

INSPECTION REPORT

THE WHITE BRIDGE INFANT SCHOOL

Loughton

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114872

Headteacher: Mrs Julie Witteridge

Lead inspector: Godfrey Bancroft

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 January 2005

Inspection number: 268101

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	157
School address:	Greensted Road Loughton Essex
Postcode:	IG10 3DR
Telephone number:	020 8508 8624
Fax number:	020 8532 0163
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ruth Dronsfield
Date of previous inspection:	18 January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves part of the community of Loughton, Essex, on the north-east fringe of London. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, which is said to be below average, is not a true reflection of these circumstances. Pupils are mainly of White-British ethnic background. A minority of pupils come from other ethnic backgrounds. Pupil mobility is higher than usually found in schools providing for this age group. In recent years the attainment of children on entry to the school has been below average. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in most schools with a small number of pupils who are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average and covers a range of needs. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is below the national average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3687	Godfrey Bancroft	Lead inspector	The foundation stage Mathematics Art and design Music Physical education
19322	Judi Bedawi	Lay inspector	
32136	Lesley Brookes	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
33730	Paul Barraclough	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The White Bridge Infant School is a good school with some very good features. Pupils from all backgrounds and abilities achieve well. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. The leadership and management of the school are good. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve very well in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Children in the Reception classes are provided with a good start to their education.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning and their behaviour are very good. However, pupils are not involved sufficiently in understanding how well they are getting on or in deciding what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.
- The school is working effectively to improve pupils' attendance, but it is still below average.
- Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school provides pupils with very good opportunities to enrich their learning.
- The school's links with parents are very good.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.

The school was last inspected in January 1999. Improvement since that time is good. Teachers' planning now ensures that tasks are matched very well to pupils' prior attainment. Day-to-day assessments also ensure that pupils' attainment and the progress they are making are clearly understood by staff. The school's trend in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, over the last five years, is above the national trend.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	C	B	A	B
writing	C	C	C	C
mathematics	B	A	C	C

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 from all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. Children join the school with attainment that is generally below average. Children in the Reception classes achieve well. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children achieve the early learning goals for their personal, social and emotional education, their physical development and their creative development. However, a significant number do not achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because their attainment on entry in these areas of their learning was well below average. The most recent national tests (2004) for the end of Year 2 show that standards in reading were well above average and standards in writing and mathematics were average. Compared with similar schools standards in reading were above average and standards in writing and mathematics were average. Inspection findings show that pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to attain standards that are well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. These well above average standards in reading are attributable to the very good use that teachers and teaching assistants make of the school's scheme for teaching reading.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, but attendance is below average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan very effectively to meet the needs of different ability groups. Throughout the school the teaching of reading is particularly effective. Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and help pupils to achieve well. Arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. However, pupils are not involved sufficiently in expressing how well they are getting on and what they need to do to improve. The curriculum is good and the range of activities provided for the enrichment of learning is very good. The provision made for the care, guidance and welfare of pupils is satisfactory. The school's partnership with parents is very good. Links with the community are satisfactory and links with other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Governors meet their statutory duties well. They provide very good support for the headteacher and are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The working relationship between the headteacher and deputy-headteacher is very effective, providing the basis for the school's very good ethos and pupils' good achievement. Subject leaders undertake their duties well. The governing body, headteacher and staff ensure that the resources available to the school are used wisely.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think the school is excellent and are delighted with the quality of education provided for their children. Pupils also think their school is excellent and are very appreciative of the work done by staff on their behalf. The school is good at involving pupils by seeking and acting on their views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Maintain the trend that is leading to improved attendance and work closely with parents to ensure their children attend.
- Ensure that pupils are involved fully in understanding how well they are progressing and in knowing what they need to do to improve the standards they achieve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children in the Reception classes achieve well. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- National test results and inspection findings show that standards in reading are well above average.

Commentary

1. Children join the school with attainment that is generally below average. Children in the Reception classes achieve well because the provision made for their learning is good. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children achieve the early learning goals for their personal, social and emotional education, their physical development and their creative development. However, a significant number do not achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because their attainment on entry in these areas of their learning was well below average. Even so, children achieve well in these areas of their learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (16.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.8 (14.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.8 (17.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The most recent national tests (2004) for the end of Year 2 show that standards in reading were well above average and standards in writing and mathematics were average. Compared with similar schools standards in reading were above average and standards in writing and mathematics were average. Inspection findings show that pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to attain standards that are well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. These well above average standards in reading are attributable to the very good use that teachers and teaching assistants make of the school's scheme for teaching reading. There are differing numbers of pupils in each year group with special educational needs. This means that there are some year-on-year variations in the standards that pupils attain in the annual national tests. However, the school's trend in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, over the last five years, is above the national trend. This illustrates good improvement in standards since the time of the last inspection.

The table below shows the inspection findings for attainment and achievement by the end of Year 2.

