

ERRATUM

Paragraph 24: The second sentence should read:

The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, seven percent, occurred in mathematics, art, music, physical education and geography, in Years 4 to 6, but mainly in Years 4 and 5.

INSPECTION REPORT

St. George's New Town Junior School

Colchester

LEA Area: Essex

Unique Reference Number:114704

Inspection Number: 186776

Head-Teacher: Ms B Assing

Reporting inspector: Mr A Andrews
6436

Dates of inspection: 27/09/1999 - 30/09/1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707282
Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Canterbury Road Colchester Essex CM2 7RU
Telephone number:	01206 506800
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Burgess
Date of previous inspection:	29/01/1996 - 02/02/1996

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Mrs D Jenkin Lay Inspector		Leadership and management Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Curriculum and assessment
Mrs E Lavender Team Inspector	Mathematics History	
Mr M Richards Team Inspector	Geography Science Art Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency of the school
Mrs K Beck Team Inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Design and technology Information and communication technology Music	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Teaching is good or very good in half of the lessons.

- Children's attitudes to work are good and their behaviour is good.
- Attainment in science is above average.
- Children make good progress in mathematics and science.
- The provision for children with special educational needs is good.
- Relationships throughout the school are good.
- Children's moral and social development is good. Their cultural development is very good.
- There are good arrangements for dealing with children's well being, health and safety.
- Links with the community are good.
- The school is run well on a day to day basis.
- The leadership and management provide good direction for the school.
- The school provides good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

Standards in reading, writing, handwriting and spelling are below average.

- I. Children's skills, knowledge and understanding in information and communication technology are below those expected nationally.
- II. The needs of the higher and lower attaining children are not consistently met across the curriculum.
- III. The overall stock of books and the resources for information and communication technology are unsatisfactory.
- IV. Training for learning support assistants to extend their experience and knowledge of children with specific needs is limited.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The school has overcome most of the weaknesses pointed out in its previous inspection of 1996. It has continued to make progress in raising standards and has maintained its supportive ethos.

The quality and consistency of teaching has improved. Curriculum plans and schemes of work are being implemented. National Curriculum Programmes of Study, Attainment Targets and levels receive appropriate attention. Emphasis is rightly given to literacy and numeracy. Teachers liaise closely in planning programmes of work across year groups and clearer objectives are set in short term planning. The monitoring of children's progress has improved, although teachers give insufficient attention to ensuring that the particular needs of higher and lower attaining children are

consistently met across the curriculum. Good monitoring procedures to check the quality of teaching of the curriculum are in place. These support teaching and learning effectively and help to ensure that the quality of education across the year groups is even. Teachers share their good practice.

Standards in science have risen significantly so that attainment is above average. Progress in mathematics is good. Determined efforts have been made to raise standards in English with some success. However, attainments in reading, writing, spelling and handwriting are below average. Computers have been brought up to date and the range of software has been increased, but this has not been sufficient for all children to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject to levels expected now. The governing body has taken action to ensure that statutory requirements relating to information to parents in its annual reports are fully met. The school's capacity for improvement is good. It has set realistic targets for further improvement and is well placed to achieve these.

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Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 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>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
			<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
			<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
English	E	D		
Mathematics	C	B		
Science	B	A		

This information gives a variable picture. It shows that standards in English were well below average compared to all schools and below average compared to similar schools. Standards in mathematics were average compared to all schools and above average compared to similar schools. Standards in science were above average compared to all schools and well above average compared to similar schools.

The school's results in the 1999 tests for English, mathematics and science show that the percentage of children reaching the expected level for their age has improved in all three subjects. However, no comparative figures are yet available.

Overall, the school is successfully raising standards, but at a slower rate in English than in mathematics and science. The literacy hour has been introduced successfully, but the skills of reading, writing, spelling and handwriting taught in these lessons are not reinforced and developed sufficiently in all other subjects. In addition, the school's stock of books is unsatisfactory and children do not read a broad range of literature. Staff absences and difficulties with recruitment have also hindered children's progress.

Attainment in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. This is because not enough time is given to the subject and there are insufficient resources. In addition, some teachers lack sufficient knowledge of the subject. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Progress in lessons observed was often good and sometimes very good. This reflects the determination of the school to improve standards. Over time, progress in history is good and in other subjects it is satisfactory, except design and technology where it is unsatisfactory. This is mainly because there is little evidence of children evaluating and then improving their work. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Information technology	Satisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good

Teaching is at least satisfactory in 93 percent of lessons. In 36 percent it is good and in 14 percent it is very good. 7 percent of teaching is less than satisfactory.

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	Good. Children are polite and well mannered.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Children arrive at school on time.
Ethos*	Good. It encourages positive attitudes to work and high standards. Relationships are good.
Leadership and management	Good. Clear direction given. School runs smoothly on a daily basis.
Curriculum	Satisfactory. Teachers give appropriate emphasis to literacy and numeracy.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. Self-esteem maintained, although classroom tasks do not always reinforce and develop skills identified in children's individual education programmes.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good cultural development. Good moral and social development. Satisfactory spiritual development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. Insufficient resources for English and information and communication technology.
Value for money	Good.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- V. They feel welcome in the school.
- VI. They feel it easy to approach staff with questions or problems.
- VII. Good information is given before a child starts school.
- VIII. They feel well informed about their child's progress.

What a small number of parents are not happy about

give a c

homewi

The judgements of the inspectors fully support the parents' positive views. The school does give a clear understanding of what is taught, for example, a meeting was held to explain the literacy hour.

Satisfactory provision is made for homework. Arrangements are set out clearly in the school's home-school agreement.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The headteacher, governors and staff should:

- 1 Improve standards in English further, particularly with regard to reading, writing, handwriting and spelling by:
 - (a) ensuring that the skills of reading, writing handwriting and spelling taught in the literacy hour are consistently applied across the curriculum;
 - (b) creating a lively reading environment, thus enabling children to read a broad range of literature;
 - (c) improving children's knowledge of books and authors;
 - (d) monitoring each child's reading programme closely;
 - (e) improving the stock of books;
 - (f) setting imaginative tasks, which motivate children to want to write more.

(Paragraphs: 6, 8, 10, 11, 27, 65, 70, 82-88, 94)

- 2 Raise standards in information and communication technology by:¹
 - (a) improving resources;
 - (b) raising teachers' knowledge and expertise;
 - (c) increasing the time allocation.

(Paragraphs: 9, 12, 14, 26, 30, 31, 54, 60, 65, 66, 71, 76, 88, 90, 126-132)

- 3 Ensure that the particular needs of higher and lower attaining children are met consistently across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs: 13, 16, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 37, 57, 59, 84, 91, 95, 97, 107, 120, 124, 129, 147)

In addition to the key issues above, the following should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- provide training for the learning support assistants in working with children with specific needs.
- (Paragraph: 68)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 St. George's New Town is an average sized junior school with 277 children on roll aged seven to 11 years. There are slightly more girls than boys in the school. 11 full-time teachers, including the headteacher and two part-time teachers teach them.

2 The school is situated close to the centre of Colchester and is surrounded by rather narrow streets and terraced Victorian styled houses. It shares a playing field adjoining the nearby infant school.

3 The school serves a diverse community, including some families with considerable social and economic difficulties. Children come from a mix of privately owned and local authority housing. The percentage from ethnic minority backgrounds is slightly above the national average. Most children are admitted into Year 3 from the infant school, although some 25 percent of the children currently in Years 5 and 6 joined the school from elsewhere. Attainment on entry is below average. 24 percent of children are known to be eligible for free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average. The school identifies 26 percent of its children as having a special educational need, which is above the national average. The percentage of children with statements of special educational needs is broadly average.

The main aims and priorities of the school

4 The school aims to provide a safe and secure environment in which all children are valued as individuals. It seeks to enable children to achieve the highest standards possible and to make good progress in relation to their age and ability. Within the curriculum, particular emphasis has been given to the introduction of the literacy hour and, currently, to the development of work in numeracy. In addition, the school is in the process of establishing an information and communication technology suite.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	35	29	64

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	14	19	29
at NC Level 4 or	Girls	17	16	22
above	Total	31	35	51
Percentage at NC	School	49(45)	56(55)	81(74)
Level 4 or above	National	65(63)	59(62)	69(68)
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	18	20	21
at NC Level 4 or	Girls	17	18	17
above	Total	35	38	38
Percentage at NC	School	56(48)	60(56)	70(64)
Level 4 or above	National	65(63)	65(64)	72(69)

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. **Attendance**

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Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised Absence	School	%
		National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised Absence	School	5.7
		National comparative data	0.9
			0.5

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. **Exclusions**

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Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	7
	Permanent	0

. **Quality of teaching**

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Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	14
	Satisfactory or better	93
	Less than satisfactory	7

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PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

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EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

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Attainment and progress
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5 On entry to school, most children have attainment which is below that which is expected for their age. They make good progress so that overall, attainment at the end of the key stage is broadly in line with the national average.

