

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Doddinghurst Community Infant School**  
Brentwood

LEA area: Essex

Unique Reference Number: 114969

Headteacher: Mrs S Lewin

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Reporting inspector: Carole Skinner, RgI

Dates of inspection: 4th to 7th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707309

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Lane Doddinghurst Brentwood Essex CM15 0NJ
Telephone number:	01277 822721
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Doddinghurst Infant School.
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mrs P Smith
Date of previous inspection:	15 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> January 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Carole Skinner, RgI	English Art Music	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency Under fives
Brian Jones, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Equal opportunities
Christabel McLean	Mathematics Information technology Religious education Design and technology	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Special educational needs
Arthur Evans	Science Geography History Physical education	Curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

The inspection contractor was:

Phoenix Educational Consultants  
"Thule"  
60 Joy Lane  
Whitstable  
Kent, CT5 4LT

01227 273449

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

### **What the school does well**

- The pupils achieve very high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Standards are above average in geography, music and gymnastics.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The school has an outstanding ethos with very good relationships, and it makes very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development.
- The school works hard to maintain its excellent links with parents and the community.
- The support and guidance provided for pupils are very good.
- The procedures to assess pupils' attainment are very good.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

- I. The procedures for school development planning are improving but are not yet fully effective. The written plan covers only one year, and it does not link closely enough with the budget setting process.
- II. The schemes of work for art, religious education, information technology and music are still being reviewed and updated.
- III. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experience the richness and diversity of different cultures.

**The weaknesses are strongly outweighed by the strengths, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school**

### **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

- The school has made a good improvement overall since its last inspection, which took place some three years and nine months ago. Standards of attainment have improved significantly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. There has been a notable improvement in the quality of teaching, which was mainly "sound" and is now very good. The quality of education for children aged under five has also improved and is now very good. There have been good improvements in the curriculum, and all subjects now have a policy statement, although a few are still in draft form. Schemes of work have been produced or adapted for all subjects, but those for art, religious education, information technology and music are not fully operational. Although the format of the school development plan has improved since the last inspection, it covers only one year and is not linked closely enough with the budget setting process. The role of teachers as subject co-ordinators has been developed well and some have monitored and evaluated work in their subject throughout the school. The governors have improved their system of monitoring the cost effectiveness of spending decisions. The school has increased the length of time spent on teaching the curriculum each week to meet government recommendations. The school's capacity to continue to improve is good.

## Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>Well above average</i>	A
			<i>Above average</i>	B
Reading	A	A	<i>Average</i>	C
Writing	A	B	<i>Below average</i>	D
Mathematics	A	B	<i>Well below average</i>	E

The information shows that the pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, they are well above average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, for which there are no national comparative figures yet, all of the pupils achieved at least average standards, and a substantial proportion achieved above average standards, in reading, writing and mathematics. The inspection findings are that standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and average in information technology. In religious education, pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in geography, music and physical education are above average for the pupils' ages, whilst those in art, design and technology and history are average for their age. Pupils with special educational needs attain very good standards for their capabilities.

Children aged under five attain above average standards in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Very good	Very good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good
Science	Very good	Good
Information technology	N/a	Satisfactory
Religious education	N/a	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Good

During the inspection, 48 lessons were observed. Of these lessons, 22 were very good, 21 were good and four were satisfactory. There was one unsatisfactory lesson. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses*



## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. The pupils are polite and well behaved in classrooms and around the school. Many pupils achieve consistently high standards of behaviour, which have a positive impact on their learning.
Attendance	Good. The rate of attendance is above the national average. Pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start promptly.
Ethos*	Outstanding. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work and the quality of relationships in the school is very good. The school's commitment to high standards is reflected in all aspects of its work.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides very good professional leadership and is ably supported by her deputy and staff with management responsibilities. There are weaknesses in the procedures for strategic planning.
Curriculum	Good. Curricular provision is broad and balanced and teachers' planning is good. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects but some are under review. Assessment procedures are very good throughout the school.
Pupils with special educational needs	Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The school makes sound provision for the pupils' spiritual development and very good provision for their moral and social development. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. The school is generously staffed. Teachers' assistants provide valuable support in the classroom. There is an adequate range of resources to meet the needs of the curriculum. The accommodation is very well maintained and provides an attractive learning environment for the pupils.
Value for money	The school provides very good value for money.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

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## The parents' views of the school

### What most parents like about the school

- IV. Staff are approachable.
- V. The school keeps them well informed about their children's progress.
- VI. Their children like school.
- VII. Parents are encouraged to play a part in the life of the school.
- VIII. The school promotes positive attitudes and values.
- IX. Their children achieve good standards.
- X. They are satisfied with homework.

### What some parents are not happy about

The findings of the inspection support the very positive views of the parents.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The governors, Headteacher and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes still further.

### **i. Improve the process of strategic planning for school improvement by:**

- setting a clear timetable for drawing up the school development plan to ensure that it coincides with the budget planning process;
- ensuring that staff and governors are involved productively in the planning, implementation and review of priorities;
- ensuring that the criteria by which to judge the success of the plan are clearly related to educational outcomes.

(Paragraphs 44, 46, 53)

### **i. Complete the development and implementation of policies and schemes of work for all subjects, to provide clear guidance for teachers and to ensure progression in the teaching of knowledge, skills and understanding.**

(Paragraphs 26, 43, 89, 94, 100)

### **iii. Enrich the pupils' knowledge and experience of different cultural traditions through the curriculum, particularly in music, art and religious education.**

(Paragraphs 32, 47, 52, 94, 95, 97, 99, 117, 120)

*In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.*

1. Ensure that the school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents fully meet statutory requirements.

(Paragraphs 40, 47)

1.

2. Improve the quality of provision for outdoor play and equipment for children aged under five.

(Paragraphs 18, 51, 52, 59, 63)

2.

3. Develop the use of information technology in other areas of the curriculum, such as history and geography.

(paragraphs 84, 89, 109, 110, 114)

### 3. INTRODUCTION

#### 3. Characteristics of the school

4. Doddinghurst Infant School is located on a very pleasant site in a rural position, close to the centre of the village of Doddinghurst. The junior school occupies an adjacent site. The pupils who attend the school come from the village and the surrounding rural area, which includes the villages of Pilgrims Hatch, Kelvedon Hatch and Blackmore. Some pupils come from the nearby town of Brentwood. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Most pupils live in privately owned accommodation. Some pupils live in rented housing association properties. At the time of the inspection, there were 185 full-time pupils on roll, of whom 18 are identified as having special educational needs. This is well below the national average. Four pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. The school has a very small ethnic minority population. Some four per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. The school has 21 more girls than boys on roll. At present, there are 38 children aged under five. These children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. Induction procedures for new children include visits to the school by the children and their parents in the term before they start school and written information for parents. Children aged under five are taught in the two Reception classes. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average.

5. There have been a significant number of changes to the school since its last inspection in January 1996. The number of pupils on roll has increased from 161 in 1996 to 196 in 1998. Four new teachers have been appointed in the two years before this inspection, and a new Chair of Governors was elected in September 1997. Almost all of the teachers have taken on new curricular responsibilities since the previous inspection. The school's aims include the provision of a happy, caring and stimulating environment for all pupils. The school also aims to develop in pupils a sense of purpose and to encourage them to work to the very best of their ability. The school development plan gives a detailed overview of the targets and priorities for the current financial year. These priorities include the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and further development of target setting for individual pupils. They also include the development of a new scheme of work, and the improvement of resources, for information technology.

2.

### 3. Key indicators

#### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	97/98	42	31	73

<b>3. National Curriculum</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
<b>Test/Task Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	40	37	38
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	71	68	69
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (95)	93 (91)	95 (95)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (83)

<b>3. Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	40	40	41
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	71	71	72
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	97 (96)	99 (99)
	National	81 (85)	85 (83)	86 (85)

**1 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year**

#### 1 Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: 1997/98			%
	Authorised	School	5.4
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

#### 1 Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

#### 1 Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	46
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

# **1 PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

## **1 EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

### **1 Attainment and progress**

6. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments by teachers for 1998 shows that, in reading and writing, the proportion of pupils who attained both Level 2 and Level 3 was well above the national average. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or higher was above average, whilst at Level 3 it was well above average. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of all schools, they show that the pupils' results are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of similar schools, they show that the pupils' results are well above average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics. A comparison of the 1998 average levels with those of the previous two years shows a slight decline in performance in the tests. However, taking the three years from 1996 to 1998 together, the figures show that the pupils' performance in reading was very high, whilst that in writing and mathematics was well above the national average. Although national comparative figures for 1999 are not yet available, the school's test results show an improvement over the previous three years. All pupils achieved at least Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading, half of the pupils achieved above average standards (Level 3), and one achieved Level 4, which is the national average for 11 year olds. In writing, just under a quarter of pupils achieved Level 3, and in spelling, just over a third of pupils reached the higher level. Forty-four per cent of pupils achieved Level 3 in mathematics. Analysis of the end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers for 1998 shows that, in science, the proportion of pupils who achieved Level 2 or higher was well above average, whilst at Level 3, it was above average. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.

7. The inspection findings show that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils who are on course to attain average standards or higher is well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In information technology, most pupils are on course to attain average standards by the end of the key stage. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. At Key Stage 1, standards are above average for the pupils' ages in geography, music and gymnastics, and average for their ages in art, design and technology and history. Standards in literacy and numeracy are very good. These findings are comparable with those of the school's last OFSTED inspection in information technology, art, design and technology and music. Standards have improved in gymnastics, and there has been a significant improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science. Factors which have contributed to this rise in standards are improvements in the quality of teaching and curricular provision, the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and the introduction of target setting for individual pupils. Targets are set, at the end of Year 1, for each pupil's attainment by the end of the key stage in reading and writing. In the previous inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in religious education, geography and history. The findings of this inspection are broadly in line with the school's end of key stage test results and teachers' assessments in 1998.

8. In English, by the age of seven, pupils' listening and speaking skills are well above average. They listen attentively to teachers' instructions and explanations and to each other in class discussions. They express their own thoughts and ideas confidently, and answer questions articulately. Standards in reading are also very good. Most pupils read fluently and accurately, and show understanding of what they have read. They tackle unfamiliar texts with confidence and use a range of appropriate strategies to monitor and correct their own reading. Pupils achieve very high standards in writing. They have a good understanding of sentence construction and grammatical rules, and are able to use words effectively to convey meaning. More able pupils write in a neat, joined style and use a varied and interesting range of vocabulary. In mathematics, by the end of the key stage, pupils recognise number bonds to 20 and are able to double numbers to 20 and beyond. More able pupils mentally double numbers to 1000. Pupils select and use appropriate operations to solve problems, such as using a doubling strategy to add 23 and 24. They count in tens from 13 to 113. Pupils recognise and name

two-and three-dimensional shapes, and measure quantities in metric units of measurement. They collect information and represent it in the form of simple graphs. In science, by the age of seven, pupils understand the concept of a fair test, and make simple predictions before carrying out a practical investigation. They make careful observations and record their findings in a variety of ways. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and know about the different parts of a plant. They investigate the properties of different materials and can explain how these affect their use. Pupils know about the force of gravity and construct simple electrical circuits.