Subject	Standards and achievement by the end of Year 2
Reading	Well above average standards and very good achievement
Writing	Above average standards and very good achievement
Mathematics	Above average standards and very good achievement
Science	Above average standards and very good achievement
Information and communication technology	Average standards and good achievement
Religious education	Average standards and good achievement
Geography	Inspection findings indicate average standards and good achievement
History	Inspection findings indicate average standards and good achievement
Art and design	Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average and that pupils achieve very well
Design and technology	Inspection findings indicate average standards and good achievement
Music	Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average and that pupils achieve very well
Physical education	Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average and that pupils achieve very well
Personal, social, health education and citizenship	Inspection findings indicate that pupils achieve very well

3. In subjects where pupils achieve very well this is because the quality of teaching is very good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well overall. Their achievement in speaking and listening and in reading and writing is very good. This is because they are supported very well in their learning, especially by teaching assistants. Pupils recognised as being gifted and talented achieve well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also achieve very well in speaking and listening. These pupils make rapid progress, benefiting greatly from the effective use made by teachers of the school's scheme for teaching reading. Pupils acquire and apply the skills of language and literacy well. They also show good competence in using their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects. Pupils' competence in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is below average and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very interested and enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils form very good relationships with each other and with adults.

- Pupils show very good understanding of their own and others' cultural traditions

Commentary

4. Pupils are able to learn in an atmosphere free from any form of bullying, racism or other forms of harassment. The school promotes racial harmony very well. Pupils behave very well and it is significant that there have been no exclusions of pupils for poor behaviour in recent years. Pupils are eager to take responsibility and undertake the jobs they are given very well. They take great care when tidying up after activities and enjoy the responsibility of jobs, such as taking the class registers to the school office. Pupils are very caring towards each other and play and work well together. They are enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy talking with each other and with adults about the work they are doing. They are also very proud of the work they do in subjects, such as art and design and English.
5. The school enables pupils to develop very well spiritually. This is particularly true in terms of pupils' awareness and care for others. Pupils acquire very good social skills. They form very good relationships with each other and with the adults who support their learning. They are courteous towards each other and greet visitors to the school warmly. Pupils are honest and open and are very aware of what is right and wrong, both in terms of their own behaviour and in relation to the wider world. The school works very effectively to raise pupils' awareness of their own cultural traditions and the traditions and beliefs of others. This is especially true of the work pupils do in lessons concerned with their personal and social development, history and religious education. Children in the Reception classes achieve well and are on course to meet the early learning goals set for their personal, social and emotional development.
6. Attendance is below average. However, the majority of pupils are eager to attend and clearly enjoy school. In the past, attendance has been affected adversely by the long-term absence of some pupils through illness. The school has good procedures to follow up absences and help pupils to attend. However, the minority of parents who take their children on holiday during term-time has a significant, negative impact on the school's attendance figures.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.5	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 quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and there is a very good range of opportunities for enrichment. Equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good. The provision made for the care, welfare and guidance of pupils is satisfactory. The school's partnership with parents is very good. Partnerships with the community are satisfactory and partnerships with other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers challenge pupils, including higher attaining pupils, very well.
- Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.
- The teaching of reading is a significant strength of the provision.
- Pupils are not involved sufficiently in understanding how well they are getting on or in deciding what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.
- The issues arising from the last inspection have been addressed successfully.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	8	13	1	0	0	0

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

7. Teaching and learning in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 are good. During the inspection excellent teaching was observed in mathematics and science. In Years 1 and 2 teachers have positive relationships with their pupils. They have high expectations of what pupils are capable of doing and pupils respond well to these expectations. They are experts at motivating pupils and making them feel good about their learning. Pupils' efforts and successes are celebrated consistently. The result of this is that pupils apply themselves well and almost always try their best. Teachers have good subject knowledge. The match of activities to pupils' needs and abilities was an issue at the time of the last inspection. Teachers now match work very well to pupils' needs and base their planning very effectively on pupils' prior attainment. In English, mathematics and science teachers challenge and extend pupils very well. The work they plan for higher attaining pupils meets the needs of these pupils very well.
8. Throughout the school the teaching of reading is particularly effective and enables pupils to achieve very well in this aspect of their learning. Teachers pay very effective attention to helping pupils to pronounce the sounds of letters and combinations of letters correctly. This enables pupils to achieve very well in their speaking and listening as well as in their reading.

Example of outstanding practice

Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and help pupils to achieve very well.

The working partnership formed by teachers and teaching assistants makes an exceptional contribution to supporting the learning of all pupils. Teaching assistants are involved fully in all aspects of planning, helping to ensure that the work set is matched very well to pupils' needs and abilities. Teaching assistants are very knowledgeable about the pupils they work with. This is clearly evident when they assess the attainment and progress that pupils make and when they monitor pupils' personal development. The relationships formed between assistants and pupils are very positive. Pupils feel they are supported very well by assistants and attach great value to the trusting relationships they have with them. Teaching assistants often work independently with groups within lessons and at times when pupils are withdrawn from lessons. At these times they often make an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. Their thorough planning and very good knowledge of the materials they are using in literacy and numeracy often enables pupils to enjoy their learning and to achieve very well. This is especially true in speaking and listening and in reading, where teaching assistants provide excellent role models.