6 The school rightly gives emphasis to literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced satisfactorily. Standards in English have been raised since the last inspection, although attainment at the end of the key stage is still below average in relation to national expectations. Attainment in mathematics at the end of the key stage is now in line with national expectations. The school is paying particular attention to the development of mental and oral arithmetic and there has been significant improvement since the previous inspection. Vigorous action in science has raised standards significantly and attainment at the end of the key stage is above average.

7 A significant number of children have special educational needs. 23 per cent of children in Year 6 in the summer of 1999 came to the school from other schools at different times of their school career. The school has done well to increase the number of children reaching the expected levels of attainment, and in some cases exceeding them, especially in the past year, given the turnover of children.

8 In the 1998 national tests and assessments for children aged eleven, the school's results in English were well below the national average. In mathematics, they were close to the national average and in science they were above the national average. Compared to schools in a similar context, the 1998 English results were below average. The results in mathematics were close to the national average and in science they were well above average. Improvements in programmes of work and the quality of teaching means that standards are rising, although not as quickly in English as in mathematics and science. This is mainly because the skills of reading, writing, spelling and handwriting taught in English lessons are not consistently applied and reinforced in the teaching of other subjects. In addition, the stock of books is unsatisfactory and the school's reading environment does not do enough to encourage children to read a wide range of literature. The school's results of the 1999 tests in English, mathematics and science show an improvement in the percentage of children reaching the expected levels for their age, although no comparative figures are yet available.

9 The last inspection found attainment in information and communication technology to be mainly in line with national expectations with some good attainment. However, the level of resources for the subject was judged to be in need of improvement. The school has reacted positively to this issue and has increased the range of resources. This has not yet been enough to enable children to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding to levels expected now. This means that attainment in information and communication technology is below average at the end of the key stage. Children's attainment in religious education at the end of the key stage is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This is an improvement on the previous inspection that found a significant minority of children underachieving.

10 Children throughout the school, demonstrate good progress and sometimes very good progress in lessons, depending on the quality of teaching. This reflects the school's determination to raise standards by building children's skills systematically within a calm working environment. However, the unsatisfactory level of writing skills hinders children's progress across the curriculum.

11 Progress in English lessons is satisfactory, although progress over time has been less secure. The routine and structure of the literacy hour is beginning to have a positive impact on moving children's learning forward. By the age of eleven, most children listen attentively and speak with growing confidence. They show understanding of the main characters in stories, but use only a narrow range of strategies when reading new words. Their reading aloud often lacks expression. Children's writing skills are frequently unsatisfactory and they sometimes find it difficult to develop their ideas fluently. Teachers give considerable attention to helping children to spell and develop their handwriting successfully, but there are too many common errors and handwriting is not well formed.

12 Progress in mathematics is good. Children respond well to the emphasis on numeracy. By the age of eleven, many children use the four mathematical operations confidently in number work and problem solving activities. They show increasing speed and accuracy in mental arithmetic and have a growing understanding of decimals, fractions, angles and area. They collect data and record it correctly in graph form. However, this is not extended sufficiently into information and communication technology, for example, in data handling and creating spreadsheets.

13 Progress in science is good, although higher attaining children are not sufficiently challenged and extended. Knowledge and understanding is built up systematically throughout the school. By the time they are eleven, children make detailed predictions of experimental outcomes. They control variables in an experiment and they observe, measure and record results accurately, although the lack of writing skills sometimes impedes progress.

14 Progress in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory. This is because too little time is given to the subject and resources are not sufficient to enable children to learn new skills and to apply them quickly. Some teachers lack up to date knowledge in the subject and the school has identified this as a priority for development.

15 Progress in physical education is good and sometimes very good. Lesson observations, examination of teachers' planning, discussions with children and scrutiny of their work shows that progress over time in history is good. In all other subjects, including religious education, it is satisfactory. However, progress over time in design and technology is unsatisfactory with few opportunities for children to evaluate and improve their work.

16 Children with special educational needs make good progress. They receive good support from a special educational needs teacher and teaching assistants especially when withdrawn for extra tuition. In literacy and numeracy lessons children are well supported to carry out tasks set by the teacher. However, links between children's individual education plans and work in the literacy hour are limited. Children with English as an additional language make good progress. Effective additional support from teaching assistants enables these children to take a full part in all lessons.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

17 Overall, children's attitudes and behaviour are good which has a positive effect on the educational standards achieved. The positive picture described during the last inspection has been sustained.

18 Most children display good attitudes to their learning. They show an interest in their work, settle quickly to their tasks and are able to sustain their concentration, often working purposefully and showing a sense of pride in the outcome of their work. Children listen attentively to the teacher, respond well to questions and are keen to contribute to the lesson, obviously enjoying their learning experience. Children with special educational needs show good attitudes to their learning which enhances their progress. However, on a few occasions, particularly if the lesson lacks pace and challenge, children lose their concentration and become restless with some off task chatter or silliness developing. Children are beginning to develop their capacity for personal study by using a dictionary and a thesaurus during lessons and carrying out research for homework. The library was under used during the inspection.

19 Behaviour in lessons is good and often very good. The children put up their hands to answer questions and are polite and well mannered. A very small number of children sometimes display poor and challenging behaviour, but this is handled well by most staff and is not detrimental to other children's progress. Behaviour at lunchtime and playtime is usually good; the children are sometimes boisterous but not unruly. The children move around the school in an orderly manner and show respect for the school's property and equipment. There is no litter or graffiti. No incidents of bullying or racial tension were seen during the inspection and parents feel that any bullying is dealt with swiftly and effectively. There were seven fixed term exclusions in the school year prior to the inspection. This relates to only two children. Usually children with particular behavioural difficulties are managed well and do their best to concentrate and to respond positively. This enhances their self-esteem and enables them to make progress in their learning.

20 Relationships throughout the school are good. The children show respect for adults and each other. They are able to work collaboratively and share resources well, often helping one another with their learning. In discussions, the children listen to each other's point of view and feel able to express their opinions without fear of ridicule.

21 Provision for children's personal development is satisfactory. When given the opportunity to show initiative the children respond well. They carry out helpful tasks around the school, act as monitors in classrooms and undertake their responsibilities seriously.

· **Attendance**

22 Attendance is satisfactory. It is slightly below the national average but there is very little unauthorised absence and parents feel their children want to come to school. Registration is carried out quickly and effectively, with no time wasted, which encourages a purposeful start to the day. Punctuality is good. Children arrive briskly from the playground and settle quickly to work. This has a positive impact on children's attainment and progress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

23 Good progress has been made in improving the quality and consistency of teaching since the previous inspection and this is helping to raise standards. The improvement has been brought about during a period of difficulties with staff absences and recruitment.

24 The quality of teaching is good or very good in half the lessons observed. Almost all other teaching is satisfactory. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, seven percent, occurred in mathematics, art, music and geography, mostly in Year 5. This compares favourably to the previous inspection where only one quarter of lessons was good or very good and one third of teaching was unsatisfactory. This good standard of teaching has a positive effect on children's attainment and progress. As at the time of the previous inspection, teaching is most consistent in Year 3, where there were no unsatisfactory lessons and well over half those seen were good. It is strong in Year 6, where a quarter of lessons observed was very good. Teaching of the literacy hour is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teaching of numeracy is mostly good.

25 Teachers' lesson plans are good. They set out clearly what children are to learn and how they are to learn it. Teachers' share their aims for the lessons with the children and remind them frequently about what they are learning. Lessons follow a clear structure that means they are often taken at a brisk pace, which enhances children's learning. In the very best lessons, plans include imaginative tasks and activities that capture children's interest.

26 In all classes, teachers' relationships with children are positive. Sensible routines are quickly established and good behaviour is promoted continually. A strength of the teaching is the good and effective management of children with behavioural difficulties. Teachers mostly have satisfactory expertise in the subjects taught. The teaching of mathematics, science and physical education is often very good and this results in many children making good progress. However, some teachers lack knowledge in information and communication technology and this hinders the children's progress in the subject.

27 Teachers mainly deploy a good range of teaching strategies. They manage classes effectively and use praise and encouragement well to promote good attitudes to learning. In most lessons teachers take care to ensure a satisfactory balance between work involving teacher direction, and group and individual activities supervised by teachers and learning support staff. They intervene appropriately to provide effective support and guidance. Good use is made of marking and written and spoken comments to help children know what they have to do to improve their standards. In some lessons, children are set tasks that provide too little challenge, especially for the higher attainers. Examples of this were seen within the literacy hour and in science. In addition, the group tasks within the literacy hour are sometimes rather dull and do not motivate the children sufficiently.

28 In the best lessons teachers:

- have secure subject knowledge and understanding together with high expectations of what

children can do;

- plan lessons that set out clearly what skills children are going to learn and how they will make progress;
- build systematically on what children already know and have experienced;
- use resources effectively;
- give children feedback on their work to enable them to know what they need to do to make progress;
- ensure that work moves forward at a good pace and with a sense of purpose.

For example, in a Year 4 science lesson on electrical circuits, children made rapid progress in constructing a circuit and adding a switch to turn a bulb on and off. The lesson had a clear purpose that was communicated effectively to the children. Resources were prepared efficiently and everyone was expected to do their best. Children were well motivated, excited about their work and, as a result, tackled the task in a responsible manner. Teacher expertise was used successfully to ask questions, give feedback and move children's knowledge and understanding forward at a good pace.

29 Teaching of children with special educational needs is good. The teacher for children with special educational needs has specialist skills. This helps children to improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills, preserves their self-esteem and means they make good progress. Across the school, targets in individual education plans for children with special educational needs are clear. However, teachers' lesson plans make few links between their precise needs and with work provided in lessons. Children with English as an additional language are supported effectively within lessons and have full access to the curriculum.

The curriculum and assessment

30 The curriculum has satisfactory breadth, balance and relevance and it complies with national requirements. However, the subject of information and communication technology does not yet make a strong enough contribution to the curriculum and insufficient time is given to it, partly because of a lack of resources. This was a key issue in the previous inspection. Although there has been some improvement since then it still remains a key issue. The length of the taught week is well above the nationally recommended minimum. Additional time is given to different aspects of the curriculum, such as personal and social development through the effective use of circle time. Children are taught all the subjects of the National Curriculum together with health, sex and drugs education, although insufficient time is set aside for design and technology. The literacy hour is now firmly established and is beginning to raise standards of attainment in English which are, nevertheless, still below average. The school has made a good start in implementing the daily mathematics lesson. Religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

31 A key issue in the last inspection was to improve planning through closer liaison between year groups and setting clearer objectives. The school has worked hard successfully to put these matters right. Planning to enable children to make systematic progress is good. Teachers in parallel classes in each age group plan effectively together. This ensures that work builds well on what has been taught previously for children of average attainment. In subjects such as science, information and communication technology, history and geography teachers give too little attention to planning and matching work to the needs of higher and lower attaining children. Due attention is being paid to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, Attainment Targets and levels of attainment as required in the previous report, except for information and communication technology. Planning for the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson is undertaken conscientiously and enables the work in these two core subjects to be taught effectively. Policies and schemes of work for these and other subjects give staff practical support in planning their work. The school has adopted new national guidance for the science curriculum and is waiting for final information on the National Curriculum for the year 2000 before making further changes.

32 The school is successful in ensuring that boys and girls receive a satisfactory and equal

opportunity to benefit from the curriculum. Care is taken that children from minority backgrounds are made welcome and join in a full range of activities. Other than in English and mathematics, however, the school has not yet done enough to ensure that higher attaining children are fully extended by their work. This recommendation from the last inspection has not yet been fully implemented.

33 Provision for children with special educational needs is good, as found in the previous inspection. They are well supported and make good progress. Some are withdrawn from class and are effectively taught both individually and in small groups by the special needs teacher. This helps to improve their literacy skills and self-confidence. Children are given additional support in class during the literacy hour which enables them to take an active part. Individual education plans are good working documents and targets set are realistic and achievable. However, guidance for teachers to plan work that links both targets and work in the classroom is not always carried through into practice. The Code of Practice for special educational needs is fully implemented at all stages of assessment.

34 The school is playing a leading role in an international project to exchange information and learn about other European countries. This has involved entertaining children from Italy who were introduced to English traditions at a very successful May Day festival. The rich resources of the local environment are used effectively to support work in history and geography. Educational visits to such places as Braintree Museum and Ipswich are used well to extend the curriculum and children's personal and social development. Visiting speakers, including authors, are invited to talk about their work. The local vicar regularly takes assemblies. The provision for out-of-school activities is satisfactory. Clubs are popular and include orchestra, recorders and choir. Sporting activities include of gymnastics, netball and football, and children represent the school in local leagues with some success.

35 Satisfactory provision is made for homework. As part of the policy for home-school partnership all children are expected to do some work at home. In addition to reading, spelling and mathematics children are asked to find out further information to support their studies, for example, by observing and sketching the phases of the moon. Those in Year 6 are given regular tasks to do at home in preparation for national tests, especially in English and mathematics.

36 Systems to check and record children's individual attainments, particularly in English, mathematics and science, are good. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in literacy and numeracy for the future. It has implemented secure assessment procedures to check progress towards them. Regular reading and end of year tests in English, mathematics and science are carried out. The information gathered from these, together with daily assessments by teachers, are used satisfactorily in planning the next stages of learning. The school has prepared documentation to ensure that teacher assessments of National Curriculum attainment levels are accurate.

37 Children with special educational needs are assessed soon after starting at the school. Once their particular needs have been identified a programme of work to enable them to meet targets in their individual education plans is devised. Regular checks are made to ensure these children maintain good progress. Specific programmes are adapted according to the progress children make. These are rarely linked to work in all subjects.

38 Children with English as an additional language are helped, by learning support assistants, to play a full part in all lessons.

39 There is a comprehensive marking policy, which is implemented by all staff. This was a key issue at the previous inspection and has been fully addressed. Work is marked regularly and children are given appropriate guidance on how to improve.

Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

40 The previous inspection found the school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to be good. This has been sustained and, in the area of cultural development further improved. The recently introduced personal, social and health education programme has also enriched children's experience in these areas.

1 Satisfactory provision is made for the children's spiritual development. Much of this is found in daily assemblies and in religious education lessons. Whole school and class assemblies during the week of the inspection focused on harvest time. In one, children compared the richness of our harvest with that of people in communities suffering hunger. In another assembly, children heard the parable of 'The Sower', and reflected on its meaning. In yet another, they were amazed to see the very large fruits and vegetables that grow from very small seeds. In the religious education programme children learn about a range of religious faiths and about the different beliefs which hold communities together. They are encouraged to reflect on, and refine their own beliefs. There are also moments of wonder and delight in other parts of the curriculum. In science, for example, children were startled to see how much light a tiny pin hole allowed into a darkened pin hole camera.

42 Provision for moral education is good. Parents recognise the positive effect of the values and attitudes of the school on their children. In many moments throughout the day children learn from example, and sometimes from direct teaching, about right and wrong actions. In a personal, social and health education lesson, they considered vandalism and its impact on communities. In an assembly, a child was rewarded for a thoughtful deed he had undertaken – reminding a teacher, on a fire drill afternoon, that he would not be in school. Class charters also emphasise right and wrong courses of action. In day to day work teachers comment on honesty, fairness and kindness. This provision is very effective in helping children sharpen their own sense of right and wrong.

43 Good provision is also made for social development. The personal, social and health education programme is particularly strong in teaching about friendship, and about social responsibilities. Class rules and charters set out expected standards of social behaviour. The children are generous in their support of charities. Recently they have supported the 'Make-a-Wish' Foundation, and research into eye diseases. They have entertained children from Italy and older children undertake a one-day visit to Mersea for sporting activities. Plans are in hand to create a school council, to give children practical experience of democratic processes such as voting, and to enhance their sense of citizenship.

44 The school makes very good arrangements for children's cultural development. Regular Book Weeks and Book Fairs are held, with authors and illustrators visiting to address the children. Instrumental music and good quality contributions from the school orchestra make an important contribution to school assembly. Reproductions of work by well-known artists, and children's work in the style of such artists, are displayed around the school. A governor, with skills in painting with watercolours, visits to work with the children. The children learn about the culture of their own area through history, geography and science field trips. Care is also taken that children come to an appreciation of a variety of cultures. Representatives of a range of faiths, including a Quaker and a Buddhist, have visited to share their practice and beliefs. An African dancer has led dance workshops in the school, and the headteacher has explored Chinese traditions with the children. Access to the NASA Internet website has provided excellent, and striking, images of the planets for display in the hall.

45 The school has formed close links with schools in France, Germany and Italy. They have

acted as hosts to Italian children visiting, and are in regular e-mail correspondence with their partner Italian, French and German schools.

41 Support, guidance and pupils welfare

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46 Overall, the provision made by the school for children's support, guidance and welfare is good. This has a positive effect on the quality of education provided. The good practice identified in the last inspection has been sustained and the procedures for monitoring children's progress and managing behaviour have improved.

47 Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development are good. The school carries out a number of tests to establish children's needs. They also help to establish children's predicted and potential levels of achievement, against which progress is monitored. This practice has had a positive impact on raising standards, especially in mathematics and science. Staff know children well and are sensitive to their particular needs. Records are kept of children's personal development and this information is used effectively to ensure children are supported and encouraged appropriately. The progress of children with special educational needs is monitored well.