9. In information technology, pupils word-process their poems and writing about special people. They use a CD-ROM proficiently to find information. In religious education, pupils retell the story of Zacchaeus from the New Testament and that of Rama and Sita from the Hindu tradition. In art, pupils mix colours carefully to create autumn shades and then produce designs using watercolours. In music, they sing very tunefully and vary the dynamics in both their singing and playing. In design and technology, pupils design and make kites from plastic and balsa wood. In geography, pupils use simple co-ordinates to locate features on a map and, in history, they know that the Second World War caused rationing in Britain and that children were evacuated to the countryside. In physical education, pupils build up simple sequences of movement, which involve travelling and balancing.

10. The attainment of children aged under five when they enter the school varies considerably, but, overall, assessments of children soon after entry to the school show that it is generally above average for their age. All children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress in language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development and creative development. They make good progress in mathematics and physical development. In the 11 lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made very good progress in six, and good progress in five. This is clearly related to the very good standard of teaching in the Reception classes. By the time they are five, children attain above average standards in all six areas of learning. They recognise the names and sounds of letters of the alphabet, and use these correctly in their reading and writing. They sequence simple sentences using word cards, and read aloud confidently from a book they have written. Children count forwards and backwards to ten and beyond, and they recognise and reproduce patterns when threading beads on to a string. They use straws to measure objects in the classroom, and recognise and name two- and three-dimensional shapes.

Children identify whether an object is hard or soft and use a range of words to describe how things feel. They use computers to support their learning and handle pencils, tools and construction equipment with increasing dexterity. Children participate in imaginative role-play, and are developing a good awareness of rhythm in music. They jump and skip with agility, and follow a leader well using a variety of movements. The children work and play together well, and develop independence and confidence very quickly in their first few weeks in school.

11. Overall, the pupils make very good progress at Key Stage 1, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. They make good progress in science, geography, music and physical education, and satisfactory progress in information technology, religious education, art, design and technology and history. Pupils make very good progress in literacy and numeracy as a result of the school's highly effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. A key factor in the pupils' very good rate of progress is the very high expectations that all teachers have of their pupils. It was difficult to make judgements about the pupils' rate of progress in information technology, religious education and design and technology, as only a few lessons were observed and there was a very limited sample of the pupils' work to examine at this early stage in a new school year. In English, pupils make very good progress in developing and refining speaking and listening skills, which enables them to listen with understanding and communicate with others articulately. They become competent and enthusiastic readers, able to locate and extract information from a text, and to express a personal response to what they have read. Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of the sound and spelling system, use an increasingly interesting range of vocabulary and learn to use correct grammatical structures and punctuation. In mathematics, pupils make very good progress in developing numeracy skills and using them across the curriculum. They increase their knowledge of shapes and measurement and their range of mathematical vocabulary. Pupils' good progress in science results from an effective balance between well-planned and structured investigations

and direct teaching of knowledge, skills and understanding.

12. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and attain well in relation to their capabilities. This results from very good curricular provision to meet their individual needs, well-planned activities and very good support from teachers and assistants in the classroom. Pupils' individual education plans identify specific and attainable targets for improvement, which address their needs very well. More able pupils also make very good progress in their learning as they are given suitably challenging work which extends their thinking. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also make very good progress in learning English, as a result of carefully planned experiences and very good support in the classroom.

#### 10. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

11. The previous inspection reported that pupils were well motivated in their lessons. Pupils' very good attitude to their learning continues to be a strength of the school. They take a very keen interest in their lessons and are eager to do very good work. They enjoy the challenges of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In a literacy lesson, pupils used their initiative to move on independently to extension work when they finished the set exercise. Pupils generally stay on task very well. Their response was good or better in 94 per cent of lessons seen, and very good in 44 per cent of the lessons. There was no unsatisfactory response at all.

13. The pupils' behaviour is very good. The majority of pupils behave very well indeed. The pattern of very good behaviour is consistent in lessons, the dining area and the playgrounds. Pupils are very courteous and welcoming and hold doors open for visitors and for one another. They treat each other, and all adults who work in and visit the school, with respect and consideration. Playtimes are free from bullying and unpleasantness. The school has not excluded any pupil in the past year, or at any time in the recent past. Parents express a high degree of satisfaction with the standards of behaviour achieved by the school.

14. The very good relationships at school play an important part in extending pupils' learning. Pupils work together very well. They take turns and share equipment without any fuss and form constructive relationships with their teachers and assistants. Pupils are sympathetic towards others who are experiencing difficulties, and are quick to offer help when it is needed. The whole school applauded warmly when some pupils won the weekly awards in a celebration assembly, and were clearly pleased for each other. The different year groups cooperate very closely with one another. Year 2 pupils read to children in the Reception classes, and, in turn, hear them read. At the school sports day, teams consisting of three pupils from each of the years take part together in over 30 activities.

15. The pupils' personal development is very good. The school gives pupils a great deal of responsibility, such as classroom jobs, selecting the music for assembly and taking charge of the CD player. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils take part in village activities and contribute to the village magazine. This year, they gained awards at the local horticultural show, won a commendation in a national competition for engineering drawing, and raised almost £400 for Red Nose Day, counting and paying in the money themselves.

16. Children aged under five settle quickly into school and quickly become confident and independent. They establish very good relationships with adults and other children, and are eager to explore new learning. Their behaviour is generally very good, and they respond well to the teachers' instructions.

## 15. Attendance

16. Attendance continues to be good. The attendance figure of 94.6 per cent recorded in 1998/99 is above the national average, and close to the 95 per cent seen at the time of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence is very low, as almost all parents send in the reason for absence, and the school follows this up when necessary. Punctuality is good. Pupils arrive punctually for registration at 9.00 a.m. and lessons start promptly throughout the day.

## 16. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### 16. Teaching

17. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good, and is a significant strength of the school. Of the 48 lessons observed during the inspection, 22 were very good, 21 were good and four were satisfactory. There was only one unsatisfactory lesson. This indicates very good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was mainly “sound”, and was good “in almost half of the lessons seen”. Activities are now very well matched to pupils’ interests and abilities and pupils are managed very well in lessons. At the time of this inspection, one temporary relief teacher was employed by the school.

18. The quality of teaching for children aged under five is very good. In the 11 lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was good in five, and very good in six. These consistently high standards of teaching have a very good impact on the progress made by the children during their first weeks in school. An examination of teachers’ planning documents and a cross-section of children’s work from the previous year shows that teaching is at least good in all areas of learning and enables children to make very good progress throughout the Reception year. The teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five. They have very high expectations of the children in all areas of learning and provide them with challenging tasks and activities. Teachers plan closely together each half-term to ensure that they are providing consistency, and they ensure that classroom assistants and parent helpers are well briefed about the children they are supporting and the activities they are supervising. Teachers and assistants provide clear explanations and ask pertinent questions to challenge pupils’ thinking and develop their understanding. Pupils are provided with an interesting and exciting range of activities to stimulate their interest and motivate them to learn. The teaching of formal aspects of literacy and numeracy is very good. Teachers have successfully adapted the National Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of the children, and are very adept at developing the children’s literacy skills throughout the day in all areas of the curriculum. Numeracy skills and mental strategies are taught frequently and often in the context of other areas of learning, such as physical education or music. The provision of opportunities for carefully structured play, occasionally, has insufficient purpose and direction.

19. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is also very good, especially in reading, writing, and mathematics. At this key stage, of the 37 lessons that were observed during the inspection, 16 were very good, 16 were good and four were satisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in only one lesson, where the teacher’s expertise and knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy were insufficient to ensure that all pupils made satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching is very good in English and mathematics, good in science, geography, music and physical education, and satisfactory in all other subjects. As it was possible to see only a few lessons in some subjects, and none in design and technology, judgements also take into account samples of the pupils’ work, where available, and teachers’ planning documents. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach, and they communicate this very well to pupils through their enthusiastic and well-structured explanations and demonstrations. They have very high expectations of all pupils and set tasks that are challenging, but achievable, and well matched to the pupils’ stage of learning. Lessons have very clear objectives, and teachers’ planning shows clearly how these are to be achieved. It also takes very good account of the differing needs of pupils within each class. A notable strength of the teaching is the very successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy. The very good teaching of skills in reading, spelling, grammar, punctuation and writing, and mental strategies in mathematics, provides a solid foundation for pupils’ future learning.

20. Teachers use a very good range of methods and organisational strategies in order to achieve their



objectives. In almost all of the lessons observed, teachers' skilful questioning challenged pupils' thinking and assessed their understanding. Purposeful practical activities encourage pupils to think about what they have learned, and pupils are given opportunities to extend their learning in investigative and problem-solving activities. When pupils are taught as a whole class, as in the literacy and numeracy hours, teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils are involved in the learning process, rather than passive observers. When pupils are working in groups, teachers, assistants and parent helpers interact with them very effectively and keep them focused on the task and working at a very good pace. Two key factors, which make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching throughout the school, are the generous provision of classroom assistants to support pupils in their work, and the very high number of parent helpers, who also provide additional support in the classroom. Teachers' assistants have very good levels of expertise and provide valuable support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. They liaise closely with teachers to plan and supervise activities, and work effectively with small groups of pupils or individuals. Some parent helpers have received training in order to enable them to provide effective support for pupils during the literacy hour. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment are very good. Teachers and assistants discuss pupils' work with them, encourage and praise them, and steer them towards new learning. Homework is used very well to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Pupils take home reading books, words to learn and use, and mathematical games.

21. In a very good literacy lesson, which exemplifies many of the strengths of the teaching throughout the school, the teacher's very high expectations for all pupils were evident in the nature of the tasks that were prepared. The teacher made very effective use of a large non-fiction text to develop the pupils' understanding of how to find information and their skills in responding to punctuation and recognising words in the past tense. Very well organised and challenging group activities matched each pupil's stage of learning. Carefully adapted group reading texts enabled pupils to experience success in reading a difficult text together. More able pupils were given the opportunity to locate and extract information from a non-fiction text. Very good management of the class ensured that all pupils remained engaged in their tasks, and the timing of each part of the lesson was very good.

22. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs, and for the few pupils for whom English is an additional language, is very good, overall. It has a considerable impact on the good standards that they achieve and the very good progress that they make. Work is carefully matched to the pupils' previous attainment and to their needs. Pupils' individual education plans contain appropriate targets for improvement and are reviewed and revised regularly. Pupils receive very good support, which is well-planned and organised, from teachers and assistants. Some pupils are occasionally withdrawn for additional, more intensive support to remedy a specific weakness. This has a very beneficial effect on the pupils' learning. Teachers, and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, make careful assessments of the pupils' progress, and use the information gained to plan their future work.

## **22. The curriculum and assessment**

23. Overall, the curriculum provided by the school is good, and has some very good features. A key issue from the previous inspection was to review the length of the teaching week. This is now in line with the national average for Key Stage 1. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced, with a strong emphasis on English and mathematics. All the subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education, are taught. However, there is insufficient use of information technology in other areas of the curriculum. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in swimming lessons in the school's outdoor pool during the summer term. The school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy very successfully, and this is having a very positive effect on standards in English. The school has also made a very good start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a very productive effect on standards in mathematics. There is daily teaching of literacy and numeracy, and the time for each is used very constructively. Pupils in Year 2 sometimes work in three ability sets for numeracy, which allows for more focused teaching. Curricular provision meets statutory requirements where these apply. The curriculum successfully promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them well for junior school.