9. At the time of the last inspection arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress were unsatisfactory. These arrangements are now satisfactory. Teachers set realistic and challenging targets for pupils' attainment and progress. They also use the last section of lessons well to assess the progress that pupils have made and as a guide for what they should teach next. However, pupils are not involved sufficiently in these processes. For example, although teachers keep pupils well informed of the progress they are making teachers rarely ask them to express how well they think they are getting on and to consider what they need to do to improve. The use of homework as a means of enhancing pupils' learning is satisfactory.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 is good. Opportunities for enrichment, through extra-curricular activities and educational visits, are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for curriculum enrichment are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Annual, termly and weekly planning, based on schemes of work, promotes learning well.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced very well by the good use made of the computer suite and the attractive library area.

Commentary

10. The school keeps the curriculum under constant and effective review and implements changes thoughtfully. Curriculum planning and schemes of work have been systematically developed to ensure full access to a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Provision for pupils with special education needs and for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. The specific needs of both these groups of pupils are monitored carefully and reviewed regularly to ensure that the work is matched well to their needs and abilities. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is also good. All subjects are given sufficient time to ensure that coverage of what should be taught is good. Subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and scrutinise pupils' work. Teachers adjust the curriculum effectively, having regard for any differences between pupils of different gender and ability. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils and extends their curriculum appropriately. This works very well in mathematics.
11. The school enriches pupils' learning with a very good variety of activities outside lesson times. The depth and range of clubs offered are of a very good standard, given the size of the school, and the young age of the pupils. Educational visits are regularly planned and enhance the quality of learning very well. Visitors are invited to talk with pupils and share their knowledge and expertise. Visits to local places of interest, such as the Royal Gunpowder Mills and a recreated African village, develop pupils' skills in geography, history and science well.
12. The quality of staffing is good. The number of experienced teaching assistants provides excellent extra support. Accommodation is satisfactory, and used well. Since the last inspection a dedicated outdoor area for the youngest pupils has been developed, and it is gradually being resourced, as funds allow. Pupils have weekly, planned sessions in the dedicated computer suite. These sessions make an effective contribution to their learning. Resources to support learning in other subjects are satisfactory. Since the last inspection an attractive, accessible and well-stocked library has been developed.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. The provision for support and guidance are also satisfactory. The school's arrangements to seek, value and act on the views of pupils are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are happy and confident because their personal development is nurtured well.
- Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' attainment and academic progress are satisfactory.
- The strong mutual trust between staff and pupils ensures that pupils' views are acted upon.
- New pupils settle in quickly.

Commentary

13. Satisfactory attention is paid to procedures and practices to ensure pupils' care, welfare and safety. There are sufficient qualified first aiders. Health and safety tests and records are maintained correctly. The staff look after pupils well, supporting their personal and social development, so that pupils gain confidence in their own abilities. The youngest children are gently enabled and encouraged to learn through activities that have a good focus on developing basic skills. Very well trained teaching assistants support pupils who need additional help with their learning, or behaviour, or in acquiring English language skills, exceptionally well. Awareness of child protection procedures is good and all staff have had recent training. The child protection policy is being amended to include the latest legislation. Sensitive records are kept securely. There is positive liaison with the different agencies involved in child protection work.
14. The monitoring of pupils' attainment and academic progress is satisfactory. Work is assessed and planned appropriately to meet the needs of all pupil groups. Pupils are set targets for their progress and improvement in English and mathematics. Many pupils know what their targets are, but are less secure in their knowledge of what to do next in order to improve further.
15. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good, firmly built on mutual respect and trust. Adults in the school listen carefully to pupils' views, taking prompt and effective action to resolve any problems that pupils have with learning or personal matters. Pupils know that adults will find time to listen, so they feel able to ask for help when it is needed.
16. There are good arrangements to help new pupils to settle in. The youngest children are gradually introduced to school routines through part-time attendance in their first term. Parents and children also visit the school together, attending 'taster' sessions and getting to know staff so that there are very few difficulties when children do attend full-time. When older pupils start at the school they are well supported by staff and are quickly accepted by other pupils who help them to make new friends.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents. Links with the community are satisfactory and links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcomes and values the thriving support from its parents.
- Parental satisfaction with their children's school is outstanding.
- The quality of information that parents receive is good.
- There are good links with the adjoining junior school.
- Provision for links with the community, although satisfactory, are not extensive.