48 There are good procedures for ensuring positive behaviour and good discipline. These include a school 'code of conduct' and a 'classroom charter'. They are supported by a clear system of rewards and sanctions. Staff follow these consistently and the procedures work effectively in practice. Many staff manage the few incidents of challenging behaviour particularly well. Children understand both the school's expectations for good behaviour and the system of rewards and sanctions, and respond well to them. There are sound systems for monitoring attendance. Any unexplained absence is followed up and the school works with the Education Welfare Officer as appropriate.

49 Procedures for child protection and promoting children's well being, health and safety are good. The school provides a safe and secure environment for the children and takes its responsibility for their well being seriously. Good liaison takes place with outside support agencies which are used well to benefit the children. There is a comprehensive policy for child protection which is known by staff. Policies and procedures for health and safety are in place and implemented satisfactorily. Routines are clear and the school has good procedures in place for dealing with illness, accidents and medicines.

41 Partnership with parents and the community

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50 The school's partnership with parents and the community is good. Many of the strengths identified in the previous inspection have been sustained.

51 The quality of the information provided for parents is satisfactory. Parents responding to the questionnaires and questions at the meeting held for parents with the registered inspector are satisfied with the information the school gives on general matters and what is taught. They appreciate the details sent to them of 'topics' to be covered and the information meetings arranged, for example to explain the literacy hour. The information given to parents when a child starts at the school is good. Parents are informed well about their child's progress through formal consultation meetings with teachers. In addition, parents appreciate the manner in which teachers are always willing to talk to them, informally, if they have any concerns or questions about their child's education. The annual reports on children's progress are satisfactory and fulfil statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The reports contain brief information about what children

know, understand and can do. They give progress and effort grades, and suggest areas for improvement.

52 Parental involvement in children's learning is good. One of the school's aims is to 'involve and work with parents'. Staff have worked hard to put this into place. Parents are encouraged to come into the school to help in classrooms. They accompany educational visits and are invited to join in an assembly every Friday. Parents feel welcome in the school and find it easy to approach the staff with any questions or problems. They were involved effectively in the development of the behaviour policy. Their views are sought on a variety of issues through questionnaires and surveys. There is a supportive Parent Teacher Association that organises social and fund raising events to benefit the children. Recent projects have included the refurbishment of an old office as an information and communication technology suite and the purchase of equipment for the playground. A small number of parents feel that not enough homework is set. However, inspectors found that the school keeps parents fully informed about its expectations for homework and that the amount set is appropriate. Parents have been informed of the school's expectations for homework by letter and in the prospectus. Many are satisfied with the work their child is expected to do at home. Parents are encouraged to help their child with reading, spelling and mathematics.

53 The links the school has established with the community are good and contribute well to children's progress and personal development. A number of representatives from the community are invited into school to take assembly or work with a class of children. These include representatives from local churches and the community policeman. The school uses the local area very well as a resource to enrich the curriculum particularly in the teaching of history and geography. Children take part in sporting activities with other schools and receive coaching from the local professional football club. The children give their support to charity, for example the recent successful involvement in the 'Make a Wish' appeal. At the moment the infant and junior schools are taking part in the 'Bridging Topic', which is a local education authority initiative to promote curricular links between separate infant and junior schools.

41 THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

41 Leadership and management

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54 The previous inspection report said that the school was 'well led with a clear sense of direction'. This continues to be so. Leadership is good and the school is moving forward in a positive way. The headteacher gives strong and determined leadership ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Considerable thought and time is given successfully to raising standards and to setting realistic targets for the future. Administration is good and staff work together well as a team. Good routines have been established and the school runs smoothly and calmly on a daily basis with the interests of the children put first.

55 Governors give generously of their time, are well informed and conduct their business effectively and efficiently. They meet regularly and have a good structure of committees, which helps them to carry out their responsibilities well. Legal requirements are met and they take an appropriate interest in checking the implementation of teaching and curriculum developments, for example the introduction of the literacy hour. They know the school well, have good relationships with staff and

play an increasingly significant part in helping to raise standards.

56 The school has a good ethos which is promoted successfully by the governing body, headteacher and staff. It is based on valuing and caring for every child. It strengthens the quality of relationships within the community of the school and encourages the children to react positively to learning. Parents are happy about the attitudes and values the school promotes.

57 Implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is good. The aims of the school are set out clearly in its prospectus and give appropriate emphasis to progress and the achievement of high standards. They are reflected well in the every day life of the school. The school is determined to raise standards further, particularly in English and information and communication technology. There is no specific policy statement on equal opportunities, but the strong commitment to providing all children with equal chances is evident in most of the school's daily work. Within classes, teachers ensure that children have experience of working in mixed ability groups and that girls and boys work together. However, the needs of the higher and lower attaining children are not met consistently across the curriculum.

58 The management and organisation of the provision for children with special educational needs are good. A knowledgeable governor oversees the provision for special educational needs effectively ensuring the co-ordinator is supported well. Provision is monitored carefully to ensure the school policy complies fully with the Code of Practice for special educational needs. The governor and volunteer helpers work closely with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, successfully raising attainment.

59 The co-ordinator for special educational needs is effective in offering clear advice to colleagues. Children's attainment and progress is checked regularly. The co-ordinator is aware that links between targets in individual education plans and work, especially in the literacy hour, are not always carried through into practice. The school has identified this as a priority for development.

60 The school has made a satisfactory response to matters raised in the last inspection, including improvements in the quality and consistency of teaching and the implementation of curriculum plans and schemes of work. However, standards in writing remain unsatisfactory and resources to support information and communication technology are yet to be improved. The school is determined to raise standards and its capacity for improvement is good.

61 School development planning, monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory. The school's overall development plan is a useful tool to help guide improvements. The headteacher, staff and governors were involved in its formulation. There are regular staff and senior management team meetings and teachers are provided with satisfactory opportunities to discuss the work of the school and evaluate its effectiveness.

62 Subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic about their roles and are clear about how to improve provision in their subject. The literacy hour has been introduced effectively and the new emphasis on numeracy is moving forward successfully. Good monitoring and evaluating procedures of the delivery of the curriculum are in place. These support teaching and learning and help to ensure even quality across the year groups. Teachers give appropriate to the dissemination of good practice.

63 There is a good commitment to improve the school. The leadership has clear insight into what needs to be done for the school to improve. There is a shared sense of determination to succeed and move forward. Standards are rising and the school is well placed to meet its targets for improved standards in the future.

41 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

64 The match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory.

65 At the time of the last inspection, the school was said to be 'fully staffed with qualified teachers who had wide-ranging expertise.' Since then, there has been significant staff turnover and some of the longer serving teachers have been deployed to different year groups. The latter has had a positive impact on children's attainment and progress, improving the number of children reaching expected levels or higher standards of attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science. Recruitment difficulties have resulted in long-term absences being covered by supply teachers or two teachers sharing a class. This has hindered progress in English, especially reading and writing as well as in information and communication technology and design and technology, which receive insufficient attention. At the time of the inspection two temporary teachers taught one class and a teacher with a one-year contract taught another. To prevent interruption to children's learning, the school has recently introduced successful systems to maintain the progress of the children in the main subjects English, mathematics and science. Weekly programmes of work are devised for each year group and temporary teachers are helped to keep to these.

66 Teachers have a wide range of initial and in-service qualifications. Co-ordinators, especially the co-ordinator for special educational needs, have good subject knowledge and understand the role well. There is a satisfactory range of experience from recently qualified staff through to those who have taught for many years both in the school or elsewhere. The last report noted that some teachers did not fully appreciate the demands of the Programmes of Study required by the National Curriculum. This is no longer the case, although some teachers lack sufficient knowledge to teach information and communication technology and this leads to unsatisfactory standards in that subject.

67 Teachers new to the school or new to the profession are supported appropriately so that they quickly adopt school policies, especially with regard to behaviour. The match of support staff to the needs of the curriculum is satisfactory. An improvement since the previous inspection is the clarification of roles, especially those of the learning support assistants and how they work with the class teachers and special educational needs co-ordinator. Learning support assistants are enthusiastic, supportive and know the children they work with well.

68 Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are mostly satisfactory. Training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is up to date and has been effective. Whole school needs and those of individual needs of teachers are supported adequately. There is a satisfactory mentoring scheme in place for newly qualified teachers who are released to attend local authority courses. Training for learning support assistants has been successful with regard to behaviour management and basic first aid. Training to extend their experience and expertise to work with children with specific needs is limited and has been identified as a priority. As required following the last inspection, appraisal is up to date and meets statutory requirements. Teachers have regular discussions with the headteacher. Targets are reviewed and new ones set to improve children's attainment and progress. Professional development is linked to priorities identified in the school development plan. These factors are having a favourable impact on the quality of education children receive.

