



# Mrs Bland's Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109887  
**LEA** West Berkshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 278303  
**Inspection dates** 8 June 2006 to 9 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Charalambos Loizou AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Jordans Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Burghfield Common
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		Reading RG7 3LP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01189 832332
<b>Number on roll</b>	214	<b>Fax number</b>	01189 835867
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Andrew Crossley
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 March 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Tyas

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 8 June 2006 - 9 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278303
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This infant school is below average in size and is situated in a mixed area of private and social housing. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and other pupils come from a diverse range of backgrounds. A small but significant number of pupils are from traveller families. A very small number of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average, although an average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils joining the school at different times is quite high. The school has extensive links with its community and other schools.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education and enables the pupils to make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. Although the school evaluated its effectiveness as good, inspectors believe there is still more to do to ensure consistently good teaching. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage. Although there is some good teaching across the school which accelerates pupils' progress, teaching is satisfactory. Standards are above average overall, however, writing standards have been below those in reading and mathematics for several years. With the exception of the Foundation Stage, there are inconsistencies in the pace and challenge of lessons so that some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable, especially in writing. The children in the Foundation Stage do well and achieve good standards. The teaching is particularly strong in the nursery. In the rest of the school the curriculum is satisfactory with a good range of clubs, educational visits and visitors that enable the pupils to enjoy school.

The majority of parents think well of the school but some are concerned about the behaviour of a few pupils and their supervision. Inspectors judge that behaviour is satisfactory but not always as good as it should be. Pupils' personal development and care are satisfactory. Teachers' marking and assessments are good and provide good guidance for pupils. The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide satisfactory leadership. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been sharp enough to accelerate consistently pupils' progress. The school demonstrates that it has the capacity to improve further because there have been satisfactory improvements to standards and good improvements to assessment, teachers' marking and information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve writing standards and ensure that pupils are given more opportunities to write in subjects across the curriculum.
- Sharpen the monitoring of teaching to ensure that the pace and challenge of lessons are consistently good across the school.
- Improve behaviour further so it is consistently good.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

The pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are above average. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and exceed the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. Pupils start school with standards that are above average and national test results confirm that Year 2 pupils attain above average standards in reading and mathematics and average standards in writing. Writing standards are lower because fewer pupils achieve the higher levels in writing compared with reading and mathematics. The school has

targeted writing as a priority and as a result, a higher proportion achieved higher levels this year.

Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Good assessments enable teachers to set accurate and challenging targets. However, the teaching is not consistent enough to ensure that the targets set are achieved by all pupils. The school has improved standards in ICT since the last inspection and are now in line with national expectations. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. The small number of pupils in the early stages of learning English make good progress because they receive appropriate support.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils treat each other with respect. This is particularly evident amongst the younger pupils who work and play harmoniously. They take responsibility for their environment and enjoy watering the flowers and vegetables they are growing.

In lessons and on the playground pupils have positive attitudes, 'I like playing with my friends', many say. They are happy and enthusiastic about school and say they feel safe and know what to do if other pupils are upset. They can organise themselves to work in teams and independently. Behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils respond well to school initiatives that promote good behaviour but the behaviour of some older pupils is not always as good as it should be. Attendance is satisfactory because the school monitors this effectively. Pupils have an understanding of how to be healthy. They drink water, eat fruit and are active during the school day and in their out of school clubs. Special topics, such as 'healthy schools', reinforce this. Pupils develop an understanding of other cultures when listening to African stories in assembly and they make a good contribution to the community through their involvement with local churches and partner schools. The development of their thinking and problem solving skills in language, mathematics and ICT prepares them adequately for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall and it is good in the Foundation Stage. Although the school believes that teaching is good, its long term effect on standards and achievement has been only satisfactory. Relationships are good and pupils try hard. Inspectors saw many good lessons which maintained the pupils' interests and were appropriately challenging. In an English lesson, Year 1 pupils enjoyed the challenge of editing their writing about 'The Owl and the Pussycat'. Year 2 pupils grappled with some challenging problem solving in mathematics. In other lessons, satisfactory teaching has inconsistent pace and challenge. Overlong class discussions resulted in the pupils becoming restless

so their progress slowed and tasks were not always challenging enough. Children in the Foundation Stage were provided with a good range of stimulating activities that enabled them to make good progress.