Commentary

17. The school works very closely with parents, sharing the responsibility of giving pupils a stimulating and happy start to education. Parents enjoy visiting the school because they are made very welcome and are encouraged to help and to become involved. Parents work with pupils in classes, listen to readers and attend regular workshops so that they know how best to support their children's learning. Many more parents help on educational visits. The White Bridge Schools Association is extremely successful at fundraising through a busy programme of school and social events with money equally shared between the infant and junior schools. The infant school is buying playground equipment. The school is very appreciative of the support that parents provide.
18. Parents are exceptionally satisfied with the school's work. They are particularly impressed with the openness and approachability of the headteacher and her staff, who are always ready to listen and share information. Parents feel confident in asking questions and know that they will receive a very prompt, positive response. They have no significant concerns and are delighted with the progress of their children, who are very happy at the school.
19. The quality of information that parents receive is good. The prospectus and annual governors' report fully meet statutory requirements. There are good newsletters and access to leaflets about education and school policies. Pupil reports are good overall because they relate well to individual pupils, particularly in terms of personal development. There are academic targets in reading, English and mathematics, but not in other subjects. Parents are told what their children have done and can do, in different subjects, but there is not enough focus on saying how pupils can improve or what they must do next to make even better progress.
20. The school has well established links with the adjoining junior school, sharing facilities such as the dining hall and the administrative corridor. Almost all pupils transfer seamlessly to the junior school at the end of Year 2. Some staff training is shared to reduce costs. Staff also benefit from training provided by a nearby special school, for example, in speech therapy. The infant school belongs to the local primary consortium. There are regular meetings and a support group for headteachers. The programme of professional development for staff, and the opportunity to visit other schools within the consortium, enhances teachers' and teaching assistants' skills. The infant school welcomes visitors from other schools, keen to learn about the success of the school's reading programme.
21. Community links are satisfactory, but not extensive. The school's good reputation is growing in the local area and some pupils travel considerable distance to attend. There are links with local churches that support pupils' spiritual development and their understanding of religions well. Links with local playgroups are also developing well. Local businesses provide welcome support through donations and advertising in the parents' association newsletter.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The governance of the school is good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The leadership and management provided by other key staff are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are knowledgeable and supportive of the school.
- The headteacher motivates and supports staff very well.
- Staff with responsibilities, such as subject leaders, undertake their duties well.
- Governors and the headteacher ensure that the resources available to the school are used wisely.

Commentary

22. Governors meet their statutory duties well. They provide very good support for the headteacher and are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve. Many governors are also regular visitors to the school and take their duty to evaluate the quality of provision very seriously. This enables them to make a good contribution to leading the school's development and measuring improvement.
23. The headteacher provides very good support and guidance for her colleagues and this is very much appreciated by the staff. Parents also express their faith and confidence in the headteacher to ensure their children are provided with a good start to their education. This faith is not misplaced. The working relationship between the headteacher and deputy-headteacher is very effective, providing the basis for the school's very good ethos and pupils' good achievement. The headteacher and deputy-headteacher know all aspects of the school's development very well. Over recent years they have led the central focus for development of pupils' speaking and listening and reading very successfully. They have also worked effectively to ensure that measures are in place to improve standards in other aspects of pupils' learning. These measures are leading to improvements in such subjects as writing, mathematics and science.
24. Staff with responsibilities, such as subject leaders, undertake their duties well. The leadership and management of English, mathematics and science are very good. The leadership of the Foundation Stage and the leadership of special educational needs are good. Subject leaders provide their colleagues with good support and guidance and this is proving to be successful in improving standards. There are also good opportunities for subject leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of provision in their subjects and they are involved fully in planning for further improvements.
25. The governing body, headteacher and staff ensure that the resources available to the school are used wisely. The day-to-day organisation and financial management of the school are good and office staff work effectively, in partnership with headteacher, to ensure the school runs smoothly. Financial planning is linked well to the school's priorities for development and to maintaining the best features of provision. For example, the governors have allocated funding to ensure that the level of support provided by teaching assistants can be maintained. Governors apply the principles of best value well to the purchase of services and resources. The school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	499,692	Balance from previous year	53,093
Total expenditure	461,891	Balance carried forward to the next	37, 801
Expenditure per pupil	3142		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes) is **good**.

Over recent years children have joined the school with attainment that is generally below average. The attainment on entry of the current Reception class children was below average in their personal, social and emotional development and in their physical and creative development. However, attainment on entry for this group of children in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world was well below average. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Improvement, since the time of the previous inspection, is also good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children behave very well.
- Many children are becoming increasingly confident learners.
- Many children are becoming increasingly independent and sustain their interest in their activities well.

