

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE R J MITCHELL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hornchurch

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 131590

Acting headteacher: Miss P S Barker

Lead inspector: Mr A J Dobell

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 268088

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	164
School address:	Tangmere Crescent Hornchurch Essex
Postcode:	RM12 5PP
Telephone number:	(01708) 551 684
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Norman
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This small primary school draws its pupils largely from its local area of south Hornchurch. Pupils come from a mixed range of housing but their socio-economic backgrounds are average overall. When children join the Reception class, their levels of understanding and learning skills are average. Most pupils are from white, Western-European backgrounds, but a number of other ethnic backgrounds are represented in the school. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and this is not a barrier to learning.

The school has 164 pupils on roll. There are ten pupils on the register of special educational needs and, at six per cent, this is below average. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs and, at 1.8 per cent, this proportion is average. The nature of special educational needs includes moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and physical difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school during the course of the year is well above average and there is some evidence that this depresses standards. The school has just emerged from a period when it was threatened with closure. This caused considerable unrest and the number of pupils on roll fell markedly. The school's future is now assured and numbers on roll are rising again.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10373	Mr A J Dobell	Lead inspector	English Music Physical education English as an additional language
14347	Mrs J Lindsay	Lay inspector	
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Religious education
15011	Mrs M Wallace	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History Personal, social and health education and citizenship

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** school giving sound value for money. In recent years, standards have been above average at the end of Year 2, but below average at the end of Year 6. The acting headteacher's effective leadership has enabled the school to recover well from its recent difficult period, and standards in Year 6 are now improving. The quality of teaching is good overall. The high turnover of pupils is a barrier to achievement.

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

- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
- Effective teaching promotes secure learning.
- Relationships are very good and pupils feel safe and secure in the school.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have not been high enough in recent years.
- Effective leadership from the acting headteacher, supported by her colleagues and the governing body, has enabled the school to emerge well from a period of significant difficulty.
- There is no specifically designed outside area for children in the Reception Year.
- There are occasions when, particularly, higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and so do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is no policy for personal, health and social education and citizenship and its implementation is inconsistent.

The school's improvement since its previous inspection has been satisfactory. The key issues from that inspection have been dealt with well overall. Improvement was adversely affected when the school was threatened with closure. Standards in the Foundation Stage have improved well, good progress has been made in developing assessment systems, and standards in information and communication technology have improved by the end of Year 6.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	D	C	C
mathematics	C	D	E	E
science	E	D	E	E

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

**Achievement is now satisfactory** overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Children enter the Reception class with average levels of understanding and achieve well so that they are well prepared for their work on the National Curriculum in Year 1. They continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and, for the last three years, have attained standards which are well above average overall at the end of Year 2. However, achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. It is adversely affected by the high numbers joining and leaving the school during these years. Standards at the end of Year 6 worsened from 2002 to 2004, but evidence from the inspection is that there has been an improvement in standards during this school year. Standards are likely to be average or just below average at the end of Year 6 in 2005. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education meet expectations in Years 2 and 6.

**Pupils' personal qualities are good.** They behave well in and out of class and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides an education of good quality. Teaching and learning are good overall.** They are very good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6, improving in Year 6. When lessons are interesting and stimulating, pupils work hard and achieve well. Teaching assistants are effective and pupils with special educational needs are given good support. There are good systems to monitor pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science.

The school provides a sound curriculum with satisfactory opportunities for enrichment activities out of class. Pupils are cared for well and the school is very effective in taking their views and ideas into account. They feel valued and so achieve well. There are good links with parents and the community and satisfactory links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The acting headteacher is providing good leadership and staff acknowledge the importance and effectiveness of her work to raise morale in the school after the threat of closure was lifted. There is now a good unity of purpose among all adults in the school. Inclusion is a priority, and all are valued for what they can offer. Management is effective and strategic planning is linked to the professional development of staff so that the school can develop systematically. Governors have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and potential for development and ensure that it fulfils its legal responsibilities apart from a few minor omissions in the prospectus and governors' annual report. Finances are managed well.

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

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. A minority of parents had concerns about how the school consulted them and acted on their views. Inspectors found that the school did this well, and agree with parents' and pupils' positive views.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- improve standards, particularly in mathematics and science, by the time that pupils leave the school;
- create a purpose-built outdoor area for children in the Reception Year;
- ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged to achieve their potential; and
- plan for consistency in the teaching of personal, health and social education and citizenship.

**In addition, governors should include the following in their action plan:**

- ensure that the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents include all necessary information.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are likely to be above average at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6, standards are likely to be average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology and in religious education are at the expected level at the end of Years 2 and 6.

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

- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 because they are taught well.
- The school has maintained standards well in spite of considerable recent disruption.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Standards in information and communication technology have improved well in Years 3 to 6 since the previous inspection.

#### **Commentary**

1. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004, the last year for which national comparisons are available, standards were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Teacher assessments for science were that standards were above average. When compared to similar schools, standards were above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. In each subject, standards have improved since the previous inspection and the trend of improvement over the last five years has exceeded the national trend. An initial analysis of the school's predictions for the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2005 suggests that these standards will at least be maintained.
2. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were average in English but well below average in mathematics and science. When compared with schools in which pupils attained similar results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2000, standards were also average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Because the proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school is well above average, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about achievement in Years 3 to 6. Thirty-one pupils took the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004, but the results obtained in the tests at the end of Year 2 in 2000 are only known for 24 of these pupils. Of these, nine attained higher results than might have been expected, 12 attained the expected results and three failed to make the expected progress. This suggests that, overall, these pupils made satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. An initial analysis of results in 2005 suggests that standards in English are likely to be maintained while standards in mathematics and science are likely to improve, although they are still likely to be below average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.7 (17.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.1 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.3)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.5 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.2 (28.0)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Children enter the Reception class with average levels of understanding and learning skills. Evidence from the inspection shows that they are likely to exceed the standards expected nationally in the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Reception Year. They are likely to match the expected levels in physical development and creative development. This represents good achievement. Children make good progress because they are well taught. The teacher in the Reception class is well supported by her nursery nurse and their teamwork is effective. They have a good understanding of how young children learn.
4. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 where the quality of teaching over time is very good. Again, teachers are very well supported by their teaching assistant and they manage learning very effectively. As a result, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved well at the end of Year 2 since the previous inspection. In the other subjects of the curriculum, standards in science are above average at the end of Year 2 and standards exceed expectations in history. In information and communication technology, geography and religious education, standards match expectations.
5. Achievement is less consistent in Years 3 to 6. This is partly because the proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school has been high in recent years so that managing overall progress has been difficult. However, it is also because pupils, particularly higher-attaining pupils, are not consistently challenged in all classes so that they build systematically on their previous levels of understanding. In 2004, in the national tests, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Higher-attaining pupils had not been effectively challenged to achieve their potential in Years 3 to 6.
6. In spite of this, the school has maintained standards at the end of Year 6 since the previous inspection and improved them at the end of Year 2. This is in spite of the considerable disruption that the school has experienced over the last two years. For some time, the school was under threat of closure. This resulted in the loss of some staff because pupil numbers fell. In the school year 2003-2004, the proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school was 70 per cent. Because numbers fell, the school had to introduce mixed-age classes for all year groups except the Reception Year and Year 6 in the school year 2004-05. Against this background, to maintain standards at the end of Year 6 has been a good achievement for the school.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous levels of attainment. They are supported effectively in class by teachers and support assistants. They are given work which is targeted to the needs identified in their individual education plans and their learning is carefully managed so that their progress is monitored effectively and new targets are set to enable them to make further progress. Overall, they reach the standards of which they are capable.
8. In the report from the previous inspection, standards in information and communication technology were judged to be unsatisfactory by the time that pupils left the school. This is no longer the case. Standards in information and communication technology now match

expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, and there are examples of information and communication technology being used well to support learning in other subjects. However, the school acknowledges that pupils need to be given more systematic opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning across the curriculum.

- Now that the school's future is no longer under threat, it is in a secure position to build on the good achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 by raising standards by the time that pupils leave the school.

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

Pupils' attendance is well below average but punctuality is satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they behave well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to all aspects of school and they behave well.
- Relationships are very good.
- Older pupils develop a sense of responsibility and community.

### **Commentary**

- Attendance is well below average and the schools' attendance levels have remained below the national average since the previous inspection. The attendance and punctuality of the majority of pupils are satisfactory but the school's average attendance level is brought down by the absence rates of a small number of pupils who fail to attend regularly and consistently. The school has procedures to monitor and follow up absences but accepts that firmer measures are needed to improve attendance. The problem is worsening because an increasing number of holidays are being taken in term time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.3	School data	0.4
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.*

- Parents' and pupils' questionnaires confirm that pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school. There are many examples of pupils working with real enthusiasm. For example, pupils became fully involved researching information about the Vikings during a history lesson for Years 2 and 3. This involvement and enjoyment has a positive effect on achievement. Behaviour is generally good in lessons, assemblies and during the informal break times. Pupils have no concerns about bullying and harassment, as there are very good relationships with adults and rare incidents of bullying are recorded and swiftly dealt with. Throughout the school, relationships are strong and constructive and only one pupil was excluded for a fixed period during the last school year. Personal development is promoted well by the responsible roles given to older pupils who take great pride particularly in their work as monitors. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs helps these pupils to acquire positive attitudes to their work and to maintain their concentration and interest in their learning.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed-period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	164	1	0

12. Pupils have good opportunities to become morally and socially aware. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are sound but are less well developed than those for moral and social development. The school has attempted to improve its provision for cultural awareness but this is still a relatively weak area because music, art and dance do not feature strongly within the school. Moral and social development are consistently emphasised from the time that pupils enter the school so that all pupils know right from wrong and have a high level of respect for the feelings of others. Pupils support each other well in the school community and the school council plays a significant and effective role in the life of the school. There are appropriate opportunities for visits and visitors to enhance learning. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from a residential visit and younger pupils visit Shoeburyness beach to enrich their geography studies. Pupils develop an awareness of other faiths through religious education lessons but opportunities to develop an understanding of multicultural life in the United Kingdom are limited. The school has a lot of artefacts, including photographs of RJ Mitchell and the pilots who flew from Hornchurch airport during the war, but there is limited evidence of pupils using this strong historical connection to enhance their learning.

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

The school provides an education of good quality. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Achievement slows in Years 3 to 5 and is satisfactory. In Year 6, achievement is good. The school's provision for pupils identified as having special educational needs is good and they achieve well. The curriculum offered to pupils meets requirements. Pupils are well cared for and their learning is supported by good systems for assessing their progress. There are very good arrangements for involving pupils in the life of the school. Links with parents and the community are good and links with other schools are satisfactory.

#### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good overall and the school has good systems for assessing pupils' progress.

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

- Effective teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to achieve well, although aspects of learning in the Reception class are adversely affected because the school does not have a specifically designed outdoor area for these children.
- The school has high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour.
- There are occasions when some pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Teaching assistants support learning well.
- The school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress and managing their future learning.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The teaching of personal, health and social education and citizenship is inconsistent.

## Commentary

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	14	9	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

13. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the Foundation Stage, two thirds of teaching is good or very good and one third is satisfactory. In the very good lessons, lively teaching presents children at different stages of learning with good levels of challenge so that achievement is very high. Very good opportunities were created, for example, for children to recognise numbers and to write them out. Enthusiastic teaching meant that children were very eager to learn and were attaining standards well above those normally found. In satisfactory lessons, the same level of challenge is not present. For example, in a literacy lesson, children were not encouraged to work out more difficult words such as 'study' and 'describe' and no writing aids were in place to help them to write, for example, 'when'. As a result, achievement was satisfactory and children were not reaching high standards. Some aspects of teaching and learning in the Reception class are hampered because there is no planned outdoor area for the Foundation Stage. This adversely affects progress in physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
14. In the lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, teaching was very good in half the lessons and good in the remaining half. As a result, pupils achieve well and reach above-average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Stimulating and challenging teaching means that pupils are enthusiastic about learning and so make good progress. Very good relationships mean that pupils are valued for what they can offer and so put a good deal of effort into their work. Activities are carefully matched to the needs of pupils at different stages of learning so that all make good progress from their existing levels of understanding.
15. In Years 3 to 6, this high level of challenge is not sustained consistently. For example, in one satisfactory lesson, the introduction to the lesson was too long so that pupils did not have enough time to practise what they had learned by doing examples. In other lessons, a slow pace means that pupils work below their potential and questioning does not involve all pupils. There are occasions when the same work is set for all pupils so that some, particularly higher-attaining pupils, do not make sufficient progress and do not attain the standards of which they are capable. In good lessons, particularly in Year 6, and in some lessons in Year 3, attempts to engage pupils' interest are more successful and, as a result, they achieve well. In the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching was good in six out of 13 lessons and satisfactory in the rest.
16. Overall, the school has high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour in class. In most lessons, these are realised and pupils work with good levels of sustained interest and concentration. As a result, learning is effective and achievement is good. Pupils know that they are valued for what they can offer and, because they feel valued, their confidence increases so that they are willing to 'have a go' in their learning. Overall, inclusion and equality of access to learning are promoted well. For example, pupils with special educational needs are given extra support to help them to be successfully involved in all activities. Teachers plan work which is well matched to their individual needs so that they make good progress in their learning in relation to their previous levels of attainment.
17. Teaching assistants and support assistants are effective in supporting teaching and learning and are very effective in Years 1 and 2. They are regarded as full members of the teaching

team and are involved in planning so that they are fully prepared for lessons. Good relationships mean that they have the confidence to take the initiative in lessons and support wherever their help is needed. Their involvement in clubs and in the management of some learning increases their feeling of being valued, as does their involvement in continuing professional development. Their work helps pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to achieve well.

18. The school has good systems in place to track the progress being made by individual pupils and then to use the information gained to manage their future learning. A marking policy, which aims to help pupils to raise their standards, is in place, and its use is monitored by the acting headteacher. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and to reflect on how they can improve further. Subject leaders analyse the results of the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, and the optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, to identify weaknesses. The outcomes of this analysis are then used to plan future learning so that the weaknesses can be addressed. The school uses other measures, for example, science assessments and a writing task at the end of Year 1, to supplement this information. The progress of all pupils is tracked systematically and targets are then set for their future progress in English, mathematics and science. These strategies are providing the school with a good bank of information with which to plan learning for individual pupils and so to raise their standards.
19. While teachers include aspects of personal, health and social education and citizenship in different lessons, there is no programme of work for the whole school to ensure continuity and progression in this area of learning. There are no specific timetable slots for this part of the curriculum which means that coverage is inevitably patchy. The school recognises the need to make provision in this area of learning a routine part of its work.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a sound range of enrichment opportunities which include extra-curricular activities. The school's accommodation is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The accommodation provides a spacious setting in which pupils can learn.
- Good use is made of educational visits and visitors to extend pupils' learning.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to achieve well.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support work in other subjects.
- There is no area specifically designed for outdoor learning for children in the Reception class.

## **Commentary**

20. A key issue from the previous inspection was 'to improve the curriculum by providing a continuous and unified provision and increasing teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6'. The school has dealt successfully with this issue. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all statutory requirements, including the provision for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. In the Foundation Stage, there is good emphasis on giving children practical activities which engage their interest and make learning fun. However, the lack of a secure outside area means that the provision for children in the Reception class to develop their learning through outdoor activity is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are provided with a well-planned curriculum, which enables them to achieve well and to reach above-average standards in English, mathematics and science. Teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is now adequate and enables them to take part in a range of interesting learning activities. For example, in science there are many opportunities to be involved in practical investigations, which pupils enjoy and which reinforce their understanding. Standards in this subject are

improving because provision has been developed so that pupils are now taught specific investigational skills. The provision for religious education takes full account of the requirements of the Havering Agreed Syllabus for religious education.

21. Of particular note is the improvement made to the provision of information and communication technology since the previous inspection. A computer suite has been created and training has been provided to improve teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. As a result, pupils now make satisfactory progress and achieve the standards that are expected by the end of Years 2 and 6. However, opportunities for them to practise the skills learned in the computer suite when they are back in class are limited because of the small number of computers available.
22. The school gives all pupils opportunities to take part in educational visits, which enrich the curriculum by providing a good range of significant learning experiences. These include a residential visit for older pupils, which plays an important role in their personal and social development. Pupils also take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils in Years 4 to 5 are able to take part in swimming lessons. This helps to ensure that, by the time they leave school, all pupils can swim the nationally expected 25 metres and have good knowledge of water safety.
23. The outcomes of the provision for personal, social and health education are satisfactory but this area of the curriculum lacks a formal programme of work. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the provision for this area of learning between different classes. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, with their individual educational plans having specific and manageable targets. This enables them to make good progress and to achieve well. Their learning is enhanced by good quality teaching assistants, who are deployed well. They play a significant role in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs by supporting them in class and helping them to concentrate and to achieve the targets in their individual education plans. The school ensures that pupils are prepared well for the next stages of their education.
24. The school has accommodation of good quality. Classrooms are generally spacious and airy and some have benefited from new windows and outer doors. The grounds are attractive and extensive and have been improved by a wooden shelter and an activity assault course. Two library areas enhance learning, as does a separate room for art and design. Resources are generally satisfactory and good in some subjects such as history, geography and music. The computer suite is a useful asset and the school has plans in place to update its computers. A significant weakness in provision is the lack of a specific outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage. This adversely affects their physical development and learning about the natural world.

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

There are good procedures to promote pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good procedures for child protection and for pupils' welfare.
- Adults are very caring, and as a result, pupils are very trusting of them.
- Pupils' ideas are listened to and acted on very well.

### **Commentary**

25. There are very good procedures for child protection. The designated co-ordinator is very experienced and well trained and she has arranged for all staff, including support staff, to have up-dated training at the start of next term. The school's policy, based on local area guidelines, is regularly reviewed and there is a named governor for child protection.

26. Health and safety procedures are also implemented well by the site manager, with regular checks carried out of the buildings, fire and electrical equipment. A new gate and fence across the car park have improved pupils' safety. However, one concern was shared with the headteacher by inspectors. An appropriate number of staff are trained in first aid and pupils with specific medical needs are catered for well. Similarly, the school liaises effectively with external agencies when specific support is needed for pupils with special educational needs. There are good procedures to enable the school to identify these pupils at an early stage. Regular assessments of their progress enables teachers and support assistants to contribute well to regular reviews of these pupils' progress and this helps the school to set new targets so that their future learning can be managed effectively.
27. This is a caring school where pupils feel safe and secure. Adults who, in this small school, know all pupils and their families very well, treat pupils respectfully. As a result, pupils have a very high degree of trust in adults and are sure that any problems that they may have will be dealt with sensitively. Pupils are supported and guided well in their academic and personal development and most parents feel that the school helps their children to become mature and independent. Pupils with specific behavioural or social problems are supported very well, with some pupils being successfully re-integrated into the school from behaviour units. Pupils' academic monitoring has improved since the previous inspection, with progress in English, mathematics and science now being closely monitored. Assessment procedures in other subjects are less thoroughly developed.
28. The school council has only been recently formed, but already pupils feel that it has been effective in giving them a voice in the school. For example, new locks on toilet doors were fitted soon after they were suggested and ideas for playground improvements have been accepted. The induction arrangements when children join the Reception class and pupils join other year groups are satisfactory. There are opportunities for parents and pupils to visit the school and older pupils starting in different year groups are made very welcome by their new classmates. Parents are very happy with the way that their children settle into school.