69 Accommodation is adequate. The school is housed in a large Victorian building with three floors. This takes up time for children to move around the premises. Children's cloakrooms are cramped. The school has adopted the recommendation in the previous report to take a flexible approach to the uses of facilities and accommodation to meet the changing needs of the school and National Curriculum. For example, a specialist information and communication technology room has been decorated and is ready for the installation of new computers. The room used by the special educational needs co-ordinator provides a quiet area for children to think hard and make progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The number of children on roll has remained similar to that at the time of the previous inspection. The anticipated rise of 25 percent in the number of children entering the school by 1999 did not occur. Classrooms are spacious enabling teachers to

move around to help children with their work. There is room in some classes for children to sit in a carpeted area together as well as to work at their tables in groups during the literacy and numeracy hours. Children and teachers can move around with ease during practical work in science.

70 Most classrooms and shared areas have been redecorated in bright colours providing an attractive environment for children to learn in. However, some classrooms and the library area are less inspiring. The library area is furnished with bookshelves but little comfortable seating or tables for children to work. During the inspection there was little evidence that it was used regularly for reading and finding out information. Most teachers display children's work attractively, valuing their achievements. Outside there are good-sized play areas that allow children to play a variety of games or sit quietly. A nearby school field is used for games and is shared with the infant school. The governors have taken action to ensure this field is safe for the children to use.

71 Resources are unsatisfactory. The last inspection report indicated that the school's expenditure on resources was relatively low, but there were enough books and resources. Resources in music were very good. This is still the case. However, spending on resources overall is well below the national average. This aspect has shown little improvement. In English, there are too few books for children to read a wide range of literature and acquire knowledge of different authors and genres. Few displays include books to encourage children to read and find out more about the work they are doing. This has a significant impact on children's learning across the curriculum. Resources are insufficient in information and communication technology hindering attainment and progress. The 10 computers that will be provided as part of the National Grid for Learning will be insufficient for the planned whole class teaching in the information and communication technology room, but the school is planning to purchase additional computers.

72 Resources are adequate in other areas of the curriculum. However, as noted in the last inspection, science and design and technology resources are not easily to hand. This has been a conscious decision by the school because of its health and safety policy. This sometimes makes it difficult for teachers working in the school for a short period to find what they need easily, even though they have access to lesson plans. Similarly it restricts opportunities for children to show initiative in selecting appropriate resources for the task they are working on.

41 **The efficiency of the school**

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73 The efficiency of the school is satisfactory.

74 At the time of the last inspection financial planning and budgetary control were found to be satisfactory. The development plan effectively directed spending, and the budget was regularly and reliably monitored. It was noted that governors did not analyse the effectiveness of their spending sufficiently well, and it recommended that the substantial surplus in the budget should be used to improve learning resources for the children.

75 The strengths noted in the previous report remain. Governors now evaluate the effectiveness of spending carefully, against school targets for children's attainment. An example of this is the spending on literacy.

76 The school still has a substantial financial surplus, but this is not significantly more than in most schools of its size. In retaining these funds, the management of the school is looking to possible demographic changes in the area, and the need to fund building alterations. However, expenditure on learning resources still remains well below the national average, and resources for learning in the

core subjects of English and information and communication technology are unsatisfactory.

77 Overall financial planning is good. A sound draft three-year development plan identifies priorities for spending, and allocates resources for the children's benefit. Costings in the development plan are realistic, and indicators have been identified to allow management to check the effectiveness of the measures taken. There has been no local authority financial audit since the previous inspection. However, the recommendations of the last audit were reported as having been implemented by that time. The funds received for the education of children with special needs are properly applied.

78 Day to day financial control and administration are satisfactory. Each full governing body meeting receives reconciliation statements so that governors check expenditure headings reliably. Between full meetings, the governors' finance committee keeps a watching brief on the budget. The management of money collected is efficient and secure. Accounts are properly backed up, and advice from the local authority is sought whenever necessary. Office staff operate the computerised financial and administrative systems efficiently.

79 Staff are deployed well. Most teachers carry responsibility for leading different areas of the curriculum. The school's learning support assistants are deployed to the points of greatest need.

80 The use of learning resources and accommodation is satisfactory. Little time is wasted in the school day. Lessons start and finish promptly, and are briskly taught. Teaching equipment and materials are used appropriately, but are sometimes stored where they cannot be independently sought and used by the children. Accommodation is used well. Both halls are fully timetabled. A room has been set aside and furnished through parental funding for information and communication technology. The library was little used during the inspection.

81 At the time of the last inspection the school was found to provide better than satisfactory value for money. Taking into account:

- the below average attainment of children when they enter the school;
- the good progress they make in their learning;
- their satisfactory personal development;
- good quality of teaching and the cost of provision;

the school now provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

82 The school's previous inspection found that overall standards in English were below national expectations. In particular, standards of writing were below the national average and handwriting was poor. Results since then have been inconsistent and are behind the national rate of improvement. In 1998, the most recent tests for which national comparisons are available, the school's results in English for children aged eleven were well below the national average. When compared to schools in a similar context, the results were below average. Few children attained levels above the expectation for their age. However, the school is working hard to raise standards with some success. The organisation into ability sets in Year 6 assists the progress of the older children. The school's results in the 1999 English tests show an improvement in the percentage of children reaching the expected level for their age, although no comparative figures are yet available.

83 Scrutiny of work and observation of lessons during the inspection show that children's attainment is below the national average at the end of the key stage. Writing, in particular, remains unsatisfactory and this impacts the children's work in all subjects. Throughout the school, children's writing is frequently disappointing when compared to their oral responses in class or in conversation. Children listen well to the teacher and, as a result, most oral responses are to the point and instructions are accurately implemented. Many children speak confidently and effectively when sharing their own experiences. However, they are sometimes less sure in discussions and find it difficult to accommodate uncertainties or nuances of opinion.

84 In lessons, children often write relatively little. Although the contents of what they write is usually sensible, there are few examples of writing in a range of forms with ideas sustained, developed and organised appropriately. Higher attaining children are not always challenged enough to develop a better understanding of style and audience. There are too many common errors of spelling and grammar, and although correct letter formation is encouraged, handwriting is unsatisfactory. The school has reviewed this situation and has introduced new schemes of work to support teaching and learning in spelling and handwriting.

85 Children's standards in reading are closer to the age related expectations, though still below average. The school's general reading environment is not sufficiently lively to encourage children to read a broad range of literature. The library is organised well, but the overall stock of books for English is unsatisfactory. A significant number of books look worn and uninviting. In general, children use a narrow range of strategies to read new words and, although they recognise their errors, they are often unsuccessful in correcting them. Their reading aloud often lacks expression. They show understanding of the main characters within stories, but find it difficult to pick out significant points from the text. Many do not speak enthusiastically about reading and have only a limited knowledge of books and authors. Children's individual reading programmes are not monitored closely enough to ensure that they draw upon a wide range of different kinds of reading. Research skills, however, are developing satisfactorily and many children can find information using the library system.

86 From children's past work and from the evidence of test results, it is apparent that over recent years progress in English has been unsatisfactory, especially in writing. However, in lessons observed during the inspection, progress is satisfactory. The positive implementation of the literacy hour is contributing successfully to progress, although the skills of reading, writing, handwriting and spelling taught in these lessons are not consistently applied and reinforced across the curriculum. Children with special educational needs make good progress, although the targets in their individual education plans are insufficiently linked to work in the literacy hour.

87 Children respond satisfactorily to the English teaching they receive. Their behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to work. They show respect for each other and for teachers. They like the routine and structure of the literacy hour, although they sometimes find the tasks unexciting and, as a result, the pace of their work slows. Most listen attentively and want to do their best. A minority find it difficult to concentrate and this affects their progress.

88 The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory. In a third of the lessons observed it was good and in one Year 6 lesson it was very good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection that found that a third of the lessons were unsatisfactory. There is also a satisfactory consistency across parallel classes in terms of the standards of work expected from children, and this too is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers demonstrate a secure understanding of the subject and give appropriate attention to planning of lessons. They create a calm atmosphere for learning and use praise and encouragement effectively. In the best lessons, teachers set out clearly what skills children are going to learn and how they will make progress. They use resources well and ensure that children's knowledge and understanding builds systematically on what they already know and have experienced. Work moves forward at a good pace and there are high expectations of what children can achieve in the time available. An example of this was seen in a Year 3 lesson in which children were describing the setting from a favourite story and thinking of ideas for characters in a play. Another example was in a Year 6 lesson in which the shared text was used effectively to extend children's understanding of descriptive language. Teaching is less effective when tasks set are unimaginative and do not motivate the children to do their best. In addition, not enough use is made of information and communication technology to extend children's learning.

• **Mathematics**

89 Standards of attainment in mathematics are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In the 1998 national tests, the number of children reaching and exceeding the expected standard at age eleven was close to the national average. Compared to similar schools, the number reaching the national standard was above average. In the previous inspection in 1996, attainment was below national expectations. There has been a significant improvement since then. Most recent test results show that the number of children reaching and exceeding the required standard has increased, but figures to compare results with all schools and those of a similar kind are not yet available.

90 The school is rightly focusing on numeracy and the development of mental and oral arithmetic as part of the national initiative to raise standards. By the end of the key stage most children use the four mathematical operations confidently in number work and problem solving activities. In mental arithmetic, they show increasing speed and accuracy, although some find it difficult to think quickly or work out the right answer in their heads. Children work out equivalent fractions, use decimals accurately in money sums and investigate probability with understanding. Most are competent at measuring angles, making scale drawings and calculating perimeter and area. They collect and read data, which they record correctly in graph form. This is not extended sufficiently into information communication technology, for example, in data handling and creating spreadsheets.

91 Progress is good. It is good or better in half the lessons and satisfactory in all but one lesson. The increased time given to mathematics and better planning are factors in the improvement since the last inspection. This also applies to those with special educational needs, particularly when they receive additional support. Many children become competent mathematicians and show confidence in using numbers and measures within mathematics. There are too few opportunities for them to practise these skills to solve problems in other subjects. They learn to use the proper language and the correct words, for example 'numerator', when explaining their work. The organisation of children into ability sets in Year 6 makes a significant contribution to their good progress. In some cases, not enough time is given to the slower workers to finish tasks.

92 Children's responses are good or very good in half the lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Behaviour is mainly good and sometimes very good and the majority of children are well motivated, have positive attitudes to the subject and work very hard. When asked to do so, they explain well to the class their method of working out answers. Most can be trusted to work independently, follow instructions and present their work neatly. In small groups, children help and support each other effectively and exchange useful ideas particularly in practical tasks. In the whole class part of daily mathematics lessons, children use their speaking and listening skills competently and are eager to answer questions.

93 Teaching is good. It is at least satisfactory in all but one lesson and either good or very good in half. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when a third of the teaching was unsatisfactory and there were significant differences between parallel classes. Teachers are confident and have a sound understanding of mathematics. This is improving as the school takes on the National Numeracy Strategy with its associated in-service training. One good point about the teaching is that children are challenged to explain the meaning of given mathematical words and find different ways of expressing similar number facts. This is an approach used by teachers that leads to good progress. Another is that lessons begin with teachers writing the focus of the day's work on the board. This keeps the class motivated and provides a point of reference for checking progress at the end.

94 Teachers expect children to work hard and behave well and they maintain firm discipline. Planning based on the Numeracy Framework is good and teachers are already making effective use of the new materials. They keep notes on children's individual progress during daily lessons for use in follow-up work that is then adapted as necessary. Relationships are good. Work is marked regularly and children receive guidance on how to improve their skills in mathematics. Unsatisfactory teaching occurs when work is not matched closely enough to children's abilities and when practical resources are unavailable to support learning. In addition, worksheets are sometimes too difficult and not always used well. This limits children's progress.

Science

95 At the time of the last inspection standards in science were variable, with some children attaining at a good level, while a significant minority underachieved. Since then the school's vigorous action has brought marked improvements. Attainment at the end of the key stage is now above the national average, with the great majority of children reaching the national standard. It is still the case, however, higher attaining children are insufficiently extended by their science programme of work, and do not reach the high standards of which they are capable.

96 The 1998 national testing and assessment programme indicated that the percentage of children reaching the nationally expected level at the end of the key stage was above average. The proportion of children reaching higher levels was average. Attainment was well above average when compared with similar schools. There has been a consistent and substantial improvement in the school's national test results over the past three years.

97 Most children make good progress in their science lessons. They also progress well through each school year, and over the key stage as a whole. Progress is good because lessons are well taught, and because the science programme is tightly structured to ensure a systematic build-up of knowledge. Children with special educational needs progress satisfactorily, although some science lessons ask too much of their writing skills. When this happens, their progress is impeded. Similarly, few lessons set specific scientific challenges for higher attaining children, and consequently they do not move ahead as quickly as they should.

98 The science programme covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Younger children know about the human body, its need for exercise and food, and how the circulatory system works. They identify different materials in common use, and classify them according to properties such as flexibility or absorbency. In work on forces they recognise pushing and pulling as forces acting on objects. Through the well-structured teaching programme, this knowledge is systematically extended throughout the key stage. By the time they are eleven, most children understand how major body systems and organs work. They have learned the formal classification of a material as liquid, solid or gas. They know how common materials change when heated or cooled, and which of these changes are reversible. They explain ways in which mixtures can be separated, and they understand the important concepts of evaporation and condensation. Work on forces has taught them about friction. They understand the relative motions of the Earth, Moon and Sun.

99 Children learn experimental and investigative skills in science. Children in Year 3 tested a range of different papers for their effectiveness in mopping up classroom spills. They discussed how to make their test a fair one. They analysed their results and decided what conclusions they could draw. By Year 6 children make detailed predictions of experimental outcomes. They control the variables in an experiment, and they observe, measure and record results accurately. In some cases they use their information and communication technology skills to display and interrogate their findings. At present children have too few opportunities to devise and conduct simple experiments of their own.

100 Children's attitudes to their science lessons, and their behaviour, are very good. They thoroughly enjoy the work, join in discussions with enthusiasm, and respond maturely when given small choices and decisions to make in the course of the lesson. In practical work they often show very high levels indeed of absorbed interest. This leads to intense concentration, which in turn promotes good standards of work and speedy progress.

101 The quality of teaching is good, and in several lessons very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The main strength of the teaching lies in the imaginative and motivating tasks set. These capture and hold children's interest, while also setting a good level of intellectual challenge. In a Year 6 lesson on forces children used a digital camera to take close-up pictures of mechanisms on a bicycle where friction influenced the operation. They had to identify the effect of friction in each circumstance, to assist braking for example. At the same time small groups of children interrogated a computer information source to see how past civilisations, such as the Romans, coped with friction in their search for improved mobility. In another highly motivating lesson Year 5 children made flip books to demonstrate the difficult notion of the phases of the Moon.

102 In all the lessons seen teachers expected a good level of disciplined thinking, and mature behaviour from the children. Planning was good, although there were seldom any advanced science tasks planned for children who learn the subject quickly.

103 The science programme as a whole is carefully constructed, and children's attainment is regularly and reliably assessed. Visitors to the school add to the programme. An Essex University teacher, for example, has helped children understand the detailed structure of the human skeleton. Very good science links with a local secondary school allow Year 6 children to visit three or four times a year, for additional practical laboratory work.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

104 The last inspection found standards of art to range from satisfactory to good. It commended the teachers' use of the work of well-known artists to stimulate children's own work, and indicated some areas in which teaching could be improved. The school has responded positively to the report through a programme of additional in-service training, and a review of the art syllabus. As a result, the strengths identified have been sustained, and teaching improvements set in place.

105 While reducing the time available for art in order to maximise provision for literacy and numeracy, the school has nevertheless retained a broad and balanced art programme. The art syllabus has been carefully constructed to ensure that children's skills are systematically built up over the key stage, and this has been very successful.

106 Most of the work seen during the inspection was planned to develop children's skills in colour and form. In these aspects of the art programme they make good progress from year to year. Children in Year 3 create self-portraits using coloured chalks. They concentrate on the shape of faces and discuss the relative positions of the features. They explore the different tones that chalks make when applied with different pressures, and use smudging techniques to make diffuse lines. In Year 4 this work is extended. Children use charcoal in depicting the human body, trying to capture visually its proportions and movement. In Year 5, the focus is again on portraits, but with attention given to the careful matching of colour to skin and hair tones. Year 6 children also work with colour. They experiment with complementary colours. They use this knowledge well to study the subtleties of manufacturers' use of colour in packaging, and develop a good awareness of how well-chosen colours can encourage people to buy. In several classes reproductions of the work of painters such as Matisse and Van Gogh are used well to focus children's attention on colour and form.

107 In most of their art lessons, children progress at a satisfactory pace. Where teachers understand the subject well, and extend the children's skills through good questioning, and challenging tasks, progress is very good. Children with special educational needs progress in line with their classmates. However, where teachers' expectations are low and subject knowledge weak, progress is poor.

108 In most lessons children's attitudes to their work are good. However, they vary according to the quality of the teaching children receive. In well taught lessons children are keen to settle to work, and proud of what they produce. They concentrate well and their behaviour is very good. Where the teaching is poor children become bored and their work suffers.

109 Four lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these, three were satisfactory or better. One lesson was poor. In the good and very good lessons, teachers present tasks which interest and

motivate the children. Teachers are clear about what they wish children to learn, and they encourage them to think hard about their work. In one very good Year 4 lesson, children studied colour tone. The teacher had brought from home a range of black items, such as a camera and a stereo radio. The children studied the way light fell on the items and was reflected. They then went on to work in charcoal, exploring tones of black and grey for themselves. The lesson captured the children's interest, and they made very good progress in developing their understanding of tone. In the poor lesson, expectations of what the children could achieve were too low, and the work lacked clarity of purpose.

110 Art contributes well to the overall cultural development of children in the school and enriches the visual environment. In Book Week, an illustrator demonstrated his work to the children. A governor visits from time to time, to show his water colour work to the children, and has led painting workshops with them. Older children have painted the doors of the very large art resources cupboards in the style of Mondrian, making a vibrant impact in a rather dark corner of the building.

Design and technology

111 Two lessons in design and technology were seen during the inspection, one in Year 3 and one in Year 6. Very little work was retained from the previous academic year on which to make judgements. Design and technology features in teachers' medium term plans.

112 Progress was very good in the lesson seen in Year 6. As part of a series of lessons to design and make a tent, children quickly applied skills gained in science to test different materials to identify the best waterproof material for their tent. Children successfully took on the role of a designer researching into the characteristics of a product to use for a purpose relevant to daily life. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Progress in Year 3 was satisfactory. Children gained insight into the way that the graphic styles on packaging is designed to attract attention and persuade customers in shops to buy the product.

113 Over time progress is unsatisfactory. In samples of previous work, much emphasis was put on design linked to posters advertising the school's May Festival, masks for characters in Macbeth and book covers. There was little evidence to show how children evaluated or improved their work. There were no samples of items children had made in the previous academic year. As noted in the previous report children produce few working drawings from which to make a particular product.

114 Thorough and detailed curriculum plans indicate a good programme for design and technology, including food technology. These include opportunities for children to develop appropriate skills and take on increasingly challenging tasks year on year. However, there is insufficient evidence to indicate the programme of work is fully carried out in all year groups.

115 Attitudes in lessons are good. Children in Year 3 showed imagination in their designs for packaging original products such as 'Wow' for a big ice-lolly and innersoles for shoes called 'Sweet'. Year 6 children worked very well together in their friendship groups, discussing their ideas and respecting different points of view. In both lessons, children contributed their ideas well in class discussion and listened attentively to their teacher. In the samples of work and lessons, children take pride in presenting their work well.

116 Teaching in Year 6 was very good and satisfactory in Year 3. In the very good lesson an imaginative task enabled children to draw very well on their previous learning about fair testing and methods of joining materials. In solving a problem children learned much from each other. Children's progress was assessed effectively during the lesson and where children found difficulties the teacher gave very clear guidance to ensure they completed the task successfully. In both lessons, teachers'

subject knowledge was secure which enabled them to teach the subject with confidence, giving children accurate information. Expectations of achievement and behaviour were high which promoted children's enthusiasm and willingness to use their own ideas.

Geography

117 A small number of geography lessons was seen during the inspection. Evidence from these, the scrutiny of past and present work and of teachers' planning show that children have a sound knowledge of geographical facts and features.

118 Progress is satisfactory and much improved since the previous inspection. Children understand the relationships between photographs, diagrams and plans. Map reading skills are well developed and they use the correct symbols and read a key. They mark their homes on small-scale maps and record their route to school from home correctly. Most plot places further afield in the United Kingdom, such as the rivers Thames, Trent and Severn and use Ordnance Survey maps to locate places of interest. Good use is made of the local environment to collect information for later classroom work. Through the international link with other countries in Europe, children come to understand the differences and similarities between themselves and others. Studies of countries further afield, such as St. Lucia, enable them to make comparisons between different habitats and customs. Systematic weather records are kept, and children check wind speeds using an anemometer and check their results against the Beaufort Scale. They know about the ways in which rivers change the landscape. Although written work is sound, some children lack the necessary skills for writing descriptively or imaginatively.

119 The response children make to geography is satisfactory. They have positive attitudes to the subject and show an interest in factual knowledge and an appreciation of environmental concerns. Many take part in class discussions, become engrossed, and ask many questions to satisfy their curiosity. When it comes to writing about what they know, some have difficulty in concentrating and talk to others instead of getting on with their work.

120 Teaching is satisfactory overall. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen. Teachers use a variety of strategies to motivate children and hold their interest such as brainstorming about clothing needed for different weather conditions. Teachers move around the room well during the lesson giving prompt advice and encouragement to individuals. The local environment is a rich resource and is used effectively to combine geography and history in a meaningful way. Visitors from abroad, such as a group of Italian children and an African dancer, help to broaden the curriculum. Teachers work hard in year groups to plan lessons that are mainly knowledge based. There are not enough opportunities for children to write at length or express their opinions. On some occasions lower attainers are expected

to complete the same work as the rest of the class without it being adapted to their needs. This hinders their progress.

History

121 Only a small number of history lessons was seen during the inspection. From the evidence of these lessons, the scrutiny of past and current work and of teachers' planning, progress is good and learning is consolidated effectively.

122 Children improve their knowledge of the past through the study of national and local history. The school itself and the town of Colchester are rich resources which are used well by teachers so that children develop an understanding of the past and a meaningful sense of chronology. Source material, for example the 1891 Census Return, is effectively used as a starting point for learning about life in Victorian times. A visit to Braintree Museum enabled children to experience what it was like to attend school at the turn of the century and to make comparisons with the present day. Children study other eras and become knowledgeable about the Romans, helped by a visit to Colchester Castle, Anglo-Saxons and Tudors. Those in Year 5 know a lot about Henry VIII. They learn about cultural traditions through festivals, such as the one held by the school to mark May Day.

123 Children mostly have positive attitudes and respond well in lessons. They are attentive, join in discussions and readily volunteer their opinions on subjects they are knowledgeable about. They show enthusiasm when given opportunities to research information but more materials and artefacts are needed to make this a really meaningful experience. Not all enjoy writing and factual accounts are often brief and work is sometimes unfinished. In group work children support each other well, exchange ideas and help to improve each other's understanding of the past.

124 Teaching is good and shows a secure knowledge of the subject. Much thought and effort have gone into planning lessons to motivate children and to encourage their sense of curiosity. Educational visits support work done in class, broaden the curriculum and provide a good focus for each topic. They enable teachers to build on skills and knowledge previously learned. Occasionally, there is an over-reliance on worksheets and opportunities are lost to extend the knowledge, skills and understanding of the higher attaining children. Those with special educational needs are not always given enough time to finish their work.

125 Children are beginning to use CD-ROMs on the computers for research work. There are not enough resource materials such as information books for children to develop investigative skills and this holds back their progress. Some teachers provide additional items of their own to support children's learning.

Information and communication technology

126 At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in information and communication technology was judged to be in line with national expectations with some examples of good attainment. A key issue was to improve the level of resources available to teach the subject. The school has acted positively, bringing computers up to date and increasing the range of software for children to learn about word processing, control and modelling. However, this has not been sufficient for all children to improve their skills, knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology to levels that are expected now. The subject remains a priority for development in the school's development plan. The school has been successful in a bid for 10 computers from the New Opportunities Fund, which will be installed in a designated computer suite in March 2000.

127 Two lessons in information and communication technology teaching were seen during the inspection. Interviews with children and staff, together with a scrutiny of work in children's books show that attainment in the subject is currently below national expectations at the end of the key stage. That

said, there were individual examples of good quality work throughout the school.

128 At the age of eleven, children are confident within a range of uses of computer technology. They handle the keyboard and mouse confidently, and know how to save and retrieve their own work. They find information on CD-ROMs and play simple games. Children word process stories but skills have not been developed sufficiently into sophisticated applications such as desktop publishing. They know little about the uses of information and communication technology in the outside world. Some children know how to take pictures with a digital camera but are unaware of how this data can be transferred to the computer. Children in Year 4 know how to use information and communication technology to control moving toys and analyse data collected from observations about the weather. In Year 3, children use simple word-processing skills to select the font they want to use and change it. They know how, with help, to enter and store information about different materials in a database.

129 Overall, progress is unsatisfactory as too little time is given to the subject. The number of computers available to work on is insufficient to enable children to learn new skills and apply them quickly. Records of children's progress are incomplete and so teachers are insufficiently aware of what children know and can do. This makes it hard for teachers, even with a good and supportive programme of work that meets statutory requirements, to develop children's skills systematically and challenge them to higher attainment. There is a different computer system in Years 3 to 5 than in Year 6. Nevertheless, some children in Year 6 have made good progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to use a different system since the beginning of term. They can find their way quickly between word processing and CD-Rom programmes.

130 In the lessons seen, attitudes were good. Children in Year 3 showed patience while waiting for their turn on the computer to enter information. They helped each other and responded well to teachers' questions. They were confident, keen and eager to learn new things. Year 6 children showed initiative in finding new programmes on the computer.

131 During the inspection, skills in entering information into a database were taught. Teaching in this aspect was satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other. This is because teachers were confident using the database software. Lessons were planned well. Explanations and demonstrations were clear and helped the children to make good progress in these skills. Teachers linked the work on the database to work in the classroom on materials and children's day to day lives. For example, children had found out that different packages were made from a variety of materials, such as plastic or cardboard, and whether these could be recycled. They recorded this information in an appropriate computer programme and teachers made clear that it could be turned into graphs which could be analysed to show popular packaging materials.

132 Lessons have a good pace and structure so that children take on new learning and apply it correctly. Teachers use appropriate subject vocabulary and encourage children to do so correctly. They give good feedback to the children to ensure that they gain as much information as they can in the time available. In the lessons seen, teachers' knowledge was secure. However, teachers have identified their lack of up to date knowledge of information technology as a priority for development. Teachers recognise the importance of information and communication technology and link tasks to English, art and design and technology. Children in Year 4 have carried out searches on the Internet and used e-mail successfully to link with schools in Italy, Germany and France as part of a school exchange project.

Music

133 Only three lessons were seen in music, two in Year 3 and one in Year 6. A beginner's recorder club group was observed and children's previous work was scrutinised.

134 As noted in the previous inspection children sing tunefully and expressively. They sing

confidently, expressing the different moods and tempos of the songs sensitively so that words can be clearly heard. Children taking up the good opportunities offered to learn how to play the violin, cello, guitar and recorder play confidently and to a good standard for their age. They play frequently in assembly and during various school performances to the public and other schools adding much to the quality of the Christmas plays and May Festivals.

135 Overall progress is satisfactory. It is very good in Year 3 where lessons move at a rapid pace. Teachers build up children's skills through a variety of short, crisp activities which help them to learn the words of a song, its beat and rhythm very quickly. In Year 6 work observed, progress was unsatisfactory as children gave too little attention to refining and improving their performance. Children had little time to compose their own music and perform it to their friends to a high standard. As there is no full-time music specialist, staff follow a commercially produced music programme. This includes tapes and pre-prepared lessons which teachers follow. The lessons increase children's knowledge and skills in listening to and appraising music, performing and singing year on year. The increased opportunity to appraise music puts right a shortcoming identified in the previous report. However, the comment that there were few opportunities for children to compose and record their compositions has yet to be put right.

136 Attitudes to learning music are very good in Year 3 and the out of school music clubs. They are satisfactory in Year 6. Mostly children enjoy music and are keen to take part. The younger children show particularly good attitudes when listening to their friends demonstrating how they can sing a song keeping to a steady beat. They listen attentively and respond well to their teachers' questions. Older children quickly become restless and less willing to participate when tasks lack challenge.

137 Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory although as noted in the last report, it varies from very good to unsatisfactory reflecting the teachers' confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. Lesson plans are satisfactory and make clear what it is children are to learn and how they are to learn it. Teachers emphasise the main teaching points throughout the lesson and use the correct terminology. Tasks and resources are matched well to children's interests, which motivates them to want to learn more and enhance their cultural development. Specialist teaching within out of school clubs such as the recorder is very good and motivates children to want to learn to play the instrument well. In unsatisfactory teaching expectations of what children can achieve are too low so that they lose interest. While the focus of the lesson is explained clearly it is not carried through into practice.

138 Resources are very good and the school has responded well to the previous report by increasing the number of electronic items. Children rarely use computer programmes within music as there are insufficient resources.

Physical Education

139 The school provides a broad and balanced programme of physical education. Gymnastics and games lessons were observed during the period of the inspection. Teachers' planning and records show that dance, swimming, athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities are also included in the programme of work.

140 Children make mostly good and sometimes very good progress, including those with special educational needs. This is an improvement on the previous inspection which described some of the games and gymnastics skills as little above the infant stage performance.

141 Children sustain energetic activity in lessons and are beginning to work together well in pairs or teams. Their movements show increasing control, co-ordination and balance. They practise, improve and refine their performance, building well on previous work. An example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson in which children developed floor movements including handstands and rolls. They evaluated their own and others' efforts. Higher attainers demonstrated a growing awareness of the importance of poise when beginning and completing movements. In games, many children show

growing skill in positioning hands and feet when passing, throwing or receiving a ball. They understand the importance of rules and of fair play. Children from Years 5 and 6 attend swimming lessons at a nearby pool where they receive instruction from qualified staff. The school reports that almost all children can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6.

142 Children's response and attitude to the subject is good and sometimes very good. This has a positive effect on their progress and is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Most children are well motivated and consistently do their best, often ending up out of breath through effort. Their behaviour is good and they enjoy the activities. They are mindful of safety factors and show consideration for others. All children wear appropriate kit for lessons.

143 The quality of teaching is mostly good and sometimes very good. Lessons are planned well and tasks are matched appropriately to children's abilities. Relationships are good and praise and encouragement are used effectively to help move learning forward. In the best lessons, the emphasis is on the systematic development of skills. Constructive on-going feedback is given to help children improve. The work is challenging and teachers have high expectations of what children can do. This has a positive impact on their progress. Time is used well and the activities have a sense of purpose and order. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed it was because the teacher lacked sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject.

144 The school participates in local sports leagues and older children have the opportunity to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities, including football, netball and cricket. These are supported well and help to widen children's experience of sporting activities.

Religious education

145 Children' attainment in religious education at the end of the key stage is average in relation to the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. At the time of the last inspection attainment was found to be variable with a significant minority of children underachieving. The school has addressed most of the issues of underachievement, and has improved attainment in this subject.

146 Standards of work and attainment are higher in those aspects of the religious education programme relating to Christian beliefs and practice, than in other areas of the Agreed Syllabus.

147 Since the last inspection the school has adjusted its programme of work for religious education in accordance with the new local authority syllabus, and has addressed the teaching weaknesses identified at that time. As a result of this, children now make satisfactory progress in their lessons. Where teaching is particularly imaginative, and teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject progress is very good. Children with special educational needs progress satisfactorily but in some classes, where there is an over-dependence on writing in religious education lessons, these children struggle. Over the Key Stage as a whole progress is variable. While the children steadily build up their understanding of Christian belief and practice, their understanding of other faiths is superficial, and often confused.

148 By the time they are eleven, most children have a sound knowledge of the importance of families, communities and friendship groups. They appreciate that many people belong to faith groups bound together by common values, beliefs and practices. They understand the importance of Christianity as a world faith community, and know a lot about the life, teaching and healing of Christ. They know that Hinduism and Judaism are also major world faiths. They are aware that most religions have special places for worship, special celebrations throughout the year, and books of sacred writings. Their knowledge of faiths other than Christianity is superficial.

149 Children's attitudes to their religious education lessons are good, and they enjoy much of the work. They are very keen to join in class discussions, and are courteous speakers and listeners. They put forward their own views with confidence, and listen respectfully to the views of others. In learning about less familiar religious practice, they are respectful and serious. They are very well behaved, and they work hard throughout lessons, even when tasks are difficult for them. Their keenness to participate has a major impact on what they learn and remember.

150 The quality of religious education teaching is satisfactory, and sometimes good. In one very good Year 3 lesson children were learning that Christians value the peace and serenity in a church building. The teacher gathered the class around her, and lit a small candle. In a very quiet, sensitive, discussion the children spoke about the places they knew which are special on account of a quality of peacefulness. Using cardboard boxes, and a range of materials, children made miniature peep-hole models of their own peaceful places. Lessons like this are practical, imaginative, and very engaging for the children. The teachers know exactly what they want the children to learn. They approach sensitive issues of religious belief and practice with great sensitivity. The combination of good subject knowledge, with activities which excite the children's interest, leads to brisk progress being made.

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PART C: INSPECTION DATA

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SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

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151 A team of five inspectors carried out the inspection over four days, making 19 inspector working days:

- a total of 72 lessons were seen in whole or in part, representing 56 hours and 10 minutes observation across all classes, including all National Curriculum subjects;
- 8 per cent of children were heard reading. Discussions were held with children about their subject knowledge and understanding;
- samples of children's current work were inspected in all classes and 11 per cent of children's work was examined in detail;

- children's work from the previous year saved by the school was examined;
- assemblies and registration periods were inspected;
- school documents, resources, records kept on children, teachers' planning and policies were scrutinised;
- meetings and discussions were held with the teaching and support staff and with members of the governing body;
- a meeting was held with 12 parents of children registered at the school and 43 replies to the questionnaire sent out by the school were analysed.

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DATA AND INDICATORS

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Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 - Y6	273	2	73	67

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Teachers and classes

·	Qualified teachers (Y3 - Y6)	
	Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	11.88
	Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23.32
·	Education support staff (Y3 - Y6)	
	Total number of education support staff:	7
	Total aggregate hours worked each week:	82.5
	 Average class size:	 28

· **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/9
	£
Total Income	429,852
Total Expenditure	430,323
Expenditure per pupil	1,559.14
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,078
Balance carried forward to next year	12,607

· **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	273
Number of questionnaires returned:	43

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	37	56	5	0	2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	51	40	7	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	30	54	9	5	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	28	47	14	12	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	54	5	7	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	36	50	10	5	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	30	40	23	7	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	24	60	3	12	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	37	51	9	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	39	44	14	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) their school	37	49	9	5	0

• Numbers may not add up exactly to 100 as numbers have been rounded up.

¹. This is included in the school development plan for the current year.

Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year