Commentary

26. Children achieve well in this area of their learning and most are on course to achieve the early goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good and they make rapid progress. Children's progress, in this area of their learning, is assessed thoroughly. Children go about their business cheerfully and are confident in their approaches to adults, often talking with enthusiasm about the work they are doing. Staff have high expectations of how children will behave and the children respond very well to these expectations. Children are also expected to tidy up after activities and they do this helpfully and eagerly. They play and work well together. Relationships between children and between children and adults are very good. Children are supported very well in all aspects of their personal, social and emotional development. For example, there is a daily 'Circle Time' in which children are given very good opportunities to speak about things that interest them and to listen to others. Teachers make very effective use of these times to help children to develop their social skills. Many children are becoming independent learners, sustaining their interest in activities for increasingly longer periods of time and keeping records of the activities they have taken part in.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide very good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening.
- The teaching of early reading skills is effective.
- The monitoring of children's progress is effective and information is used well.

Commentary

27. Children achieve well in this area of their learning and the quality of teaching and learning is good. Children who speak English as an additional language also achieve well. Many children have low levels of speaking and listening on arrival. They make rapid progress but a significant number are unlikely to achieve the early goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. Their attainment and progress are assessed accurately and frequently. The information teachers and teaching assistants gain from these assessments is used effectively to plan the next stages of children's learning. There are frequent good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers use questions very effectively to help children to gather their thoughts and express themselves with increasing clarity. Even so, a few lower attaining children still experience some difficulty in making themselves understood.
28. The school's programme for teaching reading (Early Reading Research – ERR) is very effective in enabling children to pronounce the sounds of letters and combinations of letters. This programme is enabling higher attaining children to read a good range of simple words correctly. However, although they are taught well and their achievement is good, the letter recognition of lower attaining children is below average and some do not recognise their own name. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to these early reading activities and support children's learning very effectively. Children enjoy reading and talking about familiar stories. They use pictures well to give them insights to the stories and to predict what might happen next. They also talk about their favourite characters from stories. The early attempts at writing of many children are not legible, although they like to explain what they have written. However, children's progression as they acquire early writing skills is planned well and the highest attaining children write very good short stories about their own experiences and use their imaginations well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers encourage children successfully to use correct mathematical language.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use their knowledge of numbers in practical situations.

Commentary

29. Children achieve well in this area of their learning and the quality of teaching and learning is good. However, a significant number of children are unlikely to achieve the early goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. Teachers and teaching assistants provide frequent, good opportunities for children to develop their understanding of numbers. They often encourage children to count real objects in practical situations because learning in this way is more meaningful for the children. The ability to recognise numbers and add single digit numbers develops well amongst higher attaining children. The most able recognise numbers to twenty and beyond. However, lower attaining children struggle to do this. When they start in the Reception classes very few children can write numbers legibly. This skill also develops well, but is more evident amongst higher attaining children. The majority of children can order shapes by size and use terminology, such as 'larger' and 'smaller' correctly. This is because staff encourage children consistently to do this and congratulate them when they do so correctly, especially if they use such language without being prompted to do so.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy and contribute well in assemblies.
- Teachers provide children with an effective introduction to using computers.

Commentary

30. Children achieve well in this area of their learning and the quality of teaching and learning is good. However, a significant number of children are unlikely to achieve the early goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. The school works effectively to develop children's knowledge of their locality and of people in the community who help them. However, children arrive with very little knowledge in this area of their development. Children experience a daily assembly. They like to contribute to these events which are used very effectively by teachers to introduce children to features of their own and others' cultures. However, the knowledge of many is well below that expected for their age.
31. Children rapidly gain confidence in the use of computers. The school adapts the keyboards and ensures lower case letters are available to make early writing activities easier. Children are also beginning to use painting and drawing programmes well. Children like to play with construction kits. Often the models they make reflect their intentions well. For example, during the inspection several children made machines for washing animals, explaining clearly how these would work. Children are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about the ingredients in food products. During the inspection a group of children, working with a teaching assistant, made pizzas. They commented thoughtfully about the types of food they liked and disliked.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's ability to control implements is developing well.
- Some lower attaining children lack control and awareness when they play outside.

Commentary

32. Children achieve well in this area of their learning and most children are on course to achieve the early goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make good use of the school hall to introduce children to gymnastics equipment and games activities. These activities are helping to improve children's co-ordination. There are good opportunities to play outside with large wheeled toys and children are becoming increasingly skilful. However, a few lack direction and control and awareness of what is going on around them. Children's control of implements, such as scissors, pencils and paint brushes is developing well. Since the last inspection a dedicated outdoor area for the youngest pupils has been developed. Teachers use this area well to support all aspects of children's learning and it is gradually being resourced, as funds allow.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**,

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to sing and make music.
- There are good opportunities for role-play and for children to use their imaginations.

Commentary

33. Children achieve well in this area of their learning and most children are on course to achieve the early goals by the time they leave the Reception classes. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy singing. There are also good opportunities for them to make music. During the inspection children used percussion instruments, including improvised instruments, well to make loud and soft sounds to the song 'Brown Bear Snoring'. Children play together well and learn to co-operate during role-play. These experiences include acting as the staff of a hospital and working and being customers in a café. When they do this children use their imaginations well. Children's abilities to draw and paint are developing well. This is because of the good support and guidance they receive from staff. Many paintings and drawings resemble their intended outcome. There are good opportunities to work with a range of materials, for example, in making collages and ceramic leaf patterns.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment in reading are well above average.
- Effective initiatives have been introduced to raise standards in writing.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good.
- Pupils are not sufficiently involved in deciding how well they are getting on.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

34. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment for English are above average at the end of Year 2. Reading standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average. Standards in writing are improving, but are not yet as high as those for reading. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve very well.
35. By the age of seven pupils' speaking and listening skills are developing very well. There is a conscious focus on improving these skills and many pupils are now articulate. They demonstrate this in their responses to questions, as well as in putting their thoughts, ideas and opinions forward. Teachers ensure that pupils learn specific subject vocabulary and encourage them successfully to initiate comments. There are good opportunities for role-play, mime and drama. Pupils listen politely to each other and work collaboratively and supportively during group activities.

36. Attainment in reading is well above average. This is as a direct result of the school's very successful introduction and use of the Early Reading Research (ERR) Scheme. Its daily use, from the Reception classes onwards, ensures that pupils extend their knowledge of, and familiarity with, reading words in a consistent and planned way. The majority of pupils are fluent and expressive in their reading. They can locate information in the much-improved library, which is in regular use. They understand the use of contents and index pages. In lessons, most pupils show that they are able to read a range of texts with confidence: for example pupils demonstrated their skills in history and religious education lessons, as well as in literacy sessions.
37. Attainment in writing is currently average but is improving rapidly and could well be above average by the end of the academic year. Pupils use punctuation and grammar well and the ERR scheme ensures that they make very good attempts at spelling words phonetically. The improvement of writing standards is a current focus across the school. Good initiatives have been introduced to promote and extend various forms of writing, and creative work already shows a marked improvement. Standards are starting to rise. Pupils present their work neatly.
38. The quality of teaching is very good and is matched by learning. Teachers' planning caters well for individual needs and more able pupils are appropriately challenged. Pupils with special educational needs, or English as an additional language, are supported very well. Learning assistants support pupils' learning very effectively. Marking is constructive and developmental and makes it clear where pupils can improve. Opportunities for pupils' self-evaluation are under-developed. For example, pupils are not sufficiently included in the evaluation of lessons and in deciding whether the planned learning objectives have been achieved.
39. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. Her enthusiasm has already had an impact on the raising of standards. She collaborates well with colleagues to make improvements based on a well-focused action plan. She monitors teaching and learning closely and has ensured that systems for tracking pupils' progress are thorough. The school shows appropriate rigour in its tracking and monitoring of pupils. Teachers make good use of on-going, and more formal, assessment to meet pupils' individual needs. Improvement in provision since the last inspection is good.

Literacy across the curriculum

40. Good opportunities for pupils to use their developing skills in a range of subjects are included in plans. Scrutiny of work shows that literacy skills are used well in subjects such as religious education, history and science and that these skills receive appropriate attention when work is marked. The subject makes a good, and sometimes specifically planned, contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers match work very well to pupils' needs and abilities.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic learners and respond well to the challenges set for them.
- Pupils are not involved sufficiently in knowing how well they are getting on and in deciding what they need to do to improve.
- Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

41. Inspection findings show that standards in mathematics are above average and that pupils achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve very well. From a below average starting point, when children enter the Reception classes, pupils advance to a position where, by the end of Year 2, they apply the mathematical functions of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division confidently and competently. Much of this very good progress is based on the effective use of the mental and oral section of each lesson. Teachers ensure that this section of the lesson builds carefully on pupils' previous learning. They also take great care to ensure that pupils of all abilities are involved fully in this section of the lesson, gradually increasing pupils' confidence to use and apply their mathematical abilities.
42. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. At times teaching is excellent. When this is the case lessons progress at a rapid pace and work is very well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, based on their prior learning. In Year 2 higher attaining pupils are challenged very well by excellent teaching. These pupils are very enthusiastic learners, invariably trying their very best and sustaining their interest very well. Teachers extend pupils' knowledge very well through the skilful use of questions when they ask pupils to explain how they arrive at the answers they give. At such times pupils respond thoughtfully, for example, explaining that they like to deal with the biggest number first when doing an addition. Arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Teachers set realistic and challenging targets for pupils. Pupils know these targets but are not involved sufficiently in deciding how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve further.
43. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has overseen a steady improvement in standards and provides very good support and guidance for her colleagues. She also ensures that all aspects of the mathematics curriculum are addressed fully in teachers' planning in each year group. Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning. They plan together with the class teachers and lead groups of pupils very effectively. They also know the pupils very well and make accurate assessments of the progress that pupils make. Improvement, since the last inspection, is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

44. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and abilities well across the curriculum. When undertaking additions and subtractions, particularly where money is involved, they calculate their answers quickly and accurately. Pupils use graphs well to record the outcomes of scientific investigations. They also use basic mathematical language correctly, including terms such as 'greater' and 'smaller', in a range of contexts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is very good and standards are above average.
- Teaching is very good.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to teaching and learning.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

45. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve very well. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 standards are above average. This is because teaching is very good. There is a clear matching of work to pupils' needs. In the best lessons this is achieved through a very clear focus on what the pupils should learn, which is shared with them. The pupils are involved well in reviewing their learning and negotiated targets for the next stage are agreed. Teachers also have high expectations. For example, in one lesson the teacher said '... that's not enough for me...' to a higher attaining group of pupils. Teachers, after asking pupils questions, often give them opportunities to discuss with partners. Whilst allowing for all pupils to make a contribution, this also enables the teacher to have a clear view of pupils' understanding and future learning needs. This information is effectively used to target questions and tasks to particular groups of pupils.
46. Pupils' achievements are also enhanced when they are involved in reviewing their learning at the end of lessons. For example, in Year 2, after an investigation on the melting of ice, the teacher effectively used the knowledge and skills gained during the lesson to set a related challenge on the best place to put a tub of hard ice cream to gently soften. The teacher used the pupils' responses very well to inform the planning for the next lesson. The teaching in this lesson was excellent. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The assistants are involved in the planning of work and their teaching role within lessons is clearly identified. They are sensitive to pupils' needs and use their expertise and experience to move pupils on in their learning.
47. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Although the subject leader has been in post for just over a year she is developing a clear grasp of the subject and a focus for its development across the school. This includes a whole-school drive to develop investigative work and the assessment of investigation work. She has recently supported teachers in providing comprehensive guidance on investigative work related to the science units they are teaching. The successful outcomes of this are evident in pupils' work. For example, the pupils in a Year 1 class were asked to give their reasons for whether it would be easier to push or pull a wheelbarrow and to think how this could be tested. The subject leader also has a very clear view of standards of attainment and teaching across the school as she regularly monitors teaching and pupils' work, leading the whole-school moderation of pupils' work and ensuring that the school has a consistent view of expectations and standards. Improvement, since the time of the last inspection, is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to teaching and learning.
- There is good use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment to identify pupils' future learning needs accurately.
- Some of the computers are dated and do not always work.

Commentary

48. The last inspection found that standards in ICT, by the end of Year 2, were in line with national expectations. This inspection also found attainment to be in line with expectations and pupils achieve well. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is often challenging and interesting and is effective in raising achievement. Teachers have good

relationships with the pupils, know the programmes they are teaching well and use good teaching strategies. Pupils with special needs achieve well because they are well supported by teaching assistants.

49. The use of teaching assistants to support teaching and learning in ICT is a strength of the school. For example, in a lesson on the use of a 'Roamer', designed to teach the control of an object on screen, the teaching assistant took the lead and was supported by the teacher. The school also makes very effective use of the teaching assistant's skills in her role as ICT technician.
50. Pupils' achievement is likely to be even higher once systems for assessment become fully developed. This is recognised by the school. A plan is in place to ensure an improved match between the needs of the pupil and the work set, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. For example, some higher attaining Year 2 pupils have not yet been taught to save and amend their work, in spite of being capable of doing so. The school does expect that by the end of the academic year this will have been addressed.
51. Leadership and management of ICT are good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has a good level of personal expertise. She has recently created a new scheme of work, which has effectively supported teachers in their teaching. She has a good view of standards across the school, which is line with the inspection team's findings, and is developing effective systems for monitoring teaching and pupils' work. She runs a popular ICT club and last year organised a highly successful ICT trail, where parents were encouraged to come into school and engage in ICT tasks with their children. Future plans for the development of ICT in school include upgrading the computer suite and purchasing interactive whiteboards. Improvement in provision, since the time of the last inspection, is good.
52. The school has a satisfactorily equipped computer suite, though some of the computers will soon need upgrading. Several pupils commented that some of the computers sometimes do not work. As the suite is situated in the corner of the playground, away from the classrooms with no covered walkway, there can be difficulties in reaching the suite when it is raining and in storing pupils' wet coats.

Information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum

53. Pupils effectively use ICT across the curriculum. For each class, one of their two sessions in the computer suite each week is used for cross-curricular work. For example, pupils use ICT to edit text, to create graphs and pictures, to illustrate science information, to make maps and to identify suitable clothing for different types of weather in geography.

HUMANITIES

54. Insufficient teaching was seen to make overall judgements about the quality of provision in geography and history. Judgements in these subjects are based on the observation of a small number of lessons, the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.
55. An examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning in **history** indicates that pupils study an appropriate range of time periods. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know details of the life and times of some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and are developing an adequate understanding of time as they notice how toys and homes have changed over the years.
56. Across the school, teachers develop pupils' reasoning and deduction skills satisfactorily, which contributes to their overall personal and social development. Teachers provide some opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in this subject, for example when they write diaries in the role of people experiencing the Great Fire of London.