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

Links with parents and the community are good. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have positive views of the school and receive good quality information about their children's progress.
- There is some information missing from the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus.
- Community links have improved and now enhance pupils' learning well.

### **Commentary**

29. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned the questionnaire were generally positive about the school. Many were very relieved that the threat of closure, which they had fought against, had been lifted. Parents receive regular information from teaching staff, with improvements since the previous inspection, in that they now receive information about what is being taught. Also, end-of-year reports now give clear targets for improvement and some indication of how well pupils are achieving in relation to what is expected for their ages. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about their progress and are involved in discussions to manage their future learning. The school has also organised meetings for parents to help them to understand how literacy and numeracy are taught so that they can support their children in learning to read. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children reading at home through the 'Reading Aloud' scheme and many parents support the school with this and other homework projects. Parents also support the school through the very active Parents' Association, with funds raised being used to help to buy

playground equipment. However, the contribution that parents make to pupils' learning at school and at home is only satisfactory overall because a significant minority do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. Because of this, the school's current level of attendance is well below average.

30. Regular newsletters are sent home and parents are invited into school to attend class assemblies and to view their children's work. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents do not contain all the information that the school is legally required to give. A list of what is missing has been discussed with the school.
31. Community links have now strengthened in many areas. The school uses the local church regularly and the vicar is a frequent visitor, taking assemblies and assisting with the teaching of religious education. The school makes good use of a local supermarket, park and nature reserve. The links with the RAF Association continue with displays around the school celebrating the connection of the school with the RAF and prizes funded by a descendant of R J Mitchell. Harvest festival goods are distributed to local senior citizens and pupils from the school sing carols in the area at Christmas. The school also makes good use of the many resources available in London, with frequent visits to museums and concert halls as well as to historic sites. This wide variety of links enhances pupils' knowledge of their own community as well as enlivening their lessons and their learning.
32. Links with other schools are satisfactory. There is currently no regular communication with the pre-school groups in the area. Pupils who transfer to the secondary school have the opportunity to visit beforehand and there are some pieces of work that start in the primary school and are continued when pupils move to Year 7. In addition, some pupils have visited one of the schools for language, mathematics and design and technology lessons, which helps to introduce them to the next stage in their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher's leadership has enabled the school to emerge well from a period of considerable disruption and uncertainty. Other key staff are providing effective leadership and management. The governing body is effective.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good leadership from the acting headteacher has stabilised the school after a period of uncertainty.
- Good leadership has created an effective vision for the school's future development.
- The school is committed to fully including all its members in all aspects of its work.
- There are good systems for evaluating the school's performance and determining its future priorities.
- The school has the continuing professional development of staff as a high priority.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development and, with minor exceptions, ensure that it meets legal requirements.
- Finances are managed well and the principles of best value are applied effectively.

### **Commentary**

33. The school has emerged well from a period in which it was under threat of closure. During this time, numbers on roll declined markedly, which created further uncertainty. In addition, the headteacher moved to a new post so that the deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher for the whole of this school year and will continue in this role next term. Colleagues emphasise how effectively she has 'pulled the school together' and given the school a sense of purpose. As a result, the school is now moving forward well after a time when development was virtually suspended because people's available time and effort were being put into fighting the threat of closure. Because of her good leadership, the school has



gained in confidence and purpose and is now planning effectively for the future in order to raise standards further.

34. The school now has a clear vision for its future. Essentially, this is to enable all pupils to achieve their potential academically while developing them into caring young people, aware of their role in the local and wider communities. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to participate in determining the future direction of the school so that they get a good understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. However, at this stage, the curriculum is not managed in such a way as to enable this understanding to be developed systematically through a cohesive and progressive programme of personal, health and social education and citizenship.
35. Inclusion is given a high priority in the school, which tries to give all its members, pupils and adults, full access to all that the school offers. In this it is largely successful, although there are occasions when, particularly higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 5 are not adequately challenged and so do not make the progress of which they are capable. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. The subject leader ensures that pupils who need extra help are identified early and the continuous assessment of their progress is used well to meet their needs. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, geography and history are good and other subjects are generally managed satisfactorily. This management underpins equality of access to all that the school provides.
36. Now that the school knows that its future is secure, it is developing effective systems for analysing and evaluating its performance in order to plan its future direction. The school improvement plan sensibly concentrates on relatively few main priorities in addition to having action plans for each subject with the exception of personal, health and social education and citizenship. The progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked so that their future progress can be planned for. Results in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, as well as other assessment activities, are analysed so that weaknesses can be identified and be addressed in the planning of future learning. The effectiveness of this planning is then monitored by subject leaders. These systems are putting the school in a good position to raise standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
37. As part of its drive to raise standards, the school has the continuing professional development of staff as a high priority. In-service training is linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. Staff are encouraged to attend subject courses promoted by the local education authority so that they can develop their own teaching and support their colleagues' teaching. Teaching assistants are encouraged to improve their own qualifications so that the quality of teaching and learning improves across the school.
38. Governors are an important part of the team. They, too, participate in in-service training activities and undertake their own training to help them to fulfil their roles effectively. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and potential for development and participate appropriately and effectively in strategic planning. With a few minor exceptions in the information included in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents, they ensure that the school conforms with legal requirements.
39. Governors also play an effective role in managing the school's finances. The school currently has a large carry-forward figure from previous annual budgets. This is because the period of uncertainty, which led to falling pupil numbers, prompted governors to retain sums of money to meet future contingencies which at that stage were unclear. Now that the future is secure, the school plans to use these surpluses sensibly to return to single-age classes and to provide a secure outside area for the Reception Year. Plans are also in place to upgrade the school's information and communication technology resources. These are examples of the effective practice of the principles of best value.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	553,751
Total expenditure	577,558
Expenditure per pupil	3,517

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	171,565
Balance carried forward to the next year	147,758

40. Given pupils' satisfactory achievement, their good personal development, good teaching and learning and good leadership and management, the school gives sound value for money in spite of having slightly above average costs per pupil. Now that the school's future is secure and numbers are increasing, the school has the capacity to improve well, particularly in raising standards at the point at which pupils leave the school.