24. There is a good curriculum for children aged under five. This covers all the relevant areas of learning and prepares the children well for work in Key Stage 1. There is a very good policy for the early years, and each area of learning is planned for very carefully and thoroughly. The curriculum for children aged under five acknowledges that many pupils are of above average attainment and makes provision for them to work within the early stages of the National Curriculum when they are ready.

25. There is no written policy for the personal, social and health education of the pupils, nor for drugs education. However, in practice, provision for this aspect of the curriculum is very good. Relevant issues are dealt with in timetabled 'circle' time, and in assemblies. These issues are also tackled during special weeks, such as a recent health and safety week, and through the expertise of visitors, such as the school nurse. Due attention has been paid to the dangers of misusing drugs and medicines through a production by a visiting theatre group. A parents' evening on drugs misuse was well attended. A clear sex education policy is in place. There is no formal teaching of sex education. Teachers answer pupils' questions honestly and sensitively as they arise. The school places great emphasis on building up pupils' self esteem and confidence through involving them in events such as school productions and a leavers' service. A clear homework policy is in place, and most parents are happy with the amount of homework, which is set. There are some useful curricular links with the junior school. Staff from both schools met in the infant school recently for a joint training day. There is very good provision of extracurricular activities for pupils in Year 2. These include science and technology, cookery, art, sewing, drama, French and board games. Last year, almost every pupil in Year 2 participated in a rota of these clubs. The teachers make very good use of visits to places of interest, in order to stimulate learning. Very good use is also made of the knowledge and expertise of many visitors to the school.

26. The previous inspection found that no schemes of work for subjects were in place and that teachers' planning was satisfactory, but not consistent. A key issue from that inspection was to continue to develop policy statements and schemes of work for all subjects. This has not been completely addressed. Policies for some subjects, such as history and geography, are only in draft form and have not yet been approved by the governors. The scheme of work for art is currently being re-written, and those for information technology, music and religious education are only in draft form. All other subjects now have clear schemes of work, some of them based on local or national guidelines. Teachers' planning is good overall. Teachers in each year group plan very closely together on a weekly basis, so that pupils in the different classes receive the same work. Clear curricular maps outline the work that each year group will cover throughout the year. Half-termly and weekly plans provide further detail of this work. They state the learning objectives of lessons, the activities which will achieve those objectives, how work will be matched to pupils' differing abilities and how assessments of their progress will be made.

27. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils receive very good support in classrooms, and some are occasionally withdrawn for specific help, either individually or in very small groups. Class teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs devise clear targets for the pupils' individual education plans, where these are appropriate. These targets provide a good level of challenge but are attainable with effort. There are very good procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs and for reviewing their progress. Teachers' assistants and the special educational needs assistant provide very good support for the pupils and keep careful and informative records of their attainment and progress. Teachers and assistants work very well together as a team. There is also very good provision for very able pupils, who are identified at an early stage and provided with appropriately challenging work to extend their learning and promote rapid progress. The curriculum provides good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress.

28. Very good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher is responsible for co-ordinating assessment procedures. A clear policy document is in place including a marking policy, which the teachers follow well. Effective assessment is made of young children on entry to the school. Very good assessment is made of the pupils as they move through each year. Informal, ongoing assessments and more formal checks are carried out, for example, of reading and spelling, and of knowledge gained at the end of a unit of work. At the end of Year 1, the teachers set clear targets for each pupil for the following year. A start has been made on a similar procedure for children as they leave Reception. The organisation of

the end of Key Stage 1 national tests meets statutory requirements. There are useful whole-school collections of pupils' work in English and science at agreed National Curriculum levels, which help the teachers in the accuracy and consistency of their assessments. The teachers use data from tests and other assessments very well, in order to plan subsequent work. For example, Year 2 pupils had problems with understanding maps during a visit to South Weald Park, so in the subsequent lessons, which were observed during the inspection, the teachers focused on plan views of classroom objects. Assessments of pupils with special educational needs are used very well to plan their future work. An internal, mid-year report on each pupil provides information on which to plan for the remainder of the year. The teachers provide some opportunities for the pupils to comment on how they feel they are progressing. Teachers' assistants are fully involved in assessing and recording pupils' progress.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

29. Overall, the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are provided with opportunities to reflect upon special people in their lives, and to note and appreciate the beauty of creation and seasonal changes, in assemblies, 'circle' time and religious education lessons. Themes and topics for assemblies are well planned, and include stories from the Bible, which provide an opportunity for pupils to think about the lives of others. For example, the story of Zacchaeus from the New Testament was presented and acted out by Year 2 pupils in their class assembly. In lessons in most subjects, teachers value pupils' ideas, particularly in mathematics, technology and science, when they are encouraged to put forward their own ideas and opinions. The school makes good use of visitors to enhance its provision for the pupils' spiritual development, including occasional visits by local Church ministers and Roly the Clown, who is an evangelist. During the last OFSTED inspection, it was noted that teachers were absent from assemblies, that this detracted from the pupils' experience of a whole school community coming together and that it impeded the appropriate follow-up of themes in classrooms. This situation has improved, and teachers actively participate in all assemblies. They build on the themes and stories in their work in the classroom.

30. Provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. Good behaviour is the expectation within the school and the vast majority of pupils are well behaved as a result. The school has very good systems for regulating behaviour, which include class rules, as well as rules for assembly, lunchtime and the playground, which have been devised by pupils. Good behaviour is rewarded through praise and positive reinforcement by all staff. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong, and this is evident both in lessons and assemblies.

31. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' social development. The school is successful in promoting good, mutually respectful relationships, and all staff provide very good role models for pupils' social skills. In one assembly, all pupils shared one child's good news of the birth of twins, a brother and a sister. The headteacher told the pupils that she would buy flowers and a card for the child's mother, as was the tradition at the school. This respect and care for each other as individual members of a school family are a constant feature of the very good relationships that exist. Pupils are given many opportunities to work co-operatively on their tasks, and share resources as necessary. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility, for example, in setting up and controlling the music used for assembly, in caring for younger pupils and in raising funds for a wide range of charities.

32. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory, overall. In the previous inspection, this was judged to be satisfactory. Whilst there are ample opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions, there are limited opportunities for them to learn about the contributions that other cultures make in a range of subjects across the curriculum, such as art, music, history and religious education. In art and music, the main emphasis is on European artists and composers, and, apart from in religious education, where pupils learn about some aspects of the Hindu faith and culture, there are few other opportunities for pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of other cultural traditions. A wide range of class visits is made to places of interest, and a variety of individuals and groups visit the school. The school is actively involved in the local community and takes part in Maypole dancing at the village fair. The curriculum family fun day provides an

opportunity for a wide range of local people to visit the school.

33. The teaching of children aged under five is effective in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the quality of provision is good. Children aged under five attend assemblies and play a full part in the life of the school.

33.  
**pupils' welfare**

**Support, guidance and**

34. The school provides very good support, guidance and care for its pupils. This continues to be a very great strength of the school, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector before this inspection drew particular attention to the school's excellent response when a child is ill, and the high quality of support provided for pupils with special educational needs. In response to the questionnaires, 99 per cent of parents say that the school is approachable when there are problems and 100 per cent say that their children like school.

35. The procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and personal development are excellent. The school supplements its very good assessment procedures with personal attention. The teachers know their pupils really well, and set targets to meet the abilities of each individual. They use detailed folders and individual education plans for children with special educational needs. The school responds very sensitively to help families with difficulties. It provides very good support for pupils with English as an additional language. An assistant works with one or two pupils at a time, extending their use of English and helping them to participate in lessons. The school encourages its more able pupils to work to the highest levels of their ability. The school strengthens pupils' development with sensitive personal and social education in 'circle' time. It responds very positively to opportunities as they arise and treats each child as an individual.

36. The school bases its very good behaviour and discipline policy on high expectations and positive praise and rewards to encourage good behaviour. It celebrates pupils' successes at weekly assemblies. It ensures sufficient supervision of the playgrounds to maintain a secure environment and good behaviour at lunchtime. Within the behaviour policy, there is adequate provision to deter bullying, but this is very rarely needed.

37. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor and promote good attendance. It follows up meticulously if parents do not notify the reason for an absence. It makes effective use of reminders, both written and verbal, to maintain punctuality. However, there has been a weakness in calculating absence statistics during the past two years. The school did not notify sessions and absences of pupils to the Department for Education and Employment in 1997/98. Its calculation of the 1998/99 figures was inaccurate. The school now has a model for a correct method of calculating the figures, and has undertaken to follow it in future years.

38. The school is very concerned for the welfare of its pupils. Two members of staff have current first aid certificates, and additional members of staff will renew their certificates in January. There are very good procedures for health and safety. The school has based its health and safety policy on that of the Local Education Authority. It has considerable expertise in health and safety matters within the premises committee of the governing body. This committee carries out a risk assessment every year. The Local Education Authority provided a risk assessment in 1997/98. The caretaker checks daily for health and safety, and attends to minor repairs. There are no health and safety concerns at present. The school bases its child protection policy on Local Authority procedures, and works closely with local agencies. The headteacher is the designated teacher. Teaching and support staff are aware of the requirements.

38. **Partnership with parents and the community**

39. The school fully uses its excellent partnership with parents and the community to extend pupils' learning. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents spoke very positively of the school's welcoming atmosphere and the approachability of all staff. The school is at the heart of the village community. It contributes much to village life, and gains greatly from its involvement with the village. The previous inspection reported that links with parents and the community were strengths of the school. The partnership has developed even further since that time.

40. Communication with parents is excellent. Very large numbers of parents regularly come into school as helpers. Other parents meet the teachers informally every day. There are formal parents' consultation meetings to review children's progress once each term. Parents who work a long distance away find it difficult to meet teachers during the school day. The school offers appointments both on an afternoon and an evening every term. It holds informative meetings on curricular matters, which are very well attended. The most recent was on the National Literacy Strategy, and it has scheduled an introduction to the National Numeracy Strategy. Parents are invited to attend assemblies from time to time. The school issues frequent newsletters, and a diary of events at the start of each term. It has produced a very helpful booklet for parent helpers. The annual reports on pupils' attainment and progress are of very high quality. They consist of a very detailed account of what the child has learned and can do as an individual, as well as a duplicated description of what the whole class has studied in the year. Pupils' annual reports also include long term targets for the child. The prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents are attractive and easy to read. However, the governors' Annual Report omits several statutory requirements, and the prospectus has two smaller omissions.

41. There is excellent involvement of parents in their children's learning. About 100 parents come into school to help at different times. Of these, 16 have been trained to support groups during the literacy hour. Their contribution has significantly enhanced the quality of pupils' learning. The staff invite parent helpers to a "Thank You" lunch each summer, providing them with a card and a small gift. A parent built picnic tables and benches in the grounds during the summer holiday. Parents also help on trips and with swimming. The Friends' association, to which all parents belong, organises educational and social events and raises considerable funds for the school.