The school has improved its assessment procedures since the last inspection. These are now good and, along with teachers' marking, help to check how well the pupils are doing, including those who join the school at different times. A close check is kept on the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enabling them to make satisfactory progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. As a consequence, the pupils make satisfactory progress. Since the last inspection there has been investment in provision for ICT and this has resulted in a significant raise in standards. Computers are used effectively by pupils for research, presentation and art. Pupils have good opportunities in art lessons and Year 2 produced vibrant paintings in the style of Joan Miro. The pupils receive first-hand experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of their environment. The school gardens and grounds provide a rich outdoor classroom. Nursery and reception children enjoy stimulating outdoor activities and older pupils use the pond and gardens for their science lessons. Pupils enjoy visits, visitors and a wide range of out of school clubs which include choir, country dancing, art and wildlife as well as sporting activities and opportunities to learn French and Spanish. These are popular and successfully extend pupils' skills and raise their self-esteem. The leadership team has correctly identified the need to improve pupils' writing; it is particularly in other areas of the curriculum where there are missed opportunities for pupils to demonstrate and improve their writing skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of personal care and support is satisfactory. Senior staff and governors carry out systematic safety checks, including risk assessments and arrangements for effective child protection. The majority of parents believe their children are safe but some raised concerns about the supervision of pupils. Inspectors have pointed out where supervision is not always as effective as it should be. In response, the school has put in place measures to ensure pupils are safe and secure at all times. This is especially important in the many play and recreational areas around the school site. There are effective arrangements in place for partnership with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are well cared for. The school makes good use of data from tests to provide challenging targets, especially in reading and mathematics. Teachers' marking is helpful so pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do next to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and initiatives already in place demonstrate that there is a satisfactory track record in improving the school. The headteacher has introduced a distributed approach to school management which delegates specific responsibilities for monitoring the effectiveness of the school and enables staff and governors to work in teams. Consequently, governors and curriculum managers are increasingly aware of the strengths and areas for development in the school. For example, governors monitor activities such as the healthy schools week and visit classes to observe the use of interactive whiteboards in lessons.

Taking account of the views of pupils is becoming well established and responsibilities given to pupils have increasingly ensured that attitudes and behaviour have improved. These changes have been achieved through discussion and evaluation of the needs of the school with pupils, governors and all staff. Parental involvement is increasingly effective and parents report that communication has improved. The self-evaluation process is still at the development stage and strategies for ensuring its accuracy are not yet consistent, particularly in relation to teaching and learning. There has not yet been time for strategies implemented to impact fully on pupils. These include the headteacher's introduction of behaviour management strategies, the development in pupils' writing and constructive targets in lessons. These initiatives are already having a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement demonstrating that the school has the capacity to keep on improving.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Pupils

I was pleased to visit your school together with another inspector. I write to thank you for your help and for making us feel welcome.

We believe that yours is a satisfactory school. We think these are the best things about your school: \* it helps you to enjoy learning and try hard \* you do well in reading, mathematics and art and you use computers well \* the children in the nursery and reception classes do well because their lessons are interesting and exciting \* the school provides you with a good number of clubs, trips and visits and you use outdoor areas well in lessons and playtimes.

We have asked your teachers to do the following to improve your school: \* we would like your teachers to find ways to help you do better in your writing \* your teachers are checking to find ways of making all lessons good. We would like them to do this better and to keep checking that every lesson helps you to do as well as you can \* many of you are well behaved but we know that some pupils are not always well behaved in lessons and other times. We would like the school to make sure that behaviour is good all the time. I wish you all the very best.

Yours faithfully

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector