasts in the jungle, view them through a magnifier and to write down their findings. Teachers do their best in the other two classes to plan motivating activities to promote good achievement in this area of learning, be it in the classroom, outside or in the hall. However, the lack of classroom space and the fact that there is no opportunity to play imaginatively outside limits the element of free choice for this area. Nevertheless, provision and children's attainment in this area of learning have improved well since the last inspection.



## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well, although some higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged enough.
- Pupils' very good attitudes have a positive effect on their learning.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good, but assessment is not used to monitor pupils' progress rigorously.
- Pupils' literacy skills are used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

44. In the 2004 national tests, pupils in Year 2 attained standards in reading and writing that were average compared to all schools and to pupils in similar schools. These reflect standards attained by the current Year 2 that are broadly average and similar to the last inspection. Pupils' spelling has improved and their achievement over time, both for girls and boys, is good.
45. Standards in speaking and listening are average but have been identified by the school as an area for improvement. Pupils listen well. This is clear from the way they reply to questions and it reflects their very good attitudes and behaviour. Teachers make use of 'talking partners' to encourage pupils to express their thoughts, although not enough time is allowed in some lessons for it to be effective. Some teachers question pupils effectively but others do not ask questions that invite pupils to reply at length in full sentences. The very effective use of support staff enables pupils who speak English as an additional language to make good progress in improving their English speaking and listening skills.
46. Standards in reading are average. Pupils are given the skills to enable them to read through the careful teaching of letter sounds. Their knowledge of key words is tested regularly. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 read fluently and with expression. They talk confidently about which book they enjoy by a favourite author, like Roald Dahl. The reading diaries are an effective link between home and school, encouraging parents to support the pupils' learning. Some pupils benefit from belonging to a local public library, and each class has a weekly lesson in the school library, which helps to promote positive attitudes to reading.
47. Standards of writing are average. Pupils present their work neatly and this reflects their very good attitudes. They are taught to join their letters well in handwriting lessons but they are not always required to apply these skills consistently in other subjects. Opportunities are missed to challenge higher-

attaining pupils in particular to check their handwriting and their use of full stops and capital letters. Pupils write stories, poems and factual accounts. With the help of key words, their spelling is usually either accurate or is easily understood.

48. Teaching and learning are good, both in the lessons observed and in the analysis of pupils' work. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They encourage pupils to give of their best, and they manage their class very well. Very good use is made of teaching assistants to support the learning of lower-attaining pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly to indicate if pupils have achieved the learning objective. However, marking does not consistently show pupils how to improve if the objective has not been achieved or evaluate progress towards their literacy targets. Teachers encourage pupils to adopt an enthusiastic approach to learning. This is shown clearly in all lessons, in the care that they take with their written work and when they talk enthusiastically about what they have read and learned. This helps them to achieve well.
49. Good leadership and management of the subject have a positive effect on the standards that pupils attain. The recently appointed co-ordinator has monitored teaching and given constructive feedback to help raise standards. She has organised a variety of specially organised events to enrich the curriculum, including storytelling, taking part in World Book Day, visits from theatre groups and entering a speaking competition. Good assessment procedures are established, but teachers do not use them well enough for pupils' progress to be monitored closely and for weaknesses to be quickly identified and improved.
50. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. Knowledge of traditional rhymes and stories, and special weeks that focus on a different country help pupils to understand their own culture and that of other people.

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

51. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their reading and writing skills and contribute well to their learning in a broad range of subjects. For example, pupils are given good opportunities to write in science, history, geography, design and technology and ICT. Their reading skills are used well to enhance learning in such subjects as history and geography. This is planned well and allows them to practise their writing skills and to deepen their understanding of other areas across the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Year 1 are above expected levels.
- Good teaching leads to good achievement.

- Teachers use innovative methods to capture pupils' interest and encourage an enthusiastic approach to mathematics.
- There are inconsistencies in the use of assessment information to target areas for improvement and to track pupils' progress.
- Some higher-attaining Year 2 pupils are not always challenged enough to attain consistently above average levels.

## Commentary

52. Year 2 pupils attain average standards. These are similar to those reported at the last inspection. The results in national tests over the last three years show that pupils attain above average standards. Assessment information shows that the current group of Year 2 pupils contains a lower proportion of higher-attaining pupils than previously and is unlikely to attain as well. Some higher-attaining Year 2 pupils are not always challenged enough to attain above average levels. Year 1 pupils attain standards that are above those expected nationally for their age, with a good proportion working confidently in the level expected of average Year 2 pupils. Pupils' achievement is good overall, with some very good achievement in Year 1. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in class and make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language benefit from very good support and guidance, particularly in Year 1. Most achieve the standards expected for their age and some exceed them.
53. Teaching and learning are good overall, with examples of very good practice in both year groups. Teachers use innovative methods to grasp pupils' interest and attention and promote their knowledge and understanding successfully, especially their basic number skills. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas in group and class discussions. They use praise well, promoting pupils' confidence, self-esteem and an enthusiastic attitude. Many pupils said that numeracy is their favourite subject. Their positive attitudes are reflected clearly, particularly in Year 1, in the amount of work they achieve and the neat way in which it is presented. Some teachers do not use follow-up or more challenging questions enough to ensure that higher-attaining pupils are required to apply their knowledge, for example, in mental number calculations. Too often, pupils are required to wait while others are working out their answers rather than being extended with a supplementary or extension question. This limits their achievement.
54. Teachers work well in year group teams to plan a good range of group activities to meet the different abilities in each class. They work in a very successful partnership with effective teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils are included fully and achieve well, especially lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and link their comments closely to the learning objective. This helps those pupils who achieve the objective to know how well they are doing, although marking does not always help those who do not achieve it by indicating what needs improving. The school has introduced group targets in numeracy and most pupils know what their improvement targets are. However, there are significant inconsistencies in teachers' use of these targets, and these restrict progress.

Some teachers clearly indicate when a target has been achieved with dates and comments. However, this is not consistently done, and when pupils have achieved their target, they are not sure what they need to focus on next as targets are only reviewed termly. Few teachers refer to pupils' progress towards their targets in their marking comments, even where the learning activity is linked closely to their group target. Teachers in Year 2 set homework weekly and this consolidates class learning well, often through number games.

55. The leadership and management of the subject are good overall. The subject co-ordinator has worked closely with other staff to monitor samples of pupils' work, observed some lessons and discussed with groups of pupils their work in mathematics. She has analysed test results to identify what has been done well and where there are weaknesses, although these are not used consistently to inform teaching. Teachers set attainment targets for each pupil in early October to be achieved by the end of the school year. However, these are not reviewed regularly or pupils' progress evaluated rigorously to check that they are on course to achieve them. This does not ensure that teaching and learning are focused closely on improving pupils' weaknesses, and the subject co-ordinator tracks closely the standards of attainment in mathematics across the school.

#### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

56. Teachers plan well to help pupils to extend their mathematical skills and knowledge and support their learning across the curriculum. For example, they use their knowledge of shape well in science to create symmetrical shapes found in nature. Graphs were seen in many areas of learning, especially in science, and pupils use their measuring skills successfully in design and technology, for example, when making a wheeled-vehicle.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Teachers and teaching assistants engage children very well in their learning, leading to good overall achievement.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy the good emphasis on investigational science.
- The expectation and challenge of higher-attaining pupils are inconsistent.
- The tracking of pupils' achievement lacks rigour.

#### **Commentary**

57. Standards attained by pupils by the end of Year 2 are average. Attainment is similar to that reported at the last inspection and higher than the teacher assessments made for the 2004 cohort. However, it is likely that fewer pupils will attain the higher Level 3 than in 2004, because there are fewer higher ability pupils in the present Year 2 cohort. Pupils' achievement is good overall because they are encouraged to participate actively in discussion and to apply

their knowledge in experimentation and investigational work. In these practical sessions, pupils concentrate well on the task and work co-operatively with a partner or group well. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well in lessons by teachers and teaching assistants, and achieve well. Pupils whose home language is not English have very good additional support and achieve as well as their peers.

58. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some very good teaching seen during the inspection. All teachers share the learning intentions well with pupils and review past work well so that there is a clear direction for lessons, and pupils respond enthusiastically. Teachers have devised relevant higher order questions to extend the most able pupils. However, teachers do not consistently challenge higher ability pupils sufficiently during the whole lesson, often accepting initial answers without challenging by asking questions such as 'Why?' Similarly, most Year 2 pupils can describe a fair test, but teachers do not consistently help pupils to apply this knowledge in investigations. Good attention is given to pupils' presentation of work so that investigations are recorded neatly and systematically. Pupils are beginning to use their literacy skills more effectively in the subject, as teachers rely less on published worksheets for recording outcomes of practical work. Links with other subjects are good, particularly with art and design. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not consistently give clear advice about how they can improve.
59. The leadership of the subject is good and management is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the work carried out in each classroom, as she has had good opportunities to observe lessons, scrutinise pupils' work and has had discussions with pupils. The analysis of the 2004 Year 2 teacher assessments by the school's senior leadership team highlighted that pupils' scientific enquiry skills were below average. Good strategies and monitoring are now in place, and evidence from lessons indicates that pupils' enquiry skills have improved. Teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly at the end of each unit of work, although some assessments are very cautious and do not reflect how well some pupils are doing. The subject leader does not regularly monitor pupils' assessment information and, as a result, she cannot evaluate whether they are making sufficient progress in all areas of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of pupils' basic ICT skills is good and standards are above nationally expected levels.
- Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to use their skills in many subjects.
- The ICT technician provides very valuable support to teachers and enhances pupils' learning well.
- Limited ICT resources in classrooms restrict the extension of pupils' skills and knowledge.

- Assessments of pupils' work are not used consistently to track their progress and inform teaching and learning.

## **Commentary**

60. The school's ICT suite, opened just before the last inspection, is used very effectively by teachers to provide good opportunities for teaching key skills in all required aspects of the subject and to use these skills to support learning in a good range of subjects. This helps pupils throughout the school to achieve well, and by the end of Year 2, standards are above those expected nationally. They have been maintained at the good standard reported at the last inspection. All pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject, although weaknesses in keyboard skills limit the amount achieved in word-processing activities. The valuable contribution of the knowledgeable technician/teaching assistant helps groups of pupils to extend their learning. For example, she uses a language program well to extend the skills of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
61. Teaching and learning are good, and often very good. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. They work very effectively with teaching assistants to provide at least two sessions each week in which they teach basic ICT skills well. Good clear demonstrations, followed by good individual or group support from teaching and support staff, help pupils to quickly grasp what is required and to apply their newly learnt skills. Teachers make good use of national subject guidance to plan their lessons carefully. They are particularly effective in working in their year teams to plan learning opportunities in ICT that link together a wide range of subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils use their word-processing skills and an art program to produce a poster on 'good manners' as part of their personal, social and health education work. Some teachers provide some additional opportunities for small groups of pupils to extend their skills, often with the support of a teaching assistant. However, this is limited as the suite is used heavily and is rarely empty. The lack of computers in classrooms does not enable pupils to extend their skills as much as they should, and this restricts their overall achievement. Recent difficulties with resources in the suite have also limited the development of some skills, for example using the Internet to gather information, although the hard work of the technician has proved valuable in minimising the disruption.
62. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has observed teaching and learning, talked to pupils, looked at samples of their work and analysed a pupils' questionnaire. She has looked carefully at teaching plans to identify where ICT is being taught and to promote its use further. She has drawn up a detailed subject development plan with priority being given to extending the use of the interactive whiteboards that have recently been introduced. Good training for staff, which was observed during the inspection, is already helping staff to use these new resources confidently and to enable pupils to be actively involved in their own learning. The co-ordinator has introduced some assessment sheets to help staff to gauge pupils' skills and knowledge. These are not well established and are not being used to monitor standards and inform teaching and learning. Recent meetings of the cluster of local schools

are leading to some new ideas on the development and assessment of ICT being introduced soon.

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

63. Detailed planning helps all teachers to make good use of ICT to support pupils' work in a good range of subjects. For example, the quality of Year 2 pupils' writing is improved significantly by the use of the interactive whiteboard. Year 1 pupils' mouse skills are used well to create a sketch map in geography and a picture to support their work in history. Year 2 pupils extend their skills well, for example, through using data to make graphs in mathematics and science and a program to compose music.

### **HUMANITIES**

64. During the inspection, only one **geography** lesson and no lessons in **history** were seen. No judgements are made about provision or teaching and learning. Discussions with pupils and staff and an analysis of pupils' work show that standards in geography and history are in line with nationally expected levels and are similar to those at the last inspection. Achievement is satisfactory overall.
65. In the geography lesson seen, Year 2 pupils prepared for a visit to a small village where they will look for differences compared with the area in which they live. Good questioning by the teacher helped them to achieve well in their use of maps and an aerial photograph to recognise rivers, fields and paths. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject when they talk about work they have done on islands and other countries. The curriculum is well planned. Visits and the use of the local area make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development and enhance their learning successfully.
66. In history, pupils show very good attitudes to the subject when they talk about their visit to a museum where they dressed up and experienced life in a Victorian schoolroom. They are developing a good sense of chronology, and higher-attaining pupils know how long ago the Victorian period was. The curriculum is well planned and children's learning is helped by good links to literacy, art and ICT. This contributes to the subject making very good provision for the pupils' social and cultural development. The co-ordinator knows that the school needs to improve artefacts to help pupils in Year 1 to compare old toys with new ones.
67. Both subjects are well led and managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinators have checked on standards of attainment through looking at samples of pupils' work and have monitored teaching and learning through some lesson observations. Assessment procedures are used effectively at the end of each unit of work to check on pupils' achievement, although these are not used consistently to identify areas for improvement and to inform teaching.

## Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching means that pupils learn well.
- The pupils' knowledge of Christianity is good, although their knowledge of Sikhism is less well developed.
- Good enrichment of the curriculum makes what pupils learn more interesting and relevant.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.
- Assessment procedures are not developed enough.

### Commentary

68. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the last inspection, and improvement since then has been satisfactory overall.
69. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, and there was little work in the pupils' book for analysis. The evidence from the lessons and from discussion with pupils shows that their achievement in lessons is good and it is satisfactory overall over time. Teaching and learning were good in the lessons observed. A strength of teaching is the very good relationships between pupils and teachers. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to reflect about what they are learning. Pupils respond well to this and answer thoughtfully, for example, in Year 1, when difficult issues about relationships were handled sensitively.
70. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of Christianity. Higher-attaining pupils talk readily about the meaning for Christians of Christmas, Good Friday and Easter. They know where in the Bible stories of Jesus are found and refer to ones they know. Year 2 pupils study Sikhism to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Their knowledge of Sikhism is satisfactory and so, overall, standards are in line with expectations. Religious education makes a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. What pupils know of Christianity and Sikhism and their visits to a church and to a Gurdwara help them to understand the beliefs of people of different faiths.
71. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and reviews and updates resources to support teaching and learning. She has not monitored teaching, although this is planned for in the school development plan. Procedures to assess pupils' work are not clearly established and are not used to inform teaching and learning.

### CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. No lessons of **design and technology** could be seen during the inspection, so no overall judgement can be made on provision for the subject. Evidence from pupils' work and discussions with the subject leader and pupils indicate that

standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly the same as those expected nationally. Pupils achieve well, similar to the last inspection, because there are exciting opportunities that link with other subjects and visits. Pupils enjoy learning new skills, such as stitches for sewing. The subject is led well and managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has not recently had the opportunity to observe classes, but keeps a very useful portfolio of designs and photographs of pupils' work from each year group over the year. In her evaluation of pupils' work last year, she found lower standards in joining materials three-dimensionally, whereas pupils continued to join materials satisfactorily on two-dimensional artefacts. The school made good plans to rectify this weakness with better opportunities to make models in the Foundation Stage. This provides a good basis on which skills to build on later. Teachers guide pupils satisfactorily through a series of printed questions on how to evaluate their work. However, pupils tend to evaluate their own skills simplistically or see no need for improvement. They do not evaluate how well their finished product fits the purpose for which it was made, although pupils' evaluations of food products are better. The co-ordinator enriches the subject with a well-attended woodwork club.

73. As only one lesson for pupils in Year 1 was seen during the inspection, there is too little evidence for make secure judgements on provision and overall standards in **music**. Until this year, the previous headteacher took all classes for music lessons. The published scheme of work provides a good structure and resources for lessons, so that teachers are gaining in confidence in their teaching of the subject. Teachers' planning indicates that the curriculum in music includes all the required aspects. Teachers model singing well in lessons and assemblies, and pupils respond joyfully. Pupils sing with a sense of shape of the melody, using their voices confidently. They are mostly tuneful, although this is not always sustained when unaccompanied. They sing accurate words from memory and love adding actions, which they do enthusiastically but sensibly. Teachers are beginning to use assessment sheets to record pupils' attainment, although this is at an early stage of development. The subject is resourced well. Well-attended recorder and singing clubs enhance the subject. Visitors enrich music development well, for example, musical performances by pupils from other local schools and a singing specialist led children in some lessons. Pupils' cultural understanding is developed well through visitors demonstrating African music and Caribbean dance music.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy the subject and work very hard and enthusiastically in lessons.
- Art and design skills are linked very effectively to all subjects.
- A very knowledgeable subject leader inspires teachers and teaching staff to use a wide range of media and stimuli.

## Commentary

74. Standards in Year 2 are above those expected nationally in all areas of the subject. This is a good improvement from the last inspection when there were limited opportunities to focus on three-dimensional (3D) aspects of the subject. Pupils achieve very well because of their own enthusiasm and enjoyment of the subject and the wealth of opportunities they have to practice and improve skills within other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well by teachers and teaching assistants, and achieve very well. Art and design has a very high status in the school and pupils' work is attractively displayed throughout so that all pupils can enjoy it. Pupils' work is highly valued, and at the end of the year, an art exhibition of pupils' framed work is displayed.
75. Teaching and learning are good overall and often very good. Teachers introduce pupils effectively to the work of a range of artists, and pupils make good attempts to use their styles and techniques in their own work, for example, when Year 2 pupils made good 3D sculptures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. Teachers develop pupils' drawing and pencil skills very well, often through the observation of objects for a particular topic. There are particularly good examples of Year 1 drawings of local houses for their geography topic. Pupils are equally confident in the use of paint on a variety of materials, clay-work, the construction of 3D models using a range of media and collage. Teachers introduce the art from a good variety of cultures and pupils respond very well with their good Aboriginal-style drawings and patterns, their Indian-style silk painting and the design and development of African-style masks. ICT is used well in the subject. Pupils become adept in their drawing skills using a computer program.
76. The subject is led very well and managed satisfactorily. The subject leader is very enthusiastic and has high aspirations for staff to use a good range of media to enthuse and develop pupils' skills. She provides very good training for staff when introducing new materials or techniques. She monitors teaching and learning effectively and keeps a very good portfolio of pupils' work to demonstrate to new teachers what can be done and the standards expected. Because this subject has a high priority in the school, it is well financed and resourced. Although relevant assessments are made at the end of each unit of work, this information is not used consistently to evaluate pupils' achievement and to target possible improvement.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good** overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good range of learning activities and extracurricular physical activities enhances pupils' skills and knowledge successfully.
- Pupils have very enthusiastic attitudes to physical activities and achieve well.
- The subject co-ordinator is building effectively on the school's Active Mark achievement.

- Teachers do not always extend pupils' skills enough in lessons.
- Procedures to check on how well pupils are doing are not used to inform teaching and learning.

## Commentary

77. Pupils attain standards that meet nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2. They are above expectations in swimming. Pupils' achievement is good overall. It is very good in aspects of gymnastics in Year 1, although these skills are not always built on effectively in Year 2. Pupils make better progress than that reported in the last inspection, although there was no judgement on the standards attained previously. The school has improved the range of activities and its outdoor facilities and has achieved the Active Mark Gold since the last inspection.
78. Discussions with pupils show that they enjoy physical activities, especially the opportunities to receive swimming instruction and to participate in a good range of extracurricular clubs, such as 'fun and fitness', baton twirling and football. They are enthusiastic in their approach to learning, and Year 2 pupils enjoy practising their games skills at lunchtimes, supervised by trained and experienced midday assistants. Pupils were seen improving their passing, skipping and football dribbling skills. This good range of activities provides pupils with good opportunities to enhance their skills.
79. Teaching and learning are good overall, although they vary from satisfactory to excellent. Where it is excellent, teachers maintain a very good pace to lessons. They ensure that pupils make full use of the thirty minutes allocated and achieve a lot in the short time. For example, Year 1 pupils worked very hard to improve their own movements and then extended them successfully in a competitive relay activity. Good demonstrations by the teacher and effective and continuous prompts ensured that pupils sustained their efforts and maintained a high quality of movement. Everybody enjoyed the lesson and achievement was excellent. However, teachers do not always allow pupils to evaluate and try to improve the quality of their work. They do not ask pupils to look at their own movements or those of others in their group and identify what is done well and what could be improved. This does not help pupils to try to improve the quality of their work and attain above expected levels, for example, when Year 2 pupils develop their gymnastic sequences.
80. The leadership of the subject is good. The management is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator took on the responsibility at the start of the school year. She has evaluated the programme and has improved the provision for dance and games resources for use in the playground. She has not had the opportunity to observe lessons, although this is planned for later this term. The co-ordinator is building effectively on the school's good provision, recognised through its achievement of the Gold Active Mark for 2002-05, and is preparing for submitting a reapplication for next year. Teachers use assessment grids at the end of each year to inform the annual pupil reports to parents. This information is not used to inform teachers how to build successfully on prior learning and how to raise the standards of pupils' skills and performance.

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

81. Only one lesson in personal, social and health education and citizenship was seen, but there is a good range of evidence to show that pupils attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2. The school successfully promotes a very supportive and caring ethos to improve pupils' confidence, self-esteem and relationships through timetabled lessons, religious education, assemblies, support systems in the school and daily interaction with staff. The school uses local education authority guidance well to develop pupils' understanding of safer and healthier lifestyles, their own feelings and different cultural traditions. The school makes very effective use of procedures such as 'child of the week', circle time, star charts and headteacher's award to recognise and value pupils' contributions to the school and to reinforce the expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject has been identified as a school development priority for next year and the co-ordinator will have opportunities to observe lessons and evaluate the provision.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| Inspection judgement  | Grade    |
|---|----------|
| <b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>                        | <b>3</b> |
| How inclusive the school is   | 3        |
| 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>4</b> |
| Pupils' achievement   | 3        |
| <b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Attendance  | 3        |
| Attitudes   | 2        |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions                         | 2        |
| 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   | 4        |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs                           | 3        |
| 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                  | 2        |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                  | 3        |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                    | 2        |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                    | <b>3</b> |
| The governance of the school  | 3        |
| The leadership of the headteacher                                     | 2        |
| The leadership of other key staff                                     | 3        |
| The effectiveness of management                                       | 3        |

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