42. The school has very good links with the community. Pupils take an active part in village life. In response to a request from the village, they learned and performed Maypole dancing for a fair last summer. Year 2 pupils visit senior citizens in every term. Pupils extend their self-confidence and social skills on the family fun day. Their experience of spiritual life develops when local clergy take assemblies. Various theatre groups and a Scottish bagpiper extend pupils' cultural awareness. An Indian visitor provided pupils with an Indian Experience Day, during which they learned about life in another part of the world. Other skilled visitors introduce them to the traditional crafts of spinning and doll making. Pupils visit Southend Sealife Centre. Within their own village, they explore the ancient Priest House, and Year 2 pupils found a mysterious hidden staircase in a 400-year-old cottage. There are effective links with local playgroups and the adjacent junior school.

## 42. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### Leadership and management

43. Overall, the quality of the school's leadership and management is satisfactory, but has some significant strengths. In the school's last inspection, there were no clear judgements about the overall quality of leadership and management. The improvement made by the school since its previous inspection is good. There have been significant improvements in standards in English, mathematics and science, and in the quality of teaching. Standards have also improved in gymnastics. The school has maintained very high standards in the pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships, and personal development. Governors increased the length of the teaching week, in consultation with parents, to ensure that the school is now meeting recommended guidelines. Weaknesses in the provision for children aged under five have been remedied successfully. The school has developed helpful policy statements and schemes of work for all subjects, and these are at various stages in their implementation. Those for information technology, religious education and music have only recently been introduced and are not yet fully operational. Although many of the subject co-ordinators are new to their responsibilities, they are developing the role well, sharing good practice and providing both informal and formal support for colleagues. Some have successfully monitored and evaluated the work in other classes, and all collect in and examine colleagues' planning documents. A timetable is in place to release all co-ordinators from the classroom during the current school year in order to develop further their role in monitoring teaching and the curriculum. Funds have been allocated appropriately to

support this important aspect of the management of the school. The school's capacity to continue to improve is good.

44. In response to a key issue from the previous inspection, the school development plan was re-formulated to ensure that it includes more detail of objectives, resource implications and evaluation procedures, in order to make it more effective as a tool for curricular development. However, the process of strategic planning is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the written plan is actually driving the future development of the school. The current school development plan is still in draft form and has yet to be formally approved by the governing body. The timing of the process is not synchronised with the setting of the annual budget, and this reduces its effectiveness. Staff with curricular responsibilities have contributed their own sections to the plan. Some of these do not include enough detail of cost implications, and the criteria by which to judge the success of each action are not always sufficiently evaluative. The plan identifies appropriate priorities and targets for the current school year. However, there is no outline planning of developments over a longer period.

45. The Headteacher provides very good professional leadership, which has a significant impact on the very high quality of teaching, the outstanding ethos of the school, and its excellent partnership with parents. She has built a very strong and committed team of staff, and offers enormous personal support and guidance to pupils, parents and staff. She receives very good support from her deputy, who, in turn, offers invaluable support, both curricular and pastoral, to all colleagues and pupils. Six other teachers have curricular responsibilities, most of which have been taken on recently. All are well informed about their areas of responsibility and have a clear view about the direction in which they are intending to develop them. The co-ordinator for special educational needs works in the school part-time, and makes a significant contribution to the school's very good provision for these pupils. This enables the school to fulfil its statutory responsibilities very well. The Headteacher attends year group planning meetings in order to monitor the curriculum being offered to the pupils. She has observed teachers at work in the classroom and has given feedback on their performance. She samples pupils' work, in order to gain an overview of standards.

46. In the past, governors have not been sufficiently involved in strategic planning or in evaluating the success of the action taken. They have recently taken part in a 'brainstorming' session, along with staff, to identify priorities for improvement and to increase their awareness of the future development of the school at a strategic level. The governors play a valued and important role in the management of the school. Their involvement in curricular development is very good. There are named governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Indeed, each governor is linked to a specific subject and maintains regular contact with the relevant co-ordinator. The governors frequently visit classrooms, with an agreed focus, and provide perceptive written reports on what they find. Governors are very successful in their role as critical friends to the school.

47. The school has an outstanding ethos, and the quality of relationships in it is very good. The school's mission statement emphasises that it aims to enable all pupils to work to their full potential in a happy, caring and stimulating environment. This is reflected throughout the school. All staff have very high expectations of the pupils, and all work hard to create a stimulating and attractive learning environment. Staff know pupils very well, and treat them with sensitivity and respect, tempered with an appropriate degree of firmness. All contribute to the happy, but purposeful, atmosphere that permeates the school. All pupils receive full equality of opportunity to learn and make progress. Most of the school's policies are implemented effectively, although aspects of the multi-cultural education policy are not fully reflected in the curriculum. Statutory assessment data are analysed and used very productively to identify areas for development, and challenging targets are set for individual pupils, towards which they are making very good progress. Statutory requirements are generally well met, although the statutory information for parents in the governors' Annual Report and the school prospectus has some omissions.

#### 47. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

48. The school is generously staffed with teachers to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The pupil-teacher ratio is much better than the national average. Four teachers have been appointed during the past two years. All the teachers are appropriately trained and qualified and they provide a wide range of experience. During the inspection, a temporary relief teacher was providing cover for one class. All the teachers, with the exception of a newly qualified member of staff, have responsibility for at least one subject. A part-time teacher is responsible for co-ordinating the provision of special educational needs. At certain times of the year, the pupils benefit from specialist teaching by a basketball coach and a swimming instructor. The school is very well staffed with teacher assistants, so that every class has support at some time of the day. This is having a particularly positive impact on standards in literacy and on the progress of the relatively small number of pupils with special educational needs. There is good administrative and clerical support and the caretaker maintains a high level of cleanliness throughout the school. The midday assistants contribute soundly to school life.

49. No formal system of appraisal of teachers' performance is in place as this is under review. However, the Headteacher has made informal observations of classroom practice and has offered feedback to teachers. She holds professional discussions with her colleagues, with a view to determining what their training needs might be. As a result, arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory. Teachers attend courses outside school, in order to enhance their knowledge and expertise, and advisors hold training sessions in school. There are opportunities for subject co-ordinators to lead training for their colleagues. All the staff have had recent training in literacy and numeracy. There is no written policy in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers or staff new to the school, but a very helpful staff information booklet is in place. The Local Educational Authority's guidelines on induction are followed satisfactorily. There are adequate opportunities for teacher assistants to update their knowledge and skills, and the deputy headteacher has produced a very helpful booklet for them, entitled 'Welcome to the world of the teacher assistant'. The midday assistants meet formally with the headteacher each term, but, in practice, there is frequent guidance for them on behaviour management and lunchtime games. About a hundred parents voluntarily offer regular and effective support in classrooms, some of them having received particular training to support the literacy hour.

50. A large growth in the numbers of pupils attending the school is putting pressure on space, but the accommodation is adequate for the effective teaching of the numbers currently on roll. Plans are in hand for considerable extensions to both internal and external accommodation. Two classrooms are in a demountable building, which is in a satisfactory state of repair. The main school building is in good repair and, internally, it is well decorated, attractive and provides a stimulating environment for learning. Good quality displays were evident during the inspection. The classrooms are just adequate in size, although there is little space for practical activities or activities involving water. There is a pleasant, well-stocked library, which is easily accessible to most classrooms and adjacent to an attractive 'gallery' area, where pupils' artwork is displayed to very good effect. There is a small information technology room, although access to this is not easy. The attractive hall provides adequate space for physical education, assemblies and dining. A small room called 'The Den' provides useful additional accommodation for teaching more able pupils and those who have special educational needs. Toilets were clean and tidy during the inspection. There is no separate medical room for pupils who are ill or injured.

51. The school occupies a small, but attractive site, with trees, shrubs, flowers, picnic tables and seating. There are small grassed areas for play, and two small playgrounds. The younger pupils' playground is marked out with some creative games, but there are none for the older pupils. There is no separate outside play area for children aged under five, nor any climbing apparatus. The school also has a small nature area and pond, and a numbered nature trail, which pupils were observed following during the inspection. An open-air swimming pool and changing rooms are available for use in the summer term. A number of external steps would make access difficult for pupils with severe mobility problems and there are no toilet facilities for the disabled. The school is free of litter and graffiti.

52. Overall, there are adequate resources and equipment to support pupils' learning. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Parents are very generous in donating money and resources to

support learning. There is a good range of resources to support work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and in physical education and special educational needs. The previous inspection report stated that information technology equipment needed to be updated and more artefacts and materials were needed for history, geography and multicultural education. There are a good number of computers in classrooms and in the information technology room. However, two are on loan and the school recognises that some computers still need to be updated and that there are not enough printers. Resources for history and geography are now adequate, although the school relies heavily on parents to provide historical artefacts. The teachers make good use of the schools' library service, the school grounds, the locality, visits and visitors to enhance learning. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support work in music, design and technology and art. There are sufficient books to support religious education, but not enough religious artefacts. Support materials for multicultural education remain unsatisfactory. For example, there are few resources to stimulate learning about the art and music of non-western cultures. The amount of outdoor play equipment for children aged under five is also unsatisfactory

52.

## 52. **The efficiency of the school**

53. Overall, the management of the school's resources is good. The quality of financial planning is sound. The governors give careful consideration to a number of different spending options in the light of priorities that have been identified by the headteacher and staff. However, although these priorities later become targets for improvement in the school development plan, the two processes are not sufficiently linked to be fully effective as a means of strategic planning for school improvement. Governors discuss and evaluate the cost effectiveness of spending decisions in relation to the perceived impact on the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of education provided by the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, some of the criteria given in the school development plan for judging how successfully actions have been implemented are not always evaluative enough to assist the governors in deciding how well money has been spent. Governors are concerned to ensure that value for money is achieved and, for example, have devised their own criteria by which to measure the cost effectiveness of any single item of expenditure of £500 or more.

54. The procedures for monitoring the school's spending are very good. The chair of the finance committee receives and checks details of monthly expenditure, and discusses these with the headteacher and finance officer. Governors receive regular financial reports and are kept abreast of new developments. The chair of the finance committee keeps very detailed records of income and expenditure throughout the year, and monitors the budget very closely. In the last financial year, he was able to predict the school's final outturn figure to within £200 of the actual total. At the end of the last year, the school had a larger than average budget surplus of just over 12 per cent of its income. The previous inspection recommended that the school should review its "relatively high carry-forward figure". This surplus was the result of careful financial planning and budgeting over several years in order to fund, jointly with the Local Education Authority, the replacement of the two demountable classrooms and other improvements to the buildings and grounds. The projected budget surplus for the end of the current financial year, when building work is due to take place, is well within acceptable limits. The funding which is provided for staff training is used appropriately. Money allocated for pupils with special educational needs is well spent and effectively supports the very good provision made for these pupils and the very good progress that they make.

55. The school's teaching and support staff are very well used. Teachers are appropriately deployed as class teachers and in suitable management roles, and there is effective delegation of responsibilities. Very good use is made of additional funds to employ an experienced co-ordinator for special educational needs for two mornings each week, and a teacher who provides release time for the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators to carry out their management responsibilities. Support staff are used very well and make a valuable contribution to the progress made by the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. The school's administration is efficient and unobtrusive, and contributes well to the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis. Staff make very good use of the school's accommodation. The large hall is used to the full for physical education lessons and as a dining hall. Timetabled use of the library ensures that pupils develop very good library skills. A small additional



room, known as 'The Den', is used very effectively to provide support for small groups of pupils, including more able pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers make very good use of the school grounds, including the pond and environmental area, to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers also make very good use of a wide range of resources, some of which they supply themselves or borrow from the Local Education Authority's loan service. Parent helpers are a very valuable resource in this school, and they are used to the full. They are particularly well used to work with small groups of pupils in the literacy and numeracy hours. The school also makes very good use of visits to places of interest, both in the locality and further afield, and welcomes a number of visitors who enhance the curriculum and contribute to the pupils' personal and social development.

56. The overall profile of attainment on entry to the school is above average. Pupils make very good progress during their time in school, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, but also in their personal and social development. By the end of the key stage, standards are well above average. The quality of teaching is very good, overall, and the school also makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school has an outstanding ethos with very good relationships. It makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and provides very good support and guidance for all pupils. The school maintains excellent links with parents and the community. The leadership and management of the school are sound, and it is efficiently run. The school's expenditure per pupil is low when compared with national average figures. The previous inspection report gave two conflicting judgements of value for money: one was good, the other satisfactory. The findings of this inspection are that the school now provides very good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **56. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

57. Although there were no key issues for action relating to provision for children aged under five in the previous inspection report, nevertheless, it identified a number of weaknesses. There was no written policy for the early years; there were some shortcomings in teaching, limited opportunities for creative and aesthetic development, and insufficient opportunities for investigations or “self-chosen” activities. The report also mentioned that resources for imaginative role-play needed to be extended. There has been a significant improvement in each of these areas. There is a very good written policy for the early years, and this guides and informs teachers in their planning and teaching of the curriculum. The quality of teaching is very good overall, and there are no significant shortcomings. Work is matched very well to the children’s interests and capabilities and offers a high level of challenge, and opportunities for new learning. There is a well-planned range of opportunities for creative and aesthetic development, and for investigation and activities which children choose for themselves. There is a good range of resources to stimulate imaginative role-play. There were no clear judgements of the children’s attainment in the previous inspection report.

58. Children aged under five start school at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. They are taught in two parallel Reception classes. Children’s attainment is assessed shortly after they start school, and the results of these assessments show that their attainment is above average. Attainment in language and literacy is noticeably above average, whilst that in other areas of learning is closer to the average and, in mathematics, slightly below, although this, of course, varies from year to year. Children make very good progress, in language and literacy, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They make good progress in mathematics and physical development. By the time they are five years old, most pupils exceed the expectations of the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers’ expectations are very high, and they have excellent relationships with pupils. Their knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children, and of the early years curriculum, are very good. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment are also very good. Teachers and assistants work closely together to assess and record children’s achievements in all areas of learning. They use the information gained to plan the next stage in the children’s learning.

### **58. development**

### **Personal and social**

59. Children make very good progress in their personal and social development and attain above average standards by the time they are five. After only three weeks in school, children are confident and have already established effective relationships with each other and with adults. They co-operate well when working and playing in a group and concentrate very well when working on a task independently. When playing parachute games, children learn that they only work when everyone co-operates. They are eager to explore new learning and are able to solve simple practical problems, such as laying the table for the three bears’ breakfast. Children demonstrate independence when selecting activities and when dressing or undressing. They have a very good understanding of what is right and wrong, and their behaviour is very good. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers plan a broad range of opportunities for pupils to work and play together. Activities are well structured and sometimes allow children to initiate and take responsibility for them. For example, children were given the opportunity to create and present their own play in the puppet theatre. Some children selected their own program on the computer. Sometimes, play activities do not have sufficiently clear purpose or direction.

59. **Language and literacy**

60. Children make very good progress in language and literacy and attain above average standards by the time they are five. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other, and most speak confidently about their experiences. They participate with enthusiasm as the teacher tells the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', changing their voices appropriately to portray each character. They use a varied vocabulary to express their thoughts, and make up their own stories when given the chance to participate in imaginative play. Children enjoy sharing books and understand how they are organised. They recognise and read familiar words accurately, and identify some letters of the alphabet by name and sound. Children make their own book about a teddy bear, using pictures, letters and familiar words to communicate meaning. They rearrange familiar words to construct simple sentences, and some explain which words are in the wrong place when a sentence is jumbled. Children for whom English is not the first language enjoy sharing books and are developing a good grasp of the language after only a short time at school. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers and assistants engage children in planned and spontaneous conversations, which help them to listen and respond appropriately.

For example, they encourage children to talk about their teddy bears and to ask each other questions. They participate in children's role-play activities and extend their imagination and use of language. Teachers provide numerous opportunities for children to listen to stories and rhymes, to share books and to read the print they see all around the classroom. They encourage children to write, unaided, and sometimes act as scribe for children to record their ideas.

60. **Mathematics**

61. Children make good progress in mathematics and are on course to attain above average standards by the time they are five. They recognise and recreate patterns when threading three different coloured beads on to a lace, are familiar with number rhymes and recognise written numerals. They count forwards and backwards to ten, and then count from five up to 15. Children understand and use mathematical language, as when they are asked to make three balls of dough that are small, medium and large. They compare objects to see which is longer or shorter, and learn about capacity through playing with sand and water trays. Children recognise and name some two- and three-dimensional shapes, and are beginning to use their mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, such as laying a table for four people. The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers provide a range of first-hand mathematical experiences, including carefully planned play activities, to develop children's understanding of number, shape, size and pattern. They engage children in singing number rhymes and counting up and down a number track.

61. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

62. Children make good, and often very good, progress in this area of learning, and are on course to attain above average standards by the age of five. Children know that they taste with their tongue whether food is sweet or sour. They explain how taste buds detect taste and send a message to the brain. When investigating the contents of a 'feely bag', children use their sense of touch to identify the properties of different objects. They describe them as hard or soft, furry, bumpy and rough. Children sort foods into two groups: those they like and those they don't like. They record this information in the form of a simple Venn diagram. As part of their topic on bears, they select materials to make a bed or a chair for one of the three bears, and use scissors and glue to cut and join the materials together. Children use tape recorders independently to listen to stories, and use the mouse and keyboard to select and operate simple programs on the computer. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for children to explore their environment and observe the world around them. They encourage them to ask questions and provide them with opportunities to handle a range of objects and artefacts. For example, children were shown how to operate a tape recorder safely and then given the chance to use it independently. Teachers take pupils on nature walks and visit Marsh Farm, and children talk and write about what they have seen.

## 62. **Physical development**

63. Children make good progress in their physical development and attain above average standards by the time they are five. They develop good manual dexterity through using scissors, spatulas and small construction toys. Most children have good control of a pencil and can trace over letter shapes carefully. They handle malleable materials well when creating shapes of different sizes. Children have a good awareness of space, and walk, skip and jump confidently in gymnastics lessons. They participate well in circle games such as 'The farmer's in his den' and 'In and out the dusty bluebells'. Children explore a range of small apparatus such as mats, balls, beanbags and quoits. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide a good variety of activities to develop children's manipulative skills, and their physical control and co-ordination. They show children how to hold and use tools correctly and safely, and demonstrate movements themselves or use other children to do so. In the summer term, all children have swimming lessons in the school's outdoor pool. They become increasingly confident in the water and make good progress towards becoming swimmers. Although children make good progress in their physical development as a result of well-planned experiences in the classroom and the hall, there is, at present, no outdoor secure area for children to use during the day, and a limited range of outdoor play equipment.

## 63. **Creative development**

64. Children make very good progress in their creative development and attain above average standards by the time they are five. They often sing familiar songs and rhymes and make good progress in learning to sing a new song, 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears'. They sing with a good awareness of pulse and keep to a simple three-beat rhythm. Children explore different percussion instruments and use them to make a variety of sounds. They paint and draw pictures of what they have observed and imagined, illustrate their own books and create pictures of caterpillars using wax resist techniques. Children make prints using apples and leaves, and use cutting and sticking skills to make collage pictures. They use their imagination very well when taking part in role-play in the home corner, the shop and the puppet theatre. Children act out familiar stories such as 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. The quality of teaching is very good in this area of learning. Teachers provide numerous opportunities for children to express their ideas through drawing, painting, retelling stories, imaginative play, responding to music through dance, and singing. Children are encouraged to use their senses and to experiment with a wide variety of materials. In one very good lesson, the teacher used puppets effectively, as well as the bears' beds that the children had designed and made, when retelling the story of 'Goldilocks'. She then encouraged children to re-enact the story or make up their own play to present in the puppet theatre. The teacher provided an exciting range of 'props' and materials for the children to use, which stimulated their imagination and allowed their own creativity and independence to flourish.

## 64. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### 64. **English**

65. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1998 shows that the percentage of pupils who achieved both the average Level 2, and the above average Level 3, in reading and writing was well above the national average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with that of all schools, it shows that the pupils' results are well above average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with that of similar schools, it shows that the pupils' results are above average. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results at Level 2 and above for 1998 are compared with those achieved by the school in 1996, they show a slight decline in standards. However, the pupils' performance over the three years as a whole was very high in reading and well above average in writing. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls. At the present time, no national comparative figures are available for the end of key stage tests in 1999. However, in these tests, all pupils achieved at least Level 2 in both reading and writing. Half of the pupils attained Level 3 or higher in reading, one of whom achieved Level 4, which is the national average for 11 year olds. Almost a quarter of the pupils achieved Level 3 in writing, and more than a third reached Level 3 in spelling.

66. The findings of this inspection are that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils who are on course to attain both Level 2 and Level 3 in reading and writing is well above average. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when standards in reading were “sound, and sometimes good” and standards in writing were “good”. The inspection findings are in line with the school’s results in the end of key stage tests in 1998. Pupils attain very good standards in literacy. In speaking and listening, standards are well above average. Pupils listen very carefully and attentively to teachers’ explanations, instructions and questions. They show that they have listened well when answering questions and offering suggestions, which they do with enthusiasm. Pupils love listening to stories and contribute with enjoyment when asked to join in. They speak confidently and articulately when answering questions, offering explanations or re-telling a story. They draw from a wide range of vocabulary, which they use well to express their thoughts and feelings. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to speak to larger audiences in assemblies and concerts, which they do confidently. They also read aloud frequently and report back to the class at the end of the literacy hour.

67. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are well above average. Pupils read familiar texts accurately and fluently, and are gaining confidence in tackling more difficult texts, such as extended stories and information books. More able pupils in Year 2 read a non-fiction text about elephants and demonstrate very good skills in locating and selecting information in order to answer questions. They know how to use the contents page and glossary. Many pupils recognise their own errors and use appropriate strategies to monitor and correct their reading. When faced with unfamiliar words, pupils use a number of different strategies, including picture clues, initial sounds and reference to the context or structure of the sentence. Pupils are able to re-tell stories that they have read, and to express opinions about them. A few are able to name favourite authors and explain why they like them.

68. In writing, by the end of the key stage, standards are also well above average. Teachers monitored carefully the standards achieved by pupils after the introduction of the literacy hour in the previous school year. In response to their concerns about standards of extended writing, they introduced an additional lesson each week, which focuses exclusively on developing pupils’ extended writing skills. This is having a significant impact on the standards achieved by pupils. At this early stage in the school year, most pupils are already achieving Level 2, and a significant proportion is on course to reach Level 3 by the end of the school year. Pupils communicate ideas clearly, giving sufficient detail to hold the reader’s interest. They write stories, poems, rules for the countryside, accounts of visits and instructions to make a shadow puppet. They use their literacy skills well in other areas of the curriculum, re-telling the stories of Rama and Sita and Zacchaeus, labelling maps, and describing how they carried out an investigation in science. Pupils spell some complex words accurately and use punctuation well in carefully structured sentences. More able pupils use varied and interesting words in their writing, and develop their ideas logically. Their writing is well organised, imaginative and grammatically correct. Most pupils have a neat style of handwriting, which is consistent in size. Many are able to write in a fluent, joined style.

69. Pupils make very good progress throughout the key stage in all aspects of the subject. This is largely due to the teachers’ very skilful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, structured teaching of reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and a very good emphasis on developing pupils’ extended writing skills. It also results from the teachers’ very high expectations of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, also make very good progress. They are provided with work that is well suited to their needs and capabilities, and they have clear targets for improvement. Teachers and assistants provide very good support in lessons, and this is supplemented by additional support from trained parent helpers in the literacy hour. Sometimes, pupils are withdrawn for specific support with literacy. The quality of this support is also very good, and makes a significant contribution to the pupils’ progress.

70. Pupils’ attitudes towards their work in English are very good throughout the key stage. They clearly derive great enjoyment from the shared reading session in the literacy hour, and it is clear from discussions with pupils that they have a love of reading and sharing books. They concentrate very well, both in whole-class sessions and when working independently. Consequently, they have a very good work rate and often make very good progress in lessons. Pupils are eager to answer questions, but always wait their turn and listen politely to each other. They take a pride in their work and try hard to

present it neatly. Behaviour in lessons is generally very good.

71. The quality of teaching is very good. Of the ten lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was very good in seven, good in two and unsatisfactory in one. The unsatisfactory lesson can be attributed mainly to the teacher's unfamiliarity with aspects of the National Literacy Strategy. There is no evidence to suggest that unsatisfactory teaching normally occurs. Teachers generally have very good expertise in the subject and are implementing the literacy hour very effectively. Their constant evaluation of their own practice and the pupils' performance has resulted in modifications and improvements, which are clearly having a positive impact on standards. Teachers expect and strive for excellence in all aspects of the subject, and, as a result, provide pupils with a stimulating and challenging range of activities. Teachers in each year group work and plan together on a half-termly, and then weekly, basis in order to achieve a consistent approach. They evaluate what they have done and amend their detailed planning in the light of their observations and assessments. Tasks are planned very carefully to meet the needs of pupils of all capabilities. Resources are very well prepared, adapted and organised, and lessons run smoothly and at an appropriately brisk pace. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress frequently and use the information gained to plan future work. Homework, which includes reading, spelling and sentence construction, is used very effectively to support and extend pupils' learning.

72. Teachers provide pupils with a very good range of opportunities to write for different purposes. They use the additional time for extended writing very well to develop pupils' literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 re-tell, in correct sequence, the story of Zacchaeus, write an account of their visit to South Weald Park, and write an imaginative response to the Old Testament story of Joseph. Teachers' assistants provide very good support for pupils during the literacy hour. Parent helpers also provide very good support. They have received training to ensure that they understand the expectations and routines of the literacy hour, and they also have a helpful booklet of guidance.

73. The policy for the subject has recently been updated, and, together with the framework for the National Literacy Strategy, it forms a very good scheme of work, which shows how pupils are expected to progress in their learning from year to year. The procedures for assessment in the subject are excellent. Teachers' ongoing assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are thorough and accurate. They set targets for each pupil in reading and writing, and monitor their progress closely. The co-ordinator for the subject provides very good leadership for colleagues, and has excellent expertise and an infectious enthusiasm, which she communicates successfully to staff, pupils and parents. She has undertaken both monitoring of lessons and sampling of pupils' work, and has provided feedback on her findings. The headteacher and some governors have also monitored the implementation of the literacy hour and have produced written reports of visits to classes. The co-ordinator has produced a detailed development plan for the subject, which forms part of the school development plan. The leadership and management of this subject provide a very good model for duplication across the curriculum. There is a very good range of resources to support learning, which are well organised and efficiently used. The library is very well stocked, attractively laid out and used very well to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum. Literacy is taught daily, and the school's provision for literacy is excellent. Lessons are staggered appropriately to ensure that all classes benefit from the support of classroom assistants and parent helpers. The teaching of the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

### 73. Mathematics

74. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1998 shows that, in mathematics, the proportion of pupils who attained Level 2 or higher was above the national average, whilst at Level 3, it was well above the national average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with that of all schools, it shows that the pupils' results are well above average. When the average of the school's test data is compared with similar schools, it shows that the pupils' results are above average. There are no significant variations in the attainment of girls and boys. When the end of Key Stage 1 test results for 1998 are compared with those achieved by the school in 1996, they show that standards in mathematics have fallen slightly. However, in the 1999 end of key stage tests, for which there are not yet any national comparative figures, all of the pupils reached at least Level 2, and 44 per cent achieved Level 3, which was much higher than the previous year.

75. The findings of the inspection are that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils who are on course to attain Level 2 and Level 3 is well above average. These findings are an improvement on the judgement of the last OFSTED inspection, where standards were found to be "sound". The inspection findings are broadly in line with the school's results in the 1998 tests and assessments. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils add doubled numbers to 20 and recognise number bonds to 20. More able pupils mentally double numbers to 1000, and use 'doubling' as a strategy for solving problems involving two digit numbers, for example,  $24+23$ . Pupils of all abilities understand that numbers in a magic square will always have the same total when added together. Pupils count in tens from nine to 109 and count backwards in tens from 94. They recognise and name two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties and know that a cube has six faces and a pyramid has four. Pupils use a ruler to draw and measure lines. They collect information and present it in the form of bar graphs.

76. Overall, pupils of all abilities make very good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs attain very good standards for their capabilities and make very good progress through carefully planned support, individually or in groups. The youngest pupils progress from knowing the value of three, for example,  $1+1=3$  and  $2+1=3$ , to the recognition of number bonds to ten and a sound understanding of place value in Year 2. As pupils progress through Key Stage 1, they develop their knowledge of the properties of three-dimensional shapes, such as cuboids, spheres and cones. Pupils also use their numeracy skills well in other areas of the curriculum, for example, in design and technology and science. The correct use of mathematical vocabulary is also developed very well across the key stage.

77. Pupils respond very well to mathematics. They answer questions confidently and explain their reasoning. They are very well behaved, interested and enthusiastic. Pupils listen and concentrate well during whole class sessions, and they settle promptly to work in groups, and continue to persevere when solving challenging number problems.

78. The quality of teaching in mathematics is very good. This judgement is an improvement on the last inspection, where it was mainly "sound". The previous report also stated that more opportunities were needed for practical work in weight, time and capacity. This is being addressed through the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are carefully planned for pupils across a wide range of ability. Learning objectives are stated clearly, and teachers check to see whether pupils have achieved these by the end of the lesson. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, which is communicated effectively to the pupils. They have very high expectations of their pupils, and challenge them to achieve their best. Classes are generally managed and controlled very well, and teachers make very good use of a wide range of resources. All teachers have introduced the daily mathematics lesson in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons move at a brisk pace and are well structured. Homework is set for pupils at the end of the key stage, which includes the loan of mathematics games. In a very successful lesson in Year 2, the teacher reinforced the idea that there are a variety of ways of finding the same answer to a problem. She encouraged pupils to explain how they arrived at their answer and allowed them sufficient time to think through their working out. Excellent questioning techniques enabled the teacher to assess and build on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding of three-dimensional shapes.

79. The previous inspection identified that there was no scheme of work and that there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in practical work in weight, time and capacity. These weaknesses have been remedied. The mathematics curriculum is now based on the National Numeracy Strategy and

meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are 'set' in ability groups for some of their mathematics lessons. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning and teachers regularly review these groupings. The subject co-ordinator is attending an extended course in mathematics and offers useful guidance to teachers by monitoring and advising them on their planning. Although she has not begun to monitor the implementation of the numeracy hour in other classes, this is timetabled to take place in the current term. Resources for the subject are of good quality and are used very well to support learning.

## 79. Science

80. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers for 1998 shows that the proportion of pupils who reached Level 2 was well above the national average, and at Level 3, it was above average. When compared with schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds, the pupils' results are above average overall. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in 1999 are very high. The previous inspection found that standards in science were sound. The findings of this inspection are that attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is well above average. This indicates a considerable improvement since the last inspection, and is broadly in line with the 1998 end of key stage test results.

81. From first hand experience, the pupils know about some of the flora and fauna of South Weald Park. They use their literacy skills well to write effective accounts of their recent visit to the park. Pupils know about the force of gravity and observe the falling movements of sycamore seeds. In work linked to design and technology, they build effective parachutes and helicopters, and test their flying capabilities. They think of ways in which flight could be slowed down or speeded up. Pupils are able to conduct practical investigations into a number of scientific concepts, including simple electrical circuits, the melting rate of ice cubes, the magnetic properties of various objects, and the conditions necessary for successful seed growth. They use their literacy skills here, too, in order to write effective poems about sunflowers. From first-hand experience in the school grounds, pupils know that different small creatures are found in different places.

82. All pupils are making good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of basic scientific concepts. They are refining their ability to undertake practical investigations, make predictions and record their findings appropriately. They are beginning to understand the concept of a fair test. In one lesson observed, Year 1 pupils investigated the waterproof properties of different materials and predicted which would be suitable for Billy the duck. They are learning to make careful observations, whether it is of small creatures, the different parts of a plant or the marine life at the Southend Sealife Centre. They are making good progress in understanding the importance of exercise, rest, hygiene and diet in keeping healthy. Most pupils are beginning to use correct scientific words. Pupils with special educational needs are making very good progress, with well-focused support.

83. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work. They show an interest in materials and living things, and are eager to answer questions and to contribute ideas. They particularly enjoy practical investigations, when they work well together in groups, share resources sensibly and help to tidy away at the end of lessons. Behaviour is generally good. There are a few pupils who are less attentive and often interrupt the teachers by fidgeting or shouting out. Most pupils take care to present their work neatly. Diagrams are carefully drawn and accurately labelled.

84. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers have a secure subject knowledge of the subject, and emphasise the use of correct scientific words. They plan their lessons well and give the pupils plenty of opportunities to undertake practical investigations, in order to extend their knowledge and skills. They make effective links with other subjects, such as mathematics (in using Venn diagrams to sort magnetic and non-magnetic objects), design and technology and literacy. The teachers show enthusiasm for teaching science and organise their lessons well and move them along at a brisk pace. They have high expectations of attainment and presentation, make very good use of resources, and of other help from adults, and pay due attention to safety. At times, class control is insecure. No evidence was observed of information technology being used to enhance learning in science.

85. The co-ordinator supports colleagues as necessary, and monitors planning and samples of work, in order to gain an overview of standards throughout the school. She has produced a useful science



information pack for colleagues. A good policy is in place, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Good planning is based on a clear scheme of work and assessment of pupils' progress is used well to plan subsequent work. The co-ordinator has compiled a useful whole-school collection of samples of work in science at agreed National Curriculum levels, in order to help in the accuracy and consistency of assessments. The curriculum is enhanced by the provision of a nature area, pond and nature trail in the school grounds and by a science and technology 'fun day' for families and a science and technology club. Worthwhile visits to support learning are made to places such as Thorndon Park, South Weald Park, Marsh Farm and the Sealife Centre in Southend. There is a good range of resources to support learning, including a very wide range of scientific reference books in the school library. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, the teachers instil in the pupils a concern for living things and for the environment and their attention is drawn to the country code.

## 85. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### 85. Information technology

86. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology are in line with national expectations. This judgement is in line with the findings of the school's previous inspection, and is based on a limited sample of lessons and discussions with pupils. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can start the computer, and demonstrate sound skills in controlling the mouse when selecting icons to operate programs. Pupils use the computer for re-drafting their sunflower poems and for writing about special people. They draw two-dimensional shapes on the screen using the mouse. Evidence from photographs of pupils in their final term in Year 2 last summer, shows them controlling a programmable robot around a model village. Pupils are competent in using tape recorders and understand the varied uses of information technology in the home and in the wider world.

87. At Key Stage 1, pupils' progress in information technology is satisfactory, including for those pupils who have special educational needs. The youngest pupils at this key stage are developing their keyboard skills well and are learning to use the mouse to select options. In Year 1, pupils know how to use the arrow keys, and the delete and shift keys, with confidence. By the end of the key stage, pupils use a CD-ROM proficiently to retrieve information across the curriculum.

88. Pupils respond with enthusiasm when using computers, and are keen to explain their work and demonstrate their skills in information technology. They cooperate when working in pairs at the computer, and patiently explain how to use programs to their less experienced peers.

89. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. However, some good teaching was observed during the inspection. There was no unsatisfactory teaching as there was in the previous inspection. Teachers have sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and how to teach it, but do not yet use it fully across the curriculum. Teachers' short term planning is detailed, although the newly created scheme of work, based on the scheme which has been published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, is still at an early stage of implementation. In Year 1, teachers give clear explanations to pupils of the series of actions necessary to make a tape recorder work. There are clearly displayed instructions in each classroom to remind pupils of how to carry out various operations on the computer. Displays of pupils' work show that they have been taught basic word-processing skills and that they use these to record their ideas. The previous inspection found that there was not enough systematic development of pupils' skills. There were few opportunities to observe this during the inspection, but the evidence of teachers' planning shows that it is being addressed through the implementation of the new scheme of work. In one class, a particularly imaginative use of the computer is stimulating pupils' interest: 'Winnie', the computer chip, leaves messages for the pupils on the screen each morning and they send messages in reply.

90. Currently, the headteacher is managing the subject in the absence of the co-ordinator. An action plan for the implementation of all aspects of information technology has been drawn up, and many developments are due for completion next year. A useful draft policy is also in place. This is an improvement on the last inspection. Resources for information technology are adequate. There is a wide range of computers in the school, at least one in every class, and a newly organised computer suite, which is not yet operational. However, across the school, much of the hardware is rather old and, in

many cases, there is a shortage of suitable software. This was the case at the time of the last inspection, but since then the school has purchased, or has been given, more up-to-date equipment. Parents continue to make generous donations of information technology equipment to the school, as at the time of the last inspection. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

90.

### **Religious education**

91. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standards attained are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. In the previous inspection, no judgement on standards was made. Religious education is taught implicitly through the very good relationships which exist between pupils and staff, and the excellent ethos of the school. It is taught through, for example, reflection on the self and being human, relationships and the community. The subject is taught explicitly through developing an understanding of what it means to have a faith, and an appreciation of the implications of religious belief. At Key Stage 1, this is achieved through learning about Christianity and other religions, through stories, celebrations and festivals. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and recognise that the fish and the cross are symbols of Christianity. They have fewer opportunities to learn about another world religion in any detail, but have experience of some festivals, for example, Diwali, and the story of Rama and Sita. Each year, a visitor talks to the pupils about the Hindu faith and culture, and gives the opportunity to handle artefacts and ask questions. Teachers then follow up on this in subsequent lessons. Pupils understand that they belong to different groups, in school, the family and the community and identify people who are special to them.

92. Overall, the progress which pupils make, including those pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory throughout the key stage. Pupils learn to make up their own prayers, both in classes at lunchtime and to read aloud to the whole school in assembly. They increase their knowledge of a range of Bible stories and hymns. During 'circle' times, pupils learn to reflect upon people who are special to them and why. They learn to relate what they have learned to their own experience, as when they discuss the story of Zacchaeus and what it means to them. They develop an understanding of special places, such as a church, synagogue or temple.

93. As in the previous OFSTED inspection, pupils continue to show good attitudes to learning in religious education. They are well behaved and listen attentively to each other and to their teachers. They are able to reflect on their own feelings and to empathise with the feelings of others during 'circle' time and in assemblies. Pupils listen carefully to stories, in the classroom and in assembly, and are eager to answer questions and offer ideas.

94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed during the inspection, it ranged from satisfactory to very good. Where teaching is good, teachers' questioning of pupils is effective and they use praise well to motivate and encourage pupils. They create a calm, quiet atmosphere, in which the views of all pupils are valued and respected. Teachers provide good role models for pupils and are clear about rules and boundaries during 'circle' time, ensuring that each pupil is listened to with respect. Although teachers' short term planning is satisfactory, the draft scheme of work contains too much reinforcement of previously taught work, particularly in Year 1, and insufficient emphasis on one other world religion.

95. The co-ordinator has only recently taken up this post, has good subject knowledge, and has recently received training in religious education at Key Stage 1. Further training in a multicultural approach to the subject is planned and she has many useful ideas for the future development of the subject. Overall, resources for religious education are unsatisfactory. There is a narrow range of religious artefacts and materials available to support learning about Christianity and other world faiths. Overall, religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, particularly in terms of the very good relationships that exist, the strong moral values and concern for others, which the school successfully promotes.

95. **Art**

96. In addition to the three lessons that were observed during the inspection, pupils' displayed work and teachers' planning documents were examined. This combined evidence indicates that the standards of attainment are average for the pupils' ages. This judgement is in line with the findings of the school's last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 mix primary colours to create autumn shades and paint designs that they have drawn. They observe and discuss Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" and then emulate his style and technique by applying thick paint with glue spatulas. They explain that they are using this technique because Van Gogh used a knife to apply paint. Pupils use felt and sewing techniques to make three-dimensional sunflowers. They use a pencil to make an imprint of a leaf on a polystyrene tile and then apply paint to this and use it as a printing block to make leaf prints. Pupils also make detailed observational drawings of leaves and flowers, using pastels and crayons. Pupils in Year 1 use Paul Klee's "Goldfish" as a stimulus for their own work. They use crayon and colour wash techniques to produce their pictures. Pupils study each other's faces and draw portraits within a picture frame, some of which have a very good sense of proportion, shape and form.

97. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in art, as they learn to use an increasingly wide range of techniques and experiment with different media. They are developing a sound appreciation and understanding of the work of some famous artists, although these are almost exclusively representative of western culture and traditions. Where the teaching of specific techniques is of a very high calibre, pupils make very good progress, as when some pupils in Year 1 learn to draw portraits of each other.

98. Pupils enjoy art lessons and show interest in their work. They concentrate well and take care over the presentation of their work. Their behaviour ranges from satisfactory to very good, but is generally good. Pupils are confident when explaining what they are doing and what they have learned.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen during the inspection, it ranged from satisfactory to very good. Where teaching is very good, the teacher has high levels of expertise in the subject, and communicates this through very good explanations and demonstrations of techniques. She talks to pupils as they work, suggesting ways to improve their pictures, and gives them praise and encouragement for their efforts. Her very high expectations inspire the pupils to strive for high standards, and she provides the opportunity for pupils to evaluate each other's work at the end of the lesson. Where teaching is less effective, but nonetheless satisfactory, the teacher's own expertise is less secure, and her management of the class is insufficiently rigorous to ensure that all pupils make good progress in the allotted time. Expectations of the pupils' performance are lower, and there is no skilful demonstration of techniques. Teachers in each year group plan closely together to achieve consistency of work, and to ensure progression in the teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding from year to year and breadth and balance within the art curriculum. There are limited opportunities for pupils to experience art from cultures outside Europe, and this aspect of the subject is under-resourced.

100. There is a good, recently written policy for the subject. At the time of the last inspection, there was no scheme of work. A scheme was produced following the inspection, and this is now being revised and improved. The co-ordinator has only held the post for a few weeks, but has already identified the need to develop three-dimensional work throughout the school. The co-ordinator examines teachers' plans in order to gain an overview of the curriculum and provides informal support and advice to colleagues. There is no development plan for the subject. There is a good range of resources to support the practical aspect of the subject, but examples of the work of artists and craftspeople are mainly limited to those of western cultures. The co-ordinator runs a very well attended art club for pupils in Year 2. All pupils have the opportunity to attend at some stage during the year. Activities frequently involve pupils working on a much larger scale than they are able to in the classroom. For example, they produce large mosaics in the style of Van Gogh's portraits. Pupils' work is celebrated and displayed to very good effect in 'The Gallery', alongside the work of established artists.

100.

## **Design and technology**

101. During the inspection, there were few opportunities to observe the teaching of design and technology. In addition to the two combined science and technology lessons observed, samples of pupils' work, photographs of family science and technology 'fun days', and teachers' planning, were examined. From this evidence, standards are judged to be satisfactory for the pupils' ages at Key Stage 1. This judgement echoes the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection. Pupils observe seeds that can fly, such as sycamore and dandelions, and investigate how they fly. They successfully make their own 'helicopters' with rotorblades from paper and investigate the effect of adding weights (paper clips) to the blades and to the fuselage. They also experiment with parachutes made from plastic, string and plasticine, varying the weight of the plasticine to show the rate of fall. On a recent field study trip, pupils designed and made their own kites from plastic and balsa wood.

102. Overall, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. The youngest pupils experiment with materials, cutting and joining to making farm animals and finger puppets. Through the key stage, pupils develop their design skills in a range of contexts, for example, a bag that will hold a book, a lottery machine and props for school plays. Older pupils learn to disassemble objects and to make figures with movable joints.

103. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy investigation and concentrate well on their tasks. They work co-operatively, showing their ideas and taking turns with resources when necessary.

104. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' own subject knowledge is secure. They have high expectations of their pupils, and display consistent care in building up pupils' flight vocabulary in science and technology lessons. They encourage pupils to discuss their designs and explain what they have found out.

105. The current scheme of work for design and technology is being supplemented by the scheme that has been produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. There is a useful yearly plan to organise the areas of design and technology to be covered. A collection of pupils' assessed work has been produced and is a helpful tool for teachers to use in agreeing standards of attainment. The co-ordinator has attended a ten-day course in design and technology and provides good expertise to guide teachers. Resources are satisfactory, with a useful range of materials available to support work in the subject.

105.

## **Geography**

106. Pupils achieve above average standards for their age. The previous inspection was unable to make a judgement about standards of achievement. Pupils are beginning to understand the concept of a plan or a map as a view from above and draw a variety of classroom objects in plan view. Most pupils can use a map to follow simple instructions. They use simple co-ordinates to locate features on a map and they understand the significance of a map key. Pupils are able to mark in features on an outline map of Doddinghurst, and they visit South Weald Park to observe features of the landscape. In links with literacy and the story of Badger Girl, the pupils compare Doddinghurst with Dartmoor. They also make comparisons between their village and part of Southend. Many pupils can name the constituent countries of the United Kingdom, and know some basic facts about some western European countries.

107. Most pupils are making good progress in developing early mapping skills. In a Year 1 lesson observed, the pupils drew a simple pictorial map based on a bear hunt story. They were able to insert appropriate symbols and explain what they represented. Many pupils are beginning to understand geographical terms such as 'journey', 'route', 'symbol', 'lake', 'hills', 'north' and 'south'. Pupils with special educational needs are making very good progress, with well-focused additional support.

108. The pupils behave well in lessons. Most of them listen attentively and settle down to work quickly. They concentrate appropriately and do not waste time. In two Year 2 lessons observed, the pupils showed good perseverance in trying to overcome the difficulties some of them found in drawing plan views of objects. They were willing to think about why their first attempts were wrong and to try again on the basis of what they had learnt. Presentation of work is variable, but some older pupils are producing neat work.

109. Teaching is of good quality. The teachers encourage pupils to use appropriate geographical

vocabulary. They maintain a good balance between giving information and allowing the pupils to find out for themselves. They make good use of visits within the locality and further afield to extend learning. Good links are made with literacy, but much less so with information technology. The teachers rightly lay great emphasis on the development of the pupils' mapping skills. Lessons are well organised, and some pupils' work is demonstrated during plenary sessions, when learning is reinforced.

110. A draft policy is in place and good planning is based on the Local Education Authority's guidelines. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher monitors teachers' plans and samples of pupils' work, in order to have an overview of standards in geography throughout the school. There are adequate resources to support learning, including a reasonable range of geography reference books in the school library. The teachers make good use of the schools' library service, but not of information technology resources. Learning is enhanced by worthwhile fieldwork in Doddinghurst and further afield. The subject makes a sound contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

110.

### **History**

111. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection. Judgements are based on a thorough examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Pupils achieve average standards for their age. The previous inspection was unable to make a judgement about overall standards. From first hand experience, the pupils know something about the history of South Weald Park. They look at old photographs of the house in the park and of the Belvedere Tower and make comparisons with what they can see today. Pupils know about some famous personalities and events of the past, such as Grace Darling, Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. They know that the Second World War caused rationing in Britain and that children were evacuated to the countryside. They have enacted wartime evacuation and Victorian lifestyles during 'history experience' days. In work linked to literacy, the pupils understand the significance of Remembrance Day and poppies.

112. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress in understanding the passage of time and the changes that this brings about. They understand the concept of a timeline and make a timeline of their own, and of their families. From observing artefacts, the pupils understand how toys and household items, such as irons and food mixers, have changed over time. They understand that technology often makes tasks easier. Pupils are making sound progress in using evidence from the past to note change, such as old photographs of Brentwood. Many pupils are learning to use appropriate historical words, such as 'now', 'then', 'the past', and 'long ago'. Pupils with special educational needs are also making satisfactory progress.

113. Although there are a few pupils who have a limited concentration span and can sometimes be silly, most pupils have positive attitudes to their work in history. Many take great care in presenting neat writing and drawings. They listen attentively during whole-class introductions and settle down to work quickly.

114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teachers use correct historical terminology and encourage the pupils to develop appropriate vocabulary. They maintain a sound balance between exposition and allowing the pupils to discover information for themselves and to suggest their own ideas. They understand the importance of using evidence from the past and make sound use of the locality as a source of evidence. Weaknesses in the teaching include little use of information technology, and presenting the same worksheets to pupils of differing abilities.

115. A draft policy is in place and good planning is based on local and national guidelines. The headteacher is responsible for co-ordinating history and monitors teachers' plans and samples of work. The curriculum is enhanced by 'history experience' days and by visits to places such as All Saints Church, the Priest House, Old Leigh (in Southend), the Colne Valley Railway, the Toy Museum at Stansted and South Weald Park. Good use is made of grandparents and other visitors to the school. There is an adequate range of resources to support learning, although the school relies heavily on the generosity of parents to lend artefacts as necessary. There is a satisfactory range of historical reference books in the school library. The subject is making a sound contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Music**

116. Pupils achieve good standards for their ages. This was also the judgement of the previous inspection. Pupils sing familiar songs from memory, with very good awareness of pitch and rhythm. They vary the dynamics of a song from almost a whisper to a final crescendo. Pupils control effectively the sounds made by a drum, a tambourine, a triangle and a chime bar. They create a musical pattern of loud and quiet sounds, keeping in time with each other very well. When attempting to reproduce a pattern by clapping or clicking their fingers, pupils try hard to keep together by listening carefully to each other. Pupils watch and respond appropriately to the teacher as conductor. They record and evaluate their performance, and then attempt to improve on it.

117. Throughout the key stage, pupils make good progress as they develop a good understanding of rhythm and dynamics. They learn to sing a wide range of songs with increasing confidence and awareness of pitch. They add continually to their knowledge of different styles of music and composers, although these are mostly of western origin. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, and are given good support in lessons where this is needed.

118. Pupils sing with enthusiasm, especially when they are all in assembly. In lessons, they demonstrate very good listening skills and enjoy using instruments to create their own rhythmic patterns. Pupils take great delight in recording their own performance and playing it back. They handle instruments with care and respond promptly to teachers' signals.

119. The quality of teaching in the subject is good, overall, and, in two of the three lessons seen during the inspection, it was very good. Teachers in each year group plan lessons together and share their knowledge and expertise effectively. Lessons have clear learning objectives and are well organised. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and performance in music lessons, and this has a positive impact on their learning. They make good use of tape recorders to enable pupils to evaluate and improve on their own performance. Teachers also make effective use of musical instruments when teaching the musical elements, but the timing of lessons sometimes creates problems of availability. Teachers manage pupils well and ensure that all have equal opportunity to participate in lessons. Where teaching is very good, the teacher's own expertise is considerable, and she has a range of techniques to enhance pupils' learning. For example, she emphasises 'listening in your head' and challenges pupils' thinking by skilful questioning. As a result, pupils are able to apply what they have learned about dynamics when playing instruments and singing a well-known song.

120. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is a music specialist and has held the post for three years. At the time of the last inspection, there was no policy or scheme of work in the subject. There is now a very good policy and the school has chosen to use the Local Education Authority's scheme of work for the subject. This is being evaluated and adapted appropriately to suit the school's particular needs. The co-ordinator has provided training for staff on how to use the scheme, which also contains criteria for assessment. There has been no formal monitoring of the quality of teaching or the curriculum, but the co-ordinator liaises informally with all staff and offers support as needed. There is a satisfactory range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, which are stored conveniently in a moveable trolley. The school has recently purchased a new CD music system, but the range of music that is available for pupils to listen to is limited mostly to western composers. There is a small selection of multicultural instruments. All pupils have the opportunity to perform to a large audience in concerts, which take place from time to time throughout the year. There are no extracurricular activities in the subject.

### **Physical education**

121. In gymnastics, the pupils achieve above average standards for their age. It was not possible to observe any lessons in games, dance or swimming. The previous inspection found that standards were sound and, in some lessons, good. Pupils understand the need to warm up their muscles before exercise and are well aware of warm up routines at the start of lessons. They understand the effect which exercise has on their pulse rates. Pupils are able to make various body shapes at a variety of levels. They can travel round the hall in different ways and stop and hold a good balance on small and large body parts. They build up simple sequences of movements, involving travelling and balancing.

122. Most pupils are making good progress in refining their gymnastic skills. With practice, their performance visibly improves during lessons. The more able pupils are learning how to adopt good finishing positions to their movements and to point their toes. Many pupils are developing an increasing

awareness of space, although some find this difficult and tend to crowd into one part of the hall. All the pupils are learning how to handle mats correctly. Pupils with special educational needs are making very good progress.

123. The pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and look forward to them. They change quickly and quietly into appropriate kit and enter and leave the hall in a very orderly fashion. Behaviour in lessons is very good. The pupils listen to instructions carefully and respond quickly. Most pupils are very eager to be chosen to demonstrate techniques.

124. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers dress appropriately for physical education and manage changing sessions well, encouraging the pupils to be independent and not to waste any time. The teachers demonstrate movements themselves and give pupils the opportunity to evaluate the performance of others, with a view to improving technique. Due attention is paid to safety. The teachers monitor progress carefully and use praise appropriately. They plan and organise their lessons well and they include effective warm up and cool down sessions. Relationships are very good and class control is very secure. The teachers are effectively involved in actual skills' teaching; for example, in a Year 2 lesson observed, the teacher stressed the need for the pupils to focus their eyes carefully on something and to hold their heads still, while maintaining a balance. The teachers insist on the correct handling of apparatus.

125. The Headteacher co-ordinates the provision for physical education. She has monitored teaching, in order to ensure adherence to safety procedures. A clear policy has just been developed and good planning is based on the Local Education Authority's guidelines. There is a wide range of good quality apparatus and equipment to support learning. The hall provides adequate indoor accommodation and the school has the benefit of its own outdoor swimming pool during the summer term. In the spring term, the pupils benefit from the expertise of a basketball coach. The policy refers appropriately to the development of pupils' social skills and the subject makes a sound contribution to this aspect of the pupils' education

## 125. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

### 126. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, who spent a total of 12 inspector days in the school. Time spent observing teaching, scrutinising the work of pupils and checking their attainment by working with them during the inspection - 38 hours 20 minutes: 7 hours 30 minutes at Pre Key Stage 1, and 30 hours 50 minutes at Key Stage 1. In addition, a further 19 hours 45 minutes were spent on the inspection activities listed below.

- 48 lessons or parts of lessons were observed, as were a number of registration periods, assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes;
- discussions were held with most teaching staff and some non-teaching staff;
- many pupils were heard to read and were questioned about their mathematical knowledge and understanding;
- nine samples of pupils' work across the full range of ability in all year groups were inspected, in addition to work examined during lessons;
- all available school documentation was analysed;
- attendance records, pupils' records kept by the school and teachers' planning documents were examined;
- the budget figures were inspected;
- discussions were held with pupils, parents and governors;
  - a parents' meeting was held and the views of the 50 parents at this meeting and those of the 116 families who responded to a questionnaire were taken into account.

### 127. DATA AND INDICATORS

#### 127. Pupil data

#### 127.

##### Teachers and classes

#### 127. Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): 9.25

Number of pupils per qualified teacher: 20

#### 127. Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff: 8

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 139

Average class size: 23



**127. Financial data**

Financial year:	1997/98
	£
Total Income	344739
Total Expenditure	323486
Expenditure per pupil	1464
Balance brought forward from previous year	22032
Balance carried forward to next year	43285

## 127. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 185  
Number of questionnaires returned: 116

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	73	25	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	73	25	1	0	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	38	40	20	1	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	40	52	6	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	45	50	4	1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	65	33	2	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	46	40	12	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	46	50	2	2	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	63	33	4	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	60	33	7	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	74	26	0	0	0

### 127. Other issues raised by parents

In addition to completing the questionnaires, 20 families sent written comments to the registered inspector. Almost all of these were in praise of the headteacher, the staff, the quality of education their children receive and the school's caring ethos. Parents find the staff to be dedicated, enthusiastic, caring and approachable. One parent wrote in praise of the school's provision for special educational needs. The only notable issue that concerns some parents is the rapid growth of the school in recent years.