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

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

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and standards have improved from average to above average in four areas of learning since the previous inspection. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is broadly average and children make good progress and achieve well. Overall, they are currently working at levels above those expected for children of their age. The majority have achieved the expected goals in all areas of learning and are already working on National Curriculum levels in their final term in the Reception class.

There is a qualified teacher and a nursery nurse in the Reception class. The quality of teaching is good overall, with some instances of very good teaching. Planning follows national guidance for the Foundation Stage and children's attitudes and behaviour are good. There are appropriate arrangements with parents when children start school but the links with the local playgroup are unsatisfactory. Arrangements for children's transition to Year 1 are satisfactory. Procedures to check on children's progress are satisfactory but daily planning does not always identify challenging tasks for higher-attaining children. The nursery nurse supports the teacher well in making an effective contribution to learning. Resources and accommodation in class are satisfactory but provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The co-ordinator is an experienced teacher but is new to the Foundation Stage. She has worked closely with the local education authority and has made a good start in developing the Foundation Stage.

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

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

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

- Children achieve well and make good progress because the quality of teaching is good overall.
- Children form very good relationships with adults and, as a result, feel secure, and enjoy coming to school and joining in the planned activities.

#### **Commentary**

41. Achievement is good overall in this area of learning. Children like coming to school because they enjoy the activities organised for them. They develop their concentration well and co-operate well with others in informal play and directed learning activities. Children receive firm guidelines and respond well by developing independence, an awareness of the needs of others, and a positive attitude to school. During the morning snack time they are encouraged to talk socially with others and to be polite. They are interested and enjoy the activities because adults communicate enthusiasm to them. All adults establish a very good relationship with children and their parents and this contributes to their firm foundations in learning and their positive start to school life.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good and reflects good teaching overall.
- Children develop confident speaking skills because there are well-planned opportunities for them to communicate with others.
- Children make good progress in learning to read and write.

### **Commentary**

42. There are good opportunities for children to develop their language and communication skills. Good teaching constantly challenges all children to respond to questions, to explain their ideas, and to discuss them with a partner. As a result, they develop confidence and communicate well with others, using a wide range of vocabulary. For example, higher-attaining and average-attaining children explain clearly how the butterfly develops from a cocoon and a caterpillar. All children enjoy the role-play areas and this encourages them to develop their conversation skills.
43. Children make very good progress in learning to read and develop a positive attitude to stories and books. All children are well launched in reading and parents make a valuable contribution helping their children with their reading. All children like books and talk about their favourites such as 'The Gingerbread Man and' 'The Flying Elephant.' They read confidently and talk about the characters and events in the story. Average-attaining children know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and recognise non-fiction diaries. Higher-attaining children recognise exclamation marks and know why they are used.
44. There are many well-planned opportunities for children to attempt writing for different purposes and, because of this, they make good progress in learning to write. Higher-attaining and average-attaining children write sentences with capital letters and full stops. One higher-attaining child wrote, "My cousins came round my house and we played mums and dads and then we went to the zoo", for example. Handwriting is developing well with a consistent and legible style.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good overall so that children achieve very well.
- Children enjoy the well-planned activities and these help them to develop confidence in their mathematical development.

### **Commentary**

45. There is a strong emphasis on this area of learning. Very good teaching ensures that all children make very good progress in learning to recognise and use numbers. Children enjoy the well-planned activities such as number recognition and playing with coins and this contributes effectively to their learning. They are continually encouraged to recognise and use numbers in their games. There are good opportunities to handle money and, as a result, all children can identify coins. Higher-attaining children add five 50 pence coins correctly to £2.50. They select four coins, add them together and identify how much more money they need to make £1. The majority recognise numbers up to and including 100. Lower-attaining children recognise numbers up to 10. Very good challenge by the teacher ensures that all

children make very good progress. The nursery nurse makes a significant contribution supporting lower-attaining children with their number recognition. There are appropriate opportunities for children to use and recognise two-dimensional shapes and their understanding and knowledge of shapes is at the expected level.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well and make good progress in learning about the wider world.
- Teaching is good and children enjoy the well-planned activities.
- Children make good progress in learning to use computers.

### **Commentary**

46. Consistently good teaching, combined with good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the wider world, ensure that all children make good progress in this area of learning. Good teaching ensures that children observe and describe how real butterflies emerge from their cocoons, for example. Children develop a positive attitude and gain confidence in their use of information and communication technology because they have a weekly lesson in the computer suite. They make significant gains in their learning and their ability to use computers and, as a result, attainment in this aspect is above is normally found for children of this age. Higher-attaining children use paintbrushes well to draw and select colours to show a caterpillar, chrysalis and butterfly. They include other features such as trees, birds, mountains, the sun and sky, and they know how to create a box and write their own names. There are appropriate opportunities to design and make a range of objects including a railway, train track, and a farmhouse. All children make good progress in designing and making a wide range of objects because resources are readily available. Children write about Noah and learn about biblical stories such as the first Christmas.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is no allocated outdoor area for Reception children and this is a weakness.

### **Commentary**

47. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Provision is not as good as in other areas because there is no allocated space for purposeful outdoor play for the Reception class. There are a few bikes, but there is no opportunity for children to experience progression in riding the bikes, which are too small for the taller children. Children use the outdoor adventure equipment, but this is designed for older pupils and is not suitable for children to explore independently. There are no opportunities for children to experience climbing and swinging activities.
48. Children have a sound understanding of the effect of exercise on the body because the teacher challenges them to explain this. They are aware of space and confidently move around the hall in a range of ways. Physical development is limited because provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory. Adults spend too much time preparing outdoor experiences for children, carrying heavy water containers and sand to compensate for the lack of provision. In a good lesson in the hall, children reinforced their knowledge about the development of the butterfly well. All children experience an appropriate range of opportunities to increase their

skills in using small tools such as pencils, scissors and brushes. They are encouraged to shape and join materials and do this satisfactorily.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are encouraged to use their imaginations in the role-play areas.
- Achievement is not as strong in this area of learning.

### **Commentary**

49. There are appropriate opportunities for children to use their imaginations and to explore a range of media and materials. Paint is available and children create simple pictures by mixing and using paint. Artwork on display shows that children have experienced making simple collages and also experienced printing. They are encouraged to use their imaginations in the role-play areas. They enjoyed creating the outdoor beach and underwater scene, for example. Pupils have cut out their own fishes and decorated and placed the fish in the underwater scene. Children learn a range of songs but this area of learning is less well developed. No teaching was observed in creative development.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because they are well taught.
- There are good examples of extended writing in Year 6.
- Assessment is used well to monitor pupils' progress and to promote their further learning.
- The subject is led and managed well.
- There are examples of other subjects being used effectively to develop pupils' literacy skills.

### **Commentary**

50. In the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004, standards in reading and writing were above average. The school predicts that similar results will be attained in the national tests in 2005 and evidence from the inspection supports this. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. They are keen to respond to questions and to discuss and explain their work. Standards of reading are above average overall. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to read unfamiliar words by identifying the sounds of the different syllables, but lower-attaining pupils find it difficult to apply these skills. Higher-attaining pupils' writing is above average, with a clear grasp of basic grammar, wide-ranging vocabulary, improving spelling and clear and even handwriting. Average pupils are more prone to error but still reach average standards. Lower-attaining pupils have clear handwriting and spell basic words with a good level of accuracy. However, they do not write as quickly and work is often unfinished. Even so, they have the potential to reach average standards.

51. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because they are well, and sometimes very well, taught. There is very good coverage of the subject, with pupils aware of, for example, alliteration, alphabetical order, apostrophes and speech marks. They have completed a good range of free, creative writing in different styles, for example, letter writing, book reviews, fables and character descriptions. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour and

are careful to offer realistic challenges for pupils at different stages of learning. Care is taken to include all pupils in learning, including those with special educational needs. Learning activities are carefully planned to ensure that all groups of pupils are able to make progress from their current levels of understanding. As a result, all pupils achieve well and make good progress because their learning activities interest them.

52. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were average. The school predicts that average standards will be maintained in 2005. Evidence from the inspection suggests that this is likely. By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills in speaking and listening are average. Standards in reading are average overall, although higher-attaining pupils read fluently and with good expression. They discuss different books and characters with interest and insight. Average and lower-attaining pupils read less fluently and have little understanding of how libraries work. Pupils in Year 6 have experienced a wide range of writing for different purposes. For higher-attaining pupils, spelling and grammar are accurate and handwriting is neat and consistently legible. They are able to argue a case persuasively in their writing, and there are examples of some sensitive writing of poetry. Average and lower-attaining pupils have covered similar work, although their spelling and grammar are less secure. However, they have improved well over the course of the year. Overall, standards in writing are average.
53. Pupils in Year 6 have been taught well and achieve well. There are some very good examples of extended writing, for example, in the biographies of famous people including Anne Frank, Florence Nightingale, Charles Darwin and William Shakespeare. However, there is some evidence that pupils are not consistently challenged to make the progress of which they are capable in Years 3 to 5. Because of this, achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, and the good progress made in Years 1 and 2 is not fully exploited. To some extent, this is because of the above-average proportion of pupils leaving and joining the school in Years 3 to 6. Over time, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 5 and good in Year 6.
54. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously throughout the school. In Years 2 and 6, there are clear indications to pupils to help them to improve their work. In other years, these are less consistent. Assessment systems are good. Pupils' progress is tracked systematically and evidence from tracking is used to identify pupils needing extra support. The national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 are analysed so that areas of weakness can be identified and plans made to overcome these in future years.
55. This valuable information helps the subject leader to manage the subject well. She attends training courses in English and then works alongside colleagues to develop expertise in the teaching of English. She has ensured that the subject is well resourced and that resources are readily available to colleagues. Effective leadership and management have enabled the school to maintain the standards reported by the previous inspection in spite of the disruption caused by the threat of closure and the resulting staff movements.

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

56. There are good examples of literacy skills being developed in other subjects, including different forms of writing in geography, history and science. Information and communication technology has been used very effectively to enable pupils in Year 6 to present their biographies attractively. However, the school accepts that this is an area for further development so that opportunities to practise literacy skills in other subjects are identified in medium-term planning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement by the age of seven is good and pupils reach above-average standards.
- Standards are rising in Year 6 and this reflects the school's improved stability.
- Teaching is good in Years 1, 2, 3 and 6.
- All pupils have a good attitude to their learning.
- Information on pupils' progress is not consistently used to guide the planning of future learning so that tasks are not always matched to pupils' ability.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

## Commentary

57. Provision is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and this is reflected in good achievement, with standards which are above average. In Years 3 to 6, provision is satisfactory. The school has experienced a turbulent time over the last two years and this has had a significant effect on staffing and on the standards achieved. In the national test results for 2004, pupils in Year 6 achieved standards well below the national average and well below the average attained in similar schools. There is now a noticeable upward trend in the standards achieved by the time that pupils leave the school and this reflects the greater stability now being enjoyed in the school. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as other pupils. No difference was identified between achievement of boys and girls. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Standards have improved well by the end of Year 2, but have worsened by the end of Year 6.
58. Inspection evidence suggests that standards are now rising in Year 6 and that current standards are broadly average. Lesson observations and an analysis of pupils' work indicate that pupils are making good progress in Years 1, 2 and 3 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 and this reflects the teaching and learning. Close examination of pupils' work indicates appropriate challenge and expectation for all ability groups in Years 1, 2 and 3. In the other year groups, however, average and lower-attaining pupils are challenged well but a few higher-attaining pupils find the work easy and are not always fully challenged by their learning opportunities. All pupils have a positive attitude to their work and respond well to learning.
59. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1, 2 and 3 is good, with examples of very good teaching. Lessons are very well planned with a range of interesting and challenging activities. The main learning thrust of the lesson is shared effectively with pupils so they know what is expected of them. In a very good lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, pupils made very good progress and achieved above-average standards. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 1 add two digit numbers, understand sequences of numbers and identify odd and even numbers. In Years 2 and 3, good teaching ensures that all pupils make good gains in learning simple methods for multiplication. Pupils in Year 2 double numbers to 20 and count in steps of 4 because the teacher uses the oral starter to lessons well. Effective challenge by the teacher results in good use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the work is appropriate for them and they are well supported by the class teacher and by support assistants.
60. Good teaching was observed in a Year 6 class and teaching and learning in Years 4 and 5 are satisfactory. Standards are broadly average in Year 6. Higher-attaining pupils convert decimals into fractions and they find the mode and range of data. Average-attaining pupils interpret data satisfactorily. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge in problem-solving activities. Pupils have a secure understanding of shape, space and measures. When teaching is less effective, there is insufficient match of work to pupils' ability and the same task is planned for a whole class of pupils spanning two year groups.



61. Mathematics is led and managed well. The subject leader is an experienced teacher and a good role model for other staff. All teachers have been monitored and feedback has been given to teachers to help them to improve the quality of their teaching. Test results are analysed carefully and weaknesses are identified. The school can now track the progress of individual pupils over time but these procedures are not used consistently in all classes. Resources for mathematics are good and are easily accessible.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. Satisfactory use is made of mathematical skills to enhance pupils' learning in other subject areas. In Year 5, for example, pupils have used spreadsheets to add and take away the distances walked in an investigation. Literacy is used well to reinforce mathematical learning and an analysis of pupils' work shows regular use of word problems and mathematical vocabulary. Teachers use questions well to check pupils' understanding.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

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

- Teaching and learning are good and enable pupils to achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good.
- At times, there is a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils and there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work in science.

#### **Commentary**

63. In recent years, the results of the national tests at the end of Year 6 have been well below the national average. The standards of most pupils now in Year 6 are below those expected for their age. However, this represents good achievement for these pupils. Most pupils in Year 2 also achieve well and their standards are above those expected. Standards in Year 6 are below average because, in previous years, pupils have not had sufficient experience of investigative and experimental work. However, the school has recognised that this is a weakness and the subject leader has worked effectively to improve this area of learning in the subject. As a result, the school is in a good position to raise standards in future years as the results of these improvements are felt throughout the year groups.
64. Lessons are planned carefully so that they build on previous work. Because of this, pupils are able to use their prior scientific knowledge and understanding to support their learning when tackling new ideas. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, when they used their knowledge of forces to help them to learn that water resistance slows down an object moving through water. Pupils are encouraged to use accurate scientific terminology when answering questions and communicating their ideas, and this extends their personal, as well as their scientific, vocabulary. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well as a team to ensure that all pupils receive a high proportion of direct teaching. As a result, pupils of all abilities are usually effectively challenged and supported. On occasions, the work given to higher-attaining pupils lacks challenge and so they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
65. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and expertise and so are able to demonstrate and explain new scientific ideas to pupils accurately. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. Activities are structured well to develop pupils' investigational skills. This was seen, for example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 when

they were investigating simple electrical circuits. Because of such activities, pupils develop their ability to make sensible predictions well and to make sure that a test is 'fair'. However, they are not as adept at explaining the conclusions to their experiments. These tend to be a description of what they have done rather than a consideration of what they have discovered. There are high expectations for pupils' behaviour and effort, which lead to pupils having a good work rate and being productive.

66. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy their scientific activities. They have positive attitudes, are well behaved, and speak with enthusiasm about their practical work. This has a beneficial effect on the progress that they make and the standards that they attain.
67. The subject leader provides good leadership and management. She is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement and has helped to develop curriculum planning since the previous inspection. This means that there is now a stronger emphasis on pupils learning through structured, practical investigations. Because of this, most pupils show confidence in planning a test, making sure that it is 'fair' and then carrying it out. It is this increased emphasis on investigative and experimental work which is improving pupils' achievement and improving standards gradually. The curriculum also makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development, for example, by enabling them to work collaboratively. Assessment arrangements are secure. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in the subject because there are few computers in classrooms and the ones that are in some classes are of poor quality because of their age. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The ICT suite is used well to develop pupils' basic skills in the subject.
- There are not enough opportunities to use these skills to support learning in other subjects.
- Pupils enjoy their work in information and communication technology.
- Provision is much improved since the previous inspection.

### **Commentary**

68. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards which match those expected for their ages. This shows that achievement is satisfactory. Improvement has been good since the previous inspection with the creation of a computer suite. Each class has a weekly timetabled session in the suite and this session is used well by teachers to develop basic skills. Teachers have received training to develop their expertise and confidence in teaching the subject. As a result, they are able to explain and demonstrate new ideas and techniques precisely and accurately so that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what is expected of them. This was evident, for example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 3 on learning how to add sounds to a *PowerPoint* presentation.
69. There is emphasis on pupils, including those with special educational needs, working together in pairs on computers, which contributes well to their personal and social development. Lessons are planned and managed well to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. As a result, they have a good work rate and are productive. Teachers with computer-driven

whiteboards in their classrooms use them well to enhance pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well in lessons so that all pupils receive a high proportion of direct teaching. This is an important factor in the sound progress that they make.

70. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, show a lot of interest and enjoyment when working on computers. They are very well behaved and keen to improve their skills. This has a beneficial effect on the progress that they make and the standards that they attain.
71. The headteacher provides secure leadership and management in the absence of a subject leader. She has developed a focused action plan for taking the subject forward. This includes teachers' planning being improved, so that they provide more opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to support their learning in other subjects. The curriculum is planned well so that all strands of the subject are effectively covered.

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

72. There are not enough opportunities overall for pupils to use their ICT skills to support and enhance learning in other subjects. However, there are some good examples of pupils using the Internet well as a means of researching information. This is evident, for example, in a project undertaken by some pupils as part of their work in history about life and times in Tudor England. Pupils are also able to use their word processing skills to help to add interest to their writing in English. The school acknowledges that pupils need more opportunities to practise and refine the ICT skills gained in the computer suite, when back in the classroom.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

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

- Good teaching in Years 2 and 3 ensures that pupils develop a sound understanding of their local area.
- Information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning throughout the school.

#### **Commentary**

73. Achievement is satisfactory in geography by the time that pupils leave the school. During the inspection, two lessons were observed in Years 2 and 6 and standards observed were typical of what you would expect for pupils of this age. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers. Since the previous inspection, standards and the quality of teaching and learning have been maintained.
74. In a good lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3, the teacher planned effective links with literacy, art and design and information and communication technology. As a result, pupils gained a good understanding of the importance of maintaining their own school in the local area. They used the Internet well to research information and to enhance their awareness. Younger pupils have investigated local and international weather conditions, and pupils in Year 6 have researched information about mountain ranges. Good use has been made of literacy and of art and design skills to design posters and to write letters explaining why the school should remain open. Younger pupils have used literacy skills well in writing about their visit to Shoeburyness.

75. Geography is led and managed well. The subject leader is a good role model for teachers and pupils and has a good understanding of the subject's strengths and areas to develop. She has monitored planning and analysed pupils' work to get a good overview of standards.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment in Years 1, 2 and 3 because teaching and learning are very good.
- Information and communication technology and literacy skills are used well to enhance learning.
- Local history is not as well used as it could be.