57. In **geography** there are suitable curricular plans which outline which themes pupils are to explore from class to class. They set out the skills to be developed in each class. The curriculum is sufficiently detailed. No lessons were observed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious artifacts, from a variety of faiths, are used well to capture pupils' interest.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils demonstrate good recall of their previous learning.

Commentary

58. Standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 2. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of world faiths, including Christianity, and are developing a good understanding of the similarities and differences between them. Many understand the notion of worship as being central to religion, and are developing good understanding of the use of symbolism in religion. The school's caring ethos is supported and developed well in religious education lessons and the subject features in all the classes.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are prepared well and teaching captures pupils' interest and attention. Year 2 pupils describe accurately many differences between Christian and Hindu wedding practices, and use names and terminology correctly. Attractive wall displays show pupils' drawings and writings about what they have learnt. The practice of supporting pupils' understanding of religion through further first-hand experience, such as visiting the local church, is developed well. Pupils' response in lessons is good and is matched well by their recall of their learning. They demonstrated, during assembly, that they understand that the Bible is divided into Old and New Testaments. The assembly theme during the inspection extended pupils' knowledge and understanding of 'flood' stories from various faiths.
60. The co-ordinator is experienced and has led the subject effectively for a number of years. She has a good overview and grasp of the subject, and how it could be further improved. The school uses the local education authority's Agreed Syllabus well, and assessment currently takes place through the evaluation of planning. Resources are satisfactory, and sufficient, and are used effectively to support learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

61. Insufficient teaching was seen to make overall judgements about the quality of provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Judgements in these subjects are based on the observation of a small number of lessons, the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.
62. In **art and design** inspection findings indicate that standards are above average and that pupils achieve very well. This judgement is based on displays of pupils' art work in classrooms and around the school. Pupils are taught a good range of techniques which they apply well. They take great pride in their work and talk enthusiastically about it. In Year 2 pupils have produced self-portraits and still-life drawings of plants. Teachers have also used art to provide pupils with a good insight into the traditions of other cultures by drawing items used during a Hindu wedding ceremony. All this work is of a standard that exceeds that expected for pupils of this age. The foundation for this good work is laid in Year 1 where

pupils' work is linked very effectively to their work in music. These pupils have used their artistic skills to produce a high quality, pictorial musical score of life in a city, representing successfully, in vivid colours, the sounds made by traffic.

63. In **design and technology** inspection evidence suggests that standards are in line with national expectations and that pupils achieve well. The work shows that pupils are gaining experience of using a variety of techniques and a broad range of materials. Photographs and displays around the school show that Year 2 pupils are able to design and make a vehicle, safely and accurately using the appropriate tools. A Year 1 class had been looking at toys with moving parts and had designed and created their own. In a good Year 1 lesson the pupils were being introduced to food technology. They responded positively to questions related to hygiene and food preparation and were encouraged to reflect on the taste, texture and appearance of various fruits. Design and technology does not feature as a significant part of the school development plan. However, the subject leader has recently written a good scheme of work, purchased further resources and introduced an effective system of assessment.
64. In **music** inspection findings indicate that standards are above average and that pupils achieve very well. Pupils enjoy singing and the standard of singing in assemblies is good. There are also good opportunities for pupils to accompany the singing by playing percussion instruments. Many pupils are keen to volunteer to do so and show that they can maintain the rhythm and timing very well. Pupils in a Year 1 class displayed similar qualities when they learned to identify and play high and low notes whilst composing music to link with the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. This work exceeded the level expected for pupils of this age and pupils are looking forward to performing their compositions for the children in the Reception classes. The leadership and management of music are good. The subject leader supports her colleagues well and has provided a scheme of work resulting in teachers teaching with increased levels of confidence.
65. Only one **physical education** lesson, in Year 2, was observed during the inspection. The work seen in this indicated that standards are above average and that pupils achieve very well. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was very good. The teacher provided pupils with very good opportunities to acquire and apply gymnastic skills and to plan and evaluate their own work and that of others. Pupils performed jumps and other movements, sometimes using apparatus, to a standard that exceeded that expected for their age. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and provided pupils with advice that helped them to improve their work during the lesson very well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

66. Insufficient teaching was seen to make overall judgements about the quality of provision in personal, social and health education. Judgements for this aspect of pupils' learning are based on the observation of a small number of lessons and on discussions with teachers and pupils.
67. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve very well. The school has an effective programme that is taught to pupils each week. This includes good opportunities for pupils to think about issues that confront them in their lives and about things that affect the lives of others locally and around the world. In Years 1 and 2 these issues are considered in daily class discussions groups. These groups are very effective at helping pupils to develop very good relationships with each other and with the adults who help them. The sessions also make a very good contribution to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills and many pupils are becoming increasingly confident when expressing their views. The programme makes a very good contribution to pupils' behaviour and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