### Commentary

76. By the age of seven, standards are above those expected for children of this age. Pupils build effectively on their prior attainment in Year 1, 2 and 3 and this reflects very good teaching in these year groups. No teaching was observed in Years 4 to 6, but an analysis of pupils' work suggests that achievement is not as good in these year groups. Standards of work seen are in line with those expected, but pupils have not built effectively on the very good progress they make in Years 1, 2 and 3. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make the same progress as other pupils. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in Years 1, 2 and 3 and have been maintained in Years 4 to 6. The role of the subject leader has improved.
77. Pupils make very good progress in Years 1, 2 and 3 and satisfactory progress in Years 4 to 6. This progress reflects the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils throughout the school learn about significant people, places and events from both the recent and more distant past and use different sources of information to help them to investigate the past.
78. Higher-attaining and average pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 have a clear understanding of the past, present and future because teachers use time lines effectively. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good knowledge of the Great Fire of London and talk competently about how it started and about the effects of the fire. Literacy and art and design skills are used well to enhance historical learning and pupils write about the fire and create drawings to illustrate their writing. This very good progress continues in the Years 2 and 3 class. Homework tasks are used well. Pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of Viking longboats. Higher-attaining pupils talk confidently about how the boats were made, what wood was used and how wide and long they were. The teacher skilfully extends pupils' literacy and numeracy skills by guiding them to understand the width of the longboats with two-metre-long sticks. Pupils use referencing skills well to research information in order to take notes and to make bullet points. Work is well matched to the ability of all pupils, who talk enthusiastically about the Vikings, and this is a reflection of the teacher's own enthusiastic approach.
79. Visits and computers are used well to enhance learning. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 visit London and pupils in Years 3 and 4 have used the Internet well to find out about the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils in Year 6 have researched information about historical figures such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. The rich local history of the school location is captured around the school by photographs and artefacts from the Second World War, but there is a noticeable lack of pupils' work about this local history.
80. History is led and managed well. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has a clear action plan to develop the subject further. She has monitored teaching and learning and has developed the range of resources and artefacts available.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.
- Leadership and management are good.
- There is little use of information and communication technology to support learning.
- There is a good range of religious artefacts.

### Commentary

81. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards which are above the expectations of the Havering Agreed Syllabus, which shows they have achieved well during their time in the school.
82. Teachers have secure subject expertise and organise discussions well to help pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the main events in the life of Jesus and of the main characters in the Bible. Pupils are provided with good quality opportunities to explore Christian values and beliefs, including the manner in which they affect people's lives today. For example, pupils in Year 6 have considered how Christians work within organisations locally and overseas to bring help to others. This makes a positive contribution to the good relationships that are to be found throughout the school and to pupils' moral and social development. Teachers take care to plan lessons that are often linked to pupils' own experiences. This leads to pupils being able to use their knowledge and understanding of everyday life to support their learning.
83. There is also good emphasis on pupils learning about the beliefs and traditions of other major world faiths, and this effectively supports their cultural development. This was evident, for example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 2 on Sikhism. Pupils learned that Baisakhi is the Sikh New Year and, during the lesson, they broadened their understanding of religious symbolism in Sikh festivals well.
84. The leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. The subject leader is enthusiastic and helps colleagues to plan worthwhile and interesting activities for pupils. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visitors, such as the local vicar, to give pupils further religious experiences and understanding. The school has a good range of religious artefacts to help pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of major world faiths. There is little use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in the subject. There has been a satisfactory improvement in provision since the previous inspection.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects were sampled which means that no overall judgement on provision can be made. Evidence was drawn from looking at examples of pupils' work and the school's documents, and from talking to pupils and their teachers.

## **Art and design**

85. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the standards expected for their age. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with pupils being encouraged to use a wide range of media to develop their skills in different artistic techniques. The curriculum is enriched by pupils being able to join an after-school art club. They also have had the opportunity to work with a professional potter to make clay pots. Good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' artistic ideas by studying the work of famous artists, such as Monet, Picasso and Van Gogh. There are some useful links with other subjects; for example, pupils have made a range of symmetrical patterns as part of their work in mathematics. There is also a limited use of information and communication technology to support learning. This is seen, for example, in the work of pupils in Year 2, who have used pictures from the Internet to create pencil drawings of famous buildings in London.

## **Design and technology**

86. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach the standards expected for their age. The curriculum is broad and balanced, enabling all pupils to have opportunities to design, make and evaluate a range of products. In carrying out these activities, pupils have access to a suitable range of equipment and materials. They are encouraged to practise finishing techniques to improve the quality of their products and to experiment with different ways of joining materials. There are some useful links with other subjects; for example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 have used their scientific knowledge of forces to help them to integrate cams to create up and down movements in their models of Victorian automatons.

## **Music**

87. Whole-school singing in assemblies is satisfactory. The school uses a commercial scheme to underpin teaching and learning in music, and this ensures that the National Curriculum is covered. Recent in-service training in music has increased teachers' confidence in teaching this area of the curriculum. Approximately 15 pupils attend a recorder club, but no other opportunities for instrumental tuition are provided. Some pupils attend a music school provided by the local education authority on Saturday mornings. The choir sings carols locally at Christmas and pupils benefit from occasional visits from string, woodwind and brass groups. Some pupils visited the Royal Festival Hall for a 'Proms for Schools' concert. The subject is well resourced and resources include some instruments representing non-western cultures. However, at this stage, the subject does not have a high profile in the school.

## **Physical education**

88. The school ensures that the National Curriculum is covered. Standards in swimming are above average and, in most years, all pupils swim 25 metres by the time that they leave the school. In their last year in the school, pupils play friendly matches against other schools in soccer and netball. There is some external coaching in cricket, soccer and hockey. On their residential visit, pupils in Year 6 have opportunities to experience outdoor and adventurous activities such as abseiling. The subject is well resourced and benefits from extensive playing fields on site. Again, however, it does not have a high profile in the school.

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

89. This aspect of the curriculum was sampled so that no overall judgement is made on the quality of teaching or standards.
90. The provision for pupils to gain an understanding of how to behave in various circumstances, both at school and in the wider community, is adequate. Sex education and drugs misuse are taught in science and through the teaching of a range of visitors to the school.

91. Many teachers include aspects of personal, social and health education and citizenship in their daily teaching but there is no programme of work used by the whole school which clearly sets out learning objectives, teaching activities and assessment opportunities. There are no procedures to ensure continuity and progression and there is no allocated timetable slot for this aspect of learning. Whole-class discussion time is allocated in class if teachers feel that there is a need to focus on this area of learning.
92. The school is working towards a 'Healthy School Accreditation Award'. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for developments in the school through the school council. They have a positive attitude to learning and their behaviour is good. Extra-curricular clubs are well attended and contribute well to pupils' personal development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

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

